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Equal Access to Quality Education For Roma

Romania

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Monitoring report

2007

Equal access to quality education for
Roma

Romania

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ALSDGC	Romanian branch of the International Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Association (<i>Asociația Lectura și Scrierea pentru Dezvoltarea Gândirii Critice, România</i>)
ARACIP	Romanian Agency for Ensuring Quality in Pre-University Education (<i>Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Preuniversitar</i>)
CCD	Teacher Training Centres (<i>Casa Corpului Didactic</i>)
CEDU	Center Education 2000+ (<i>Centrul Educația 2000+</i>)
CNFP	National Centre for Training of the Pre-University Teaching Staff (<i>Centrul Național de Formare a Personalului din Învățământul Preuniversitar</i>)
CREDIS	Department of Open Distance Education of Bucharest University (<i>Departamentul de Învățământ Deschis la Distanță, Universitatea din București, dezvoltat din Centrul de Resurse, Documentare, Informare și Servicii pentru Învățământ Deschis la Distanță</i>)
CSI	County School Inspectorate (<i>Inspectorat Școlar Județean</i>)
DPPD	Departments for Teacher Training (<i>Departamentul pentru Pregătirea Personalului Didactic</i>)
ICCV	Research Institute for Quality of Life (<i>Institutul de Cercetare a Calității Vieții</i>)

INS	Romanian National Institute of Statistics (<i>Institutul Național de Statistică</i>)
ITP	Individual Training Plan (<i>Planul Individual de Pregătire</i>)
MARODIS	Methodology for Application of the Rules for Organisation and Implementation of School Inspection (<i>Metodologia de Aplicare a Regulamentului de Organizare și Desfășurare a Inspecției Școlare</i>)
MER	Ministry of Education and Research (<i>Ministrul educației și cercetării</i>)
NCCD	The National Council for Combating Discrimination (<i>Consiliul Național pentru Combaterea Discriminării</i>)
PNMFCDN	Multi-Annual National Training Programme for Non-Roma Teachers Working with Roma Children and Students (<i>Programul național multianual de formare a cadrelor didactice nerome care lucrează cu elevi și copii rromi</i>)
REF	Roma Education Fund
RODIS	Rules for Organisation and Implementation of School Inspection (<i>Regulamentul de Organizare și Desfășurare a Inspecției Școlare</i>)
RWCT	Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (<i>Lectura și Scrierea pentru Dezvoltarea Gândirii Critice</i>)
TAB	Textbook Approvals Board (<i>Consiliul Național de Aprobare a Manualelor</i>)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Executive Summary

The Romanian Government has energetically adopted policies and programmes aimed at improving the situation of Roma generally, and has made Roma education a priority for the use of European Union (EU) funds. However, implementation of these policies has been far weaker than the ambitious targets suggest, and a range of serious obstacles to quality education remains for Roma children. An active civil sector has acted in partnership with the Government in a number of successful projects designed to increase Roma access to education, and the gradual scaling-up of these initiatives should be monitored to track results. With Romania now a member of the EU, it is vital that the international encouragement that has played such an important part in past efforts to better address the needs of Roma does not falter. The “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015” could be a framework for Romania to consolidate and broaden improvements in education for Roma, rather than yet another programme promising more than it delivers.

Romania has a high proportion of young Roma, making access to quality education all the more urgent. While comprehensive official data are not available, a number of independent studies have collected relevant information on the Roma population and educational issues. The numbers of Roma – and importantly, the numbers of Roma who identify themselves as such – enrolling in school have been steadily increasing. However, despite the important contribution that pre-school makes to a child’s later school success, there is still a large number of Roma children who do not attend pre-school, due to costs, lack of space, and geographical isolation. Roma also appear more likely to drop out of school than their non-Roma peers, and a much higher percentage of Roma over the age of ten have not completed any level of schooling.

Segregation is a persistent and pervasive issue in Romania; the separation of Roma settlements from majority communities has led to the growth of Roma-only schools serving these settlements and neighbourhoods. However, practices such as deliberately placing Roma children in separate classes, or channelling them into special schools for children with intellectual disabilities, have also been reported. As various studies have used different methods for determining what constitutes a segregated school, a comprehensive survey using a consistent methodology and definitions should be a priority for the Government.

The main Government document addressing the situation of Roma in general is the *Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma*, adopted in 2001 and updated in 2006. Research has shown that *Strategy* implementation has been uneven in the areas that it targets, which include education. The “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project, which has been developed and run since 2003 with support from the EU’s Phare programme, includes support for county-level strategies and has been effective in piloting a variety of

approaches aimed at improving Roma access to education. In 2004, the Government also drafted an Action Plan as part of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (*draft Decade Action Plan*), but this has not yet been adopted.

The ongoing process of decentralisation particularly affects education, as local authorities gain greater autonomy, but often without clear responsibilities, and the central Government retains fewer and fewer mechanisms to combat negative trends such as segregation. As this process continues, the Government should ensure that there are accessible and competent bodies to address potential problems within a more decentralised system, that local authorities are given clear mandates and support to implement their new level of autonomy, and that the needs of Roma communities are appropriately addressed by local policies.

A notification issued by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2004 outlines the steps that schools and school inspectors must take to identify and eliminate segregation; however, as this notification lacks the force of law, its implementation has been limited.

Roma mediators have been working in Romanian schools since 2000, and while the selection and training of 200 mediators were carried out as part of the Phare programme's "Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma" project, limited resources and a lack of clear regulations for hiring additional mediators have limited the expansion of this initiative and threatened the position of existing Roma mediators. Government efforts to increase the number of Roma teachers and teachers speaking Romanes, as well as Romanes language classes, have been more successful. However, more material reflecting the Roma minority should be included in curriculum content, and made an integral part of the education on offer for all children in Romania, not only the minority itself.

NGO-funded and Government-funded teacher training is available on topics relevant to Roma education, and the Government should establish a system to monitor and evaluate all courses in order to consolidate and build on their good practices.

The National Council for Combating Discrimination (NCCD) has been operating since 2002, but to date has received only one complaint related to access to education, where the Council issued a warning to a school found to be segregating Roma students. The capacity of schools for handling discrimination is low, and there should be local solutions in place for dealing with different situations.

While precise figures on the number of Roma without identity papers are not available, research clearly indicates that the scope of the problem is large; the Government should take steps to collect more data on this issue and, in particular, to assess its significance as a barrier to school enrolment. The costs for maintaining a child in school are not affordable for most Roma families: a clear connection exists between the economic status of Roma and the educational attainment of their children.

The public authorities still largely ignore the problem of residential segregation of Roma communities, and a real change will take place only with systematic State intervention. Widespread geographical segregation in Romania has led to a high proportion of Roma children living in Roma-majority settlements and neighbourhoods, often at a distance from majority communities and infrastructure, including schools.

Although overrepresentation of Roma in special schools for children with intellectual disabilities is not as serious a problem in Romania as in other countries in the region, some Roma children are still placed in these schools to take advantage of meals and accommodation benefits. Such benefits should be made available to students from disadvantaged backgrounds attending any schools, to eliminate any incentive to attend special schools. The Government's "Second Chance" programme, while generally involving exclusively Roma students, remains a better option than previous efforts to integrate older-than-average students, which tended to place such children in classes with younger peers.

Romania has an established system offering Romanes language instruction, with the numbers of both students and teachers increasing steadily, supported by the good cooperation between civil society and Government efforts in this area.

Romania has made some important advances with regard to the quality of education available to Roma. Nevertheless, serious inequalities remain, and the Government must ensure that education reform takes the specific needs of Roma students into account.

Despite a number of reports highlighting the poor condition of schools with a high proportion of Roma students, little has been done to address the basic conditions of such schools – poor heating, inadequate sanitation, and overcrowding. As schools receive much of their funding from local revenue, specific action at the central Government level is needed to supplement funds in disadvantaged areas.

The school results of Roma pupils have been improving, although this is still measured in terms of declining failure rates. Decentralisation has had a positive impact on curricular development, as schools are encouraged to develop modules reflecting local culture and traditions. However, the Ministry of Education and Research should ensure that materials about Roma culture and contributions are part of all Romanian children's education.

A range of training opportunities related to Roma education are available to teachers, many offered by NGOs with specific experience in the field. This is a positive step towards more active techniques; however, after training, there is little support provided to teachers to help them to continue to innovate in their classrooms. In addition, more focused efforts are needed to involve Roma communities in schools; sustained outreach and communication from all parties are needed to bridge the enduring gap between Roma parents and schools. Low expectations and negative perceptions of Roma in the classroom are pervasive, and the Government must take steps to enhance tolerance in schools as a corollary to measures addressing physical segregation.

Romania's informal network of Inspectors for Roma Education is a model in many regards; the Ministry of Education and Research should reinforce this system and ensure that it continues to work to enhance the inclusion of Roma throughout the country, and through all levels of education.

1.2 Recommendations

1.2.1 Recommendations on monitoring and evaluation

Data collection

The Ministry of Education and Science should do the following:

1. Improve the data collection mechanisms related to the school population, in particular for Roma students and migrant students, with adequate safeguards for protecting sensitive information and identity and privacy of individuals.
2. Ensure the public availability of statistical data disaggregated by age, ethnicity and gender, on the situation of Roma in the field of education; this could, for example, be made available on the Ministry of Education's portal website.
3. Design samples of the pupils participating in international educational testing, such as PISA and TIMSS, to include consistent sub-samples of Roma pupils. Report the results of these international testing disaggregated on ethnicity in order to allow the identification of trends in Roma school achievement of throughout the "Decade of Roma Inclusion".
4. Use the existent data collection systems in the longer term; for example, the Roma database software designed in the frame of the Phare 2003 project could provide reliable data, if used in the future to track student records and school achievement.
5. Develop a "tracking" system between schools for students who migrate with families inside the country or abroad.

Evaluation

The Ministry of Education and Science should do the following:

6. Monitor desegregation actions and the impact on the beneficiaries.
7. Initiate evaluation research in order to document the impact of different interventions, projects and programs after the formal end.
8. Balance quantitative data collection mechanisms with qualitative data collection in order to get system-related data, as well as information related to people's lives.

School Inspectorates should do the following:

9. Monitor and respect quality standards for the school's environment, including with respect to ensuring adequate space, heating, lightening, space available per child; to this end, the ARACIP (the Romanian Agency for Ensuring Quality in Pre-University Education) quality criteria and self-assessment forms should be used at the school level.

1.2.2 Recommendations for improving access to education

Structural Constraints, Legal and Administrative Requirements, Costs

The Ministry of Education and Science should do the following:

10. Ensure that all children have access to full-day two-year preschool, by:
 - Extending the compulsory preparatory class (*grupa pregatitoare*) to two years for all disadvantaged children;
 - Ensuring that adequate space is available to accommodate all children; this could be through construction of new classrooms, revision in class scheduling, or reviewing the requirements for the number of children per class;
 - Providing free, full-day educational programmes for disadvantaged children.
11. Make provisions for those children who do not have the appropriate papers to have access to preschool education.
12. Allocate funding for primary and secondary schools to ensure that children who qualify can receive support such as meals, clothes and after school programmes.
13. Take concerted action to tackle child labour; specifically find ways to target child labourers to return to, and stay in, school, such as through the above-mentioned incentives.
14. Provide full-day educational programmes for disadvantaged children ("after school programmes"), including tutoring and mentoring. Teachers should receive financial incentives for extra-hours; children should receive a free lunch, at a minimum.
15. Continue and encourage more "Second Chance" classes where necessary, and further ensure appropriate implementation of the recruitment, teaching, assessment and certification procedures for "Second Chance" students.

Residential segregation/geographic isolation

The Government of Romania should do the following:

16. Adopt the National Action Plan of the Decade of Roma Inclusion – the *National Action Plan at the National Level* (hereafter, *draft Decade Action*

Plan)¹ – including the section on Education issues and especially its provisions for combating school segregation.

17. Ensure that appropriate and clear roles and responsibilities are set out for the new structures designated for implementation of the *Roma Strategy* in a decentralised system:
 - Working Group for Public Policies for Roma (Grupul de lucru pentru politicile publice pentru romi);
 - Ministerial Commissions for Roma (*Comisiile ministeriale pentru Romi*);
 - County Offices for Roma (*Birourile Judetene pentru Romi*);
 - Local experts for Roma issues (*Expertii locali pentru problemele romilor*).
18. Fulfil the goals set out in *The Governmental Strategy for Improvement of the Condition of the Roma*,² especially in regards to ending the practice of placing Roma children in separate classes.
19. Involve the representatives of Government in territory (*Prefecturi*) in facilitating institutional dialogue among local stakeholders, such as the local authorities, school staff, county school inspectorate, parents councils and NGOs, in desegregation projects.
20. Allocate governmental and EU funds as a priority to localities demonstrating efforts to improve social cohesion through school desegregation initiatives.

The Ministry of Education and Science should do the following:

21. Issue a ministerial order on the elimination of segregation, defining segregation broadly so as to include separation on the basis of the socio-economic status of parents, occupational class, gender, religion, or academic abilities. School directors who maintain separate school classes for Roma, or not elaborating and implementing desegregation plans in the case of separate schools, should be subject to financial and professional sanctions.
22. Create a working group to reunite the National Agency for Roma, the National Council for Combating Discrimination (NCCD), as well as Roma NGOs, in order to design a nationwide strategy for school desegregation, drawing on the best practices on desegregation established in the Phare 2001 and Phare 2003 educational programmes.

¹ *The National Action Plan at the National Level (Planul Național de Acțiune)* (hereafter, *draft Decade Action Plan*)

² *The Governmental Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma (Strategia Guvernului României de Îmbunătățire a Situației Romilor)*.

23. Train the county school inspectorates to carefully prepare for the desegregation process; this includes preparing teachers, parents and pupils, creating and maintaining a welcoming school environment, and delivering educational and social support for pupils in need until their complete integration in their new classes and schools, as part of a comprehensive desegregation programme.
24. Strongly support and empower the role played by school inspectors in monitoring school and placement procedures, and assisting schools in desegregation efforts, as identified in the Ministry of Education Notification 29323 of 20 April 2004 on school desegregation; this could be through training, best practice exchange, and by channelling resources for implementing the activities.
25. Provide assistance to the county inspectorates, to ensure that experts on community facilitation and desegregation go into schools and the community, to provide mediation and counselling in case of debates or conflicts.
26. Support inspectorates in the use of school self evaluation – which includes school de-segregation as a topic – to encourage schools nationwide to use these instruments in the process of desegregation.
27. Continue to collect data, and monitor desegregation measures started in the 2005–2006 school year through the Phare 2003 project.

The Regional Inspectorates of Education and local education authorities should do the following:

28. Set up long-term and short-term desegregation plans; assist schools, monitor and support desegregation at the school level, including through their regular school inspections.
29. Support the creation of school networks at the local level, with the aim of sharing experience and adopting optimal desegregation plans.
30. Ensure that the free transportation of all children to the host schools as required by law is available as needed, and offer their full assistance for the process of desegregation.
31. Address non-educational barriers to school desegregation, including not only transport, but also other poverty-related barriers.

School and Class Placement Procedures

The Ministry of Education and Research should do the following:

32. Fulfil the commitments made in Government Emergency Ordinance No. 192/199 and the Education Law No. 218/ April 2004 that stipulate the integration of children from special schools to mainstream schools.

33. Demonstrate commitment to, and progress in, the improvement of diagnostic and assessment tools/instruments used in the assessment of children with special educational needs.
34. Develop standards, methodologies, and financing mechanisms for the inclusion of children from special schools in mainstream classes, ensuring that mainstream schools offer all of the support and resources necessary for inclusive education.

Language

The Ministry of Education and Research should do the following:

35. Commit itself to the curriculum and curricular materials development to support the Roma language and culture classes that are occurring across the country.
36. Pilot a Romanes language curriculum in grades one to four.
37. Encourage and support in-service and pre-service teacher institutions to offer courses in language acquisition, methodologies for bilingual education and techniques, intercultural education, inclusive education.
38. Create a clear job description for the inspectors for Roma regarding language learning.

1.2.3 Recommendations on improving quality of education

School Facilities and Human Resources

The Ministry of Education and Research and the County School Inspectorates should:

39. Ensure that more qualified teachers are appointed in the schools from disadvantaged communities, specifically in the rural areas.
40. Control the turn-over rate of teachers by providing incentives for teachers working in disadvantaged and Roma communities, including free training programmes.
41. Extend the decentralisation process by increasing the use of local school and community recommendations and needs in appointing teachers rather than using the computer-based teacher job allocation system.
42. Make basic investments in infrastructure.
43. Find a means of ensuring that trained Mediators can subsequently be employed, and those that are hired can remain in service.

Curricular Standards

The Ministry of Education and Research should do the following:

44. Review the educational philosophy and common set of principles and norms for all schooling in pre-tertiary education in regards to diversity and the multicultural nature of Romanian society, and make necessary changes in creation criteria to integrate cultural and ethnic diversity issues both at the level of objectives (attainment targets and specific objectives) and at the level of content.
45. Cooperate with the National Textbook Agency in order to strengthen the cultural diversity dimension in textbooks at all the school levels.
46. Support the creation of good quality learning materials that take into account Roma history, culture and values, and also reprint such materials already developed by NGOs.
47. Open a competition for the creation of books in Romanes that comply with the national curriculum for at a minimum the early primary grades, and identify financial resources to ensure the costs are not prohibitive.
48. Review the proportion of school based curricula in the general context of the national curriculum, such that schools and teachers can effectively adapt the educational offer to the real needs linked with ethnic structure of the students and community.
49. Elaborate of a set of professional incentives to encourage teachers to develop alternative learning resources.

Classroom Practice and Pedagogy

The Ministry of Education and Research should do the following:

50. Support schools and teachers to use new standards to help in the quality of the education they deliver.
51. Monitor the implementation of those teaching standards that incorporate indicators regarding quality education, such as those prepared by the Romanian Agency for Ensuring Quality in Pre-University Education (ARACIS); these standards incorporate lessons learned from various projects and programs in the field of inclusive education, education in Roma communities or disadvantaged communities.
52. Continue training, employ and engage school mediators in the education process.
53. Elaborate a new national policy for initial and continuous teacher training with explicit references to include in the curriculum intercultural or multicultural education as a specific component.

54. Glean the experience in in-service teacher training that has occurred in projects run under Phare and NGO projects, and mainstream that practice into pre-service and in-service teacher training institutions.
55. Encourage innovations in schools with highly mobile student populations, such as the children of seasonal labourers who are away for the same period every year; this could be in the form of, for example, summer study packs, and student portfolios.

County level and local pedagogical authorities, inspectorates, and in-service training institutions should do the following:

56. Provide training for teachers and administrators in pre-service and in-service training institutions, in child-centred pedagogy, anti-bias education, methodologies for second language learning, multi-cultural education, and effective ways of involving parents and communities.
57. Provide support for the in-service teacher training institutions (and encourage their cooperation with the inspectorates), to encourage new models and practices of school-based leadership and management, student-centred instruction and parent and community involvement, including the use of school self-evaluation as a quality assurance tool.
58. Support teachers' pre-service and in-service training institutions to include school improvement theory and practice into their official curriculum.

School-Community Relations

The Ministry of Education and Science should do the following:

59. Continue to stimulate Roma to work in schools by providing scholarships and distance education programs for teachers and school mediators; Roma NGO involvement in the trainings would be recommended.

Local Inspectorates should support schools to do the following:

60. Encourage the increased involvement of Roma parents in school decision-making.
61. Actively pursue their own institutional development and improvement.
62. Reinforce school improvement and school development efforts by building on the experience gained in some schools with other projects, and organising exchange visits and networking between schools.
63. Foster links wherever possible with organisations such as community development NGOs, that can work with groups of parents to enhance their capacity for meaningful involvement with school life, to increase their

confidence and ultimately to enable them to influence school policy and practice.

Discriminatory Attitudes

The Government of Romania should do the following:

64. Increase the visibility of the National Council for Combating Discrimination (NCCD) and other national institutions charged with countering discrimination.
65. Address quality differences between schools and discriminatory practices by enforcing respect for legal regulations and norms.
66. Encourage and support financially programs for interethnic tolerance and cooperation.

Universities and pedagogical high schools should:

67. In their initial training of teachers, extend to a larger scale specific training modules on elements such as: intercultural education, equal opportunities, family involvement in school life.

School Inspections

The Ministry of Education and Research and the County School Inspectorates should do the following:

68. Ensure that all schools, including special schools and segregated Roma schools, are inspected regularly and held to the standards defined by law.
69. Train and nominate inspectors in charge with segregation issue and require all inspectors to take action in line with desegregation policy.
70. Support and encourage inspectors to undertake the monitoring process as a learning and supportive function, not as control function.

2. BASIC EDUCATION INDICATORS

Romania has a high proportion of young Roma, making access to quality education all the more urgent. While comprehensive official data are not available, a number of independent studies have collected relevant information on the Roma population and educational issues. The numbers of Roma – and importantly, the numbers of Roma who identify themselves as such – enrolling in school have been steadily increasing. However, despite the important contribution that pre-school makes to a child's later school success, there are still a large number of Roma children who do not attend pre-school, due to costs, lack of space, and geographical isolation. Roma also appear more likely to drop out of school than their non-Roma peers, and a much higher percentage of Roma over the age of ten have not completed any level of schooling.

Segregation is a persistent and pervasive issue in Romania; the separation of Roma settlements from majority communities has led to the growth of Roma-only schools serving these settlements and neighbourhoods. However, practices such as deliberately placing Roma children in separate classes, or channelling them into special schools for children with intellectual disabilities, have also been reported. As various studies have used different methods for determining what constitutes a segregated school, a comprehensive survey using a consistent methodology and definitions should be a priority for the Government.

2.1 Data collection

This report takes into consideration the most relevant research reports and statistics published recently. However, the availability and reliability of data are problematic, due to a lack of consistent collection and publication of Roma-related statistics, as well as education statistics in general. Several data collection initiatives are relevant to this report, published with the participation of organisations that are constantly involved in the promotion of access to quality education for children. These include UNICEF, the Institute for Educational Sciences (*Institutul de Științe ale Educației*), the Research Institute for Quality of Life (*Institutul de Cercetare a Calității Vieții*, ICCV) and others. With support from the European Union (EU), the Phare programmes implemented by the Ministry of Education, and research in recent years on access to education for disadvantaged groups, some baseline studies were started, which should lead to more consistent and constant updating of the data available.

The official Census of Romanian Population and Households from 2002 (hereafter, 2002 census) presents several relevant figures regarding the situation of Roma in Romania. According to the census, the total population of Romania was 21,680,974.³ After 1989, the birth rate in Romania plummeted, from 2.2 (number of children borne by a woman during her fertile life) in 1989, to 1.8 in 1990 and 1.3 in 2004; over the

³ Romanian National Institute of Statistics (Institutul Național de Statistică, INS), results of the 2002 population census, available in English and Romanian on the INS website at http://www.insse.ro/index_eng.htm (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, 2002 Census).

same period the mortality rate increased from 10.0 (deceased per 1,000 inhabitants) in 1991 to 10.8 in 2004.⁴

According to the 2002 census, the Roma population in Romania is 535,140, or 2.46 per cent of the total population. The 2002 census data show a significant increase in the Roma population since 1992, when the census registered 401,087 Roma or 1.75 per cent of the total.⁵ This increase of 0.71 per cent must be seen in the context of a decreasing total population and an increasing openness to declaring oneself as Roma. According to ICCV, the unofficial Roma figure is around 6.7 per cent of the total population.⁶ The Roma Education Fund (REF) *Needs Assessment Paper*, prepared for the “Decade of Roma Inclusion”,⁷ notes that Roma activists and NGO leaders estimate that there are between 1,010,000 and 2,500,000 Roma in Romania, representing between 4.65 per cent and 11.52 per cent of the total population.⁸

The complex issue of “who is Roma” and the characteristics that define someone as Roma both remain unresolved. The use of language is one indicator, and the 2002 census indicates that about 43.9 per cent of people who identify themselves as Roma speak Romanes. According to recent research of the Open Society Foundation, Romania (hereafter, OSF-Romania),⁹ within a nationally representative sample of self-

⁴ INS, statistical data available in Romanian and English on the INS website at <http://www.insse.ro/Anuar%202005/CAPITOLE/cap2.pdf> (accessed 9 March 2007).

⁵ INS, statistical data available in Romanian and English on the INS website at <http://www.insse.ro/RPL2002INS/vol4/tabele/t1.pdf> (accessed 9 March 2007).

⁶ C. Zamfir and M. Preda (eds.), *Romii in Romania (Roma in Romania)*, Bucharest: Expert Publishing House, 2002. Data gathered refer to 1998. The percentage of 6.7 per cent represents an accurate estimation of the percentage of Roma who are identified by others as such. It is estimated by the same source that the percentage of Roma who declare themselves as Roma is lower, at 4.3 per cent of the total population (pp. 13–14). The estimation of 6.7 per cent is quoted also in Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Commission (APSIC), *Suportul social pentru populatia de romi* (Social Support for the Roma Population), Bucharest: APSIC, 2002. This is an official document elaborated by the Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Commission under the Romanian Government.

⁷ The “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015”, an initiative supported by the Open Society Institute (OSI) and the World Bank, is an unprecedented international effort to combat discrimination and ensure that Roma have equal access to education, housing, employment and health care. Launched in February 2005 and endorsed by nine Central and Eastern European countries, the Decade is also supported by the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Development Bank, and the United Nations Development Program. For further details, see the Decade website at <http://www.romadecade.org>.

⁸ Roma Education Fund (REF), *Needs Assessment for Romania*, August 2004, available in English at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTROMA/Resources/NAREportFinalRomania.pdf> (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, REF, *Needs Assessment*).

⁹ Open Society Foundation, Romania (hereafter, OSF-Romania), *Roma Inclusion Barometer*, Bucharest: OSF-Romania, 2007, available at <http://www.osf.ro/en/publicatii.php> (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, OSF-Romania, *Roma Inclusion Barometer*) p. 8.

identified Roma, almost half (45 per cent) declare themselves as “Romanianised” Roma, members of groups known as woodworkers (*rudari*) or hearth-makers (*vatrasi*).

In Romania, during the process of harmonisation of the Romanian legislation to the *acquis communautaire* of the European Union (EU), the National Authority for the Supervision of Personal Data Processing was established as a public, independent and autonomous authority of the Romanian public administration, with the goal of protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of natural persons, especially the rights of intimate, family and private life, in connection with the processing of personal data and the free circulation of these data.¹⁰ The authority supervises and oversees the legality of personal data processing that falls under Law No. 677/2001, where personal data are defined as “any information referring to a physical person, identified or identifiable, direct or indirect, particularly through an identification number or one or several more specific factors of his or her physical, physiological, psychic, economic, cultural or social identity (for example, name, surname, address, habits, telephone number and salary).”¹¹ The supervisory authority can decide, if it determines that this law has been violated, to temporarily suspend data processing, to erase all or part of the processed data or to take legal action. The authority can also undertake investigations, on its own initiative or to follow up on a complaint filed, and issue recommendations on data processing.

However, the process of collecting data related to the situation of the Roma population in Romania is still in the early stages. The National Agency for Roma, through an EU-funded programme,¹² is undertaking research that will present representative data on the condition of Roma in areas related to Government policy.

Schools are required to collect data annually and to send this information to the County Inspectorate, using a common form (*SC Situație Centralizată*). The Inspectorate centralises the data and sends it to the Ministry of Education. These data include tables to be filled in by the directors regarding the number of people who repeat the school year, the number of students enrolled, and the like, but the age or ethnicity of students is not included.

¹⁰ Law no. 102/2005 on Setting up the National Authority for the Supervision of Personal Data Processing, entered into force on 12 May 2005.

¹¹ Law 677/2001 on Protection of Persons Concerning the Processing of Personal Data and Free Circulation of Such Data.

¹² Phare, *Phare 2004, Consolidarea Capacității Instituționale și Dezvoltarea de Parteneriate pentru Îmbunătățirea Percepției și Condițiilor Romilor* (Phare 2004, Strengthening Capacity and Partnership Building to Improve Roma Condition and Perception), Bucharest: Phare, 2004 (hereafter, *Phare 2004, Strengthening Capacity and Partnership Building*).

2.2 Enrolment data and trends

Research by the Centre for Health Policies and Services (*Centrul de Politici și Servicii de Sănătate*), from 2004, presents the following data on the demographic structure of the Roma population:¹³

Table 1: Roma demographic structure (2004)

Age	Roma Population (sample, 2004)		Total Romanian population (2000 census) ¹⁴	
	Number	per cent	Number	per cent
Under 18	3,487	43.6	5,391,401	24.0
18–24	968	12.1	2,323,894	10.4
25–34	1,357	17.0	3,644,244	16.2
35–44	851	10.7	2,880,033	12.3
45–54	721	9.0	2,914,862	13.0
55–64	344	4.3	2,295,258	10.2
over 65	262	3.3	2,985,513	13.3
Total	7,990	100.0	22,435,205	100.0

Source: Centre for Health Policies¹⁵

From these data, it is clear that the Roma population in Romania is young: approximately 50 per cent are under 24 years old, while the general population under 24 years old is approximately 25 per cent. (However, this high percentage of Roma under 24 years old has been called into question.)¹⁶ On the other hand, the situation is reversed among the elderly population, where Roma are less represented. The most significant difference is found in the population over 55 years old and over 65 years old

¹³ The research was implemented by the Centre for Health Policies and Services (*Centrul de Politici și Servicii de Sănătate*) and funded by the Open Society Institute (OSI), New York. It was based on a representative sample including 1,511 Roma households; a total of 7,990 Roma. See S. Căce and C. Vladescu (eds.), *Health Status of the Roma Population and Its Access to Health Services*, Centre for Health Policies and Services, Bucharest: Expert Publishing House, 2004 (hereafter, Centre for Health Policies and Services, *Health Status of the Roma Population*).

¹⁴ Data from INS, *Romanian Statistical Yearbook*, Bucharest: INS, 2000.

¹⁵ Centre for Health Policies and Services, *Roma Population Research 2004*, p. 16.

¹⁶ OSI Roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007. Explanatory Note: OSI held a roundtable meeting in Romania in February 2007 to invite critiques of the present report in draft form. Experts present included representatives of the Government, education professionals, and non-governmental organisations.

– where there are proportionately three times more non-Roma than Roma (3.3 per cent of the Roma population aged over 65, against 13.3 per cent of the general population). Table 2, with data from the 2002 census, further illustrates the variations between Roma and national averages by age group.

Table 2: Pre-school- and school-age population – for Roma and the national population, breakdown by age groups (2002)

Age group (years)	Proportion of the population (per cent)	
	National level	Roma population
0–4	5.0	12.8
5–9	5.2	10.7
10–14	7.2	12.7
15–19	7.5	10.9

Source: INS¹⁷

The proportion of the Roma population under age 19 is approximately twice that of the Romanian population. These data deserve special attention with respect to the educational system and educational policies, given the general context of negative natural population growth in Romania and its long-term implications for the education system and for society in general. The implication of these numbers on the age structure of the Roma population in Romania is that achieving better access to quality education for Roma has even greater importance.

Pre-school education enrolment is 66.1 per cent for the country as a whole (2000–2001); the one third of children who do not attend pre-school mainly comprise the most economically disadvantaged, with less educated parents.¹⁸ Pre-school education enrolment for the Roma community is as low as 20 per cent.

The fact that such a small percentage of Roma children attend pre-school, in comparison with non-Roma children, is an important factor that contributes to school failure. Children go to school without any prior experience with a structured learning environment, and find it very difficult to keep pace with children who attended a regular pre-school programme of three years. In response to this, intensive summer pre-schools are being organised in more and more schools. Most of the Inspectorates involved in a Phare-funded project (see section 3.2) developed a methodology,

¹⁷ 2002 census.

¹⁸ P. Cronin, M. Dvorski, A. Valerio, M. Kovacs, “Education Sub-Sector Review: Romania,” unpublished paper, Education Support Programme (ESP), OSI-Budapest, 2003 (hereafter, Cronin *et al.*, *Education Sub-Sector Review*), p. 14.

educational materials, assessment instruments and handouts, which both primary and pre-school teachers are encouraged to use. However, this can be only a temporary solution, and the focus should instead be on encouraging Roma children to attend mainstream pre-schools.

Table 3: Proportion of Roma who drop out or are never enrolled in school (1993 and 1998)

Age group (years)	Share of total school-age population (per cent)			
	Dropped out		Never enrolled in school	
	1992	1998	1992	1998
7–10	10.1	1.9	27.9	15.4
11–14	24.4	8.6	17.6	15.8

Source: C. Zamfir and E. Zamfir¹⁹

Table 3 above demonstrates that Roma enrolment in school has been increasing steadily over the past ten years. There are two main reasons for this. First, according to teachers, a policy measure introduced in 1993 has had an impact on increased enrolment.²⁰ This was the regulation of conditioning payment of the school allowance benefit on school attendance introduced by the Law no.61/1993.²¹ Table 3 shows the reduction in drop-out rates, and in numbers of Roma never enrolled in school, after the introduction of the Regulation in 1993.

The second reason for the increase in Roma children's school participation is a probable increase in the self-identification of Roma as a result of introducing a Roma-oriented curriculum and affirmative measures for Roma for secondary education and university.

¹⁹ C. Zamfir and E. Zamfir (eds.), *Tigani între ignorare și îngrijorare* (Roma between invisibility and worry) and *Roma Social Observer*, database of the Research Institute for Quality of Life, both sources quoted in M. Surdu, "Conditionarea alocatiei pentru copii de prezenta scolara si efectele sale asupra educatiei copiilor rromi" (Children's social allowance and school attendance – effects on Roma children), in *Calitatea Vietii Review*, No. 1, February 1998, p. 179. The article notes that almost 15 per cent of Roma who remain outside of the education system after implementation of this regulation are consequently deprived of the child allowance that is supposed to be a universal benefit for all children.

²⁰ This was a recurrent theme appearing in almost all interviews or informal discussions with teachers carried out in the framework of the local case studies carried out for this project (see Annex 2).

²¹ Law no. 61 from 22 September 1993 Referring to the Child Allowance Offered by the State (*Legea nr. 61 din 22 septembrie 1993 privind alocația de stat pentru copii*). Published in Monitorul Oficial (Official Monitor), no. 233 of 28 September. 1993, available at http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htp_act_text?idt=13808 (accessed on 9 March 2007).

Finally, the recruitment and activity of Roma teachers have also contributed to the greater numbers of Roma children enrolling; these teachers have had a direct motivating effect on the school participation of Roma children.²² In 1990, the first Inspector for Education in Romanes, encouraged by Professor Nicolae Gheorghe, made an initial census of Roma children, which provided the first statistics regarding Roma children's participation in education.²³ Since 1990, different measures have been gradually introduced to improve collection of data on the number and attainment of Roma students; these were initiated either by civil society or by the Ministry of Education (see section 3).

Following the employment of Inspectors for Roma Education, Professor Sarau established a national network of school mediators and Roma teachers, and was involved in the organisation and development of teacher training programmes. Professor Sarau has been able to document the increase of the number of children who identify themselves as Roma, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Number of Roma students (1989–2007)

School year	Number of Roma students	
	Total	Studying Roma history and language
1989–1990	129,000	50
1990–1991	138,000	–
2002–2003	158,128	15,708
2003–2004	183,176	20,528
2004–2005	220,000	24,129
2005–2006	243,008	24,903
2006–2007	250,000	25,525

Source: OSI Roundtable²⁴

Although these data show that the number of children who identify themselves as Roma has steadily increased, this may not in fact reflect growth in the enrolment rates within the Roma population. Students who were already in school, but registered as

²² Comments submitted to EUMAP by Professor Gheorghe Inspector for Education in Romanes, following the OSI roundtable.

²³ The informal census was the work of Roma teacher Ina Radu, following the recommendations of Nicolae Gheorghe and Gheorghe Sarau.

²⁴ Data were collected with the support of Romanes teachers and Roma School Inspectors working at the county level, as well as with direct support of the schools.

having Romanian or Hungarian ethnicity, may now have elected to declare themselves as Roma, while the situation of the *most* marginalised Roma children – the ones who have never been to school at all – remains unchanged.²⁵ Indeed, data show that there is still a gap between overall enrolment for Roma and their non-Roma peers, as Table 5 indicates.

Table 5: Enrolment rate for Roma and majority population in close proximity to Roma (2005)

Education level	Enrolment rate (per cent)	
	Majority population in close proximity to Roma	Roma
Primary (ages 7–15)	94	76
Secondary (ages 16–19)	69	17
Tertiary (20>)	5	1

Source: UNDP²⁶

While data disaggregated for ethnicity are not available, according to data from the Ministry of Education and Research, 73 per cent of all children of pre-school age (between two and seven years old) attend pre-school,²⁷ whereas over 86 per cent of five-year-olds attend pre-school.²⁸ On average, a child spends 2.9 years in pre-school.²⁹ According to data from the 2002 census, the average number of years that Roma spend in school is 6.8 years for the population over ten years old, while for the population over the age of ten as a whole the average is 11.2 years.

Table 6 below further demonstrates, that on average, Roma children are older than their majority peers within the classes of primary school, and that the age gap increases in the higher grades of primary school. This may indicate that Roma are more likely to repeat grades than non-Roma. However, other factors may also contribute, such that Roma are likely to begin pre-school late, or not at all, and to enter first grade at a later

²⁵ Comments submitted to EUMAP on the present report in draft form, February 2007 by Maria Andruszkiewicz, independent consultant and former Roma Education Expert and Team Leader for the Phare project “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups with a Special Focus on Roma”.

²⁶ UNDP, *Vulnerable Groups in Central and Southeastern Europe*, Bratislava: UNDP, 2005, available at <http://vulnerability.undp.sk/> (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, UNDP, *Vulnerable Groups*).

²⁷ Ministry of Education and Research (MER), *Raport asupra stării sistemului național de învățământ (Report on the Situation of the National Education System)*. Bucharest: MER, 2005 (hereafter, MER, *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2005*), p. 77, selected data.

²⁸ MER, *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2005*, p. 77, selected data.

²⁹ MER, *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2005*, p. 77, selected data.

age.³⁰ The data from Table 6 further suggests that many Roma who are asked to repeat the fifth year³¹ may instead drop out, as the age discrepancy decreases after this point.³²

Table 6: Average age of Roma and non-Roma students at primary and secondary levels – breakdown by grade (2006)

Education level	Grade	Average age of students (years)		Age difference
		Non-Roma	Roma	
Primary	I	7.3	7.7	+0.4
	II	8.1	8.8	+0.7
	III	9.2	9.7	+0.5
	IV	10.3	11.1	+0.8
Secondary	V	11.4	12.3	+0.9
	VI	12.4	13.0	+0.6
	VII	13.4	14.0	+0.6
	VIII	14.4	14.9	+0.5

Source: Nigel Simister³³

An interesting project addressing this issue is the project developed by CEDU (Center Education 2000+, *Centrul Educația 2000+*) and UNICEF addressing early marriage and early pregnancy amongst Roma girls. The project, which started in 2004, is based on a peer counselling approach and the use of community mediators. The concept of this intervention is twofold: on the one hand it approaches the gender issue in education and on the other it addresses the issue of cultural identity and tradition in Roma communities.

³⁰ Simister, *Phare Baseline Report*, p. 15.

³¹ Primary education ends in the fourth grade. The fifth grade is a critical year, when secondary education begins, which is still part of compulsory education. While during the first four grades students have only one teacher, in grades four to eight, there is one teacher for each subject taught. Usually students at this level report a lack of the emotional support they had previously received from teachers. This is correlated with the “atomisation” of the study programme in specialised subject matters and lessons, with strict time scales (45 or 50 minutes per lesson), which allows fewer opportunities for individualised instruction and support.

³² Simister, *Phare Baseline Report*, p. 15.

³³ Nigel Simister, *Baseline Report Prepared for the PHARE Project RO 2003/005-551.01.02 on Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups*, WYG International, for the Ministry of Education and Research, 2006 unpublished, p. 15 (hereafter, Simister, *Phare Baseline Report*). The report covers 109 schools from 12 counties. The sample size for students is large, with over 29,000 students.

2.3 Retention and Completion

There are no current data available in Romania on the drop-out rates for Roma as compared to the general population, nor on the difference in drop-out rates in segregated versus integrated schools. However, the Ministry of Education has reported that between 12 and 20 per cent of Roma drop out of primary and lower secondary school.³⁴ Some partial data presented in Table 7 show general trends in drop-out rates for the general school population, disaggregated by location.

³⁴ MER, *Strategia pentru Educația timpurie* (Strategy for Early Education). Budapest: MER, 2005 pp. 3–4, available at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c486> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

Table 7. Evolution of the drop-out rate for compulsory education during the school year – breakdown by place of residence (1990–2005)

School year	(1) TOTAL			(2) URBAN			(3) RURAL		
	No. registered		Abandoned (per cent)	No. registered		Abandoned (per cent)	No. registered		Abandoned (per cent)
	Beg. of the year	End of the year		Beg. of the year	End of the year		Beg. of the year	End of the year	
89/90	2,892	2,824	-2,4	1,668	1,630	-2,3	1,224	1,194	-2,5
90/91	2,701	2,653	-1,8	1,594	1,567	-1,7	1,107	1,085	-2,0
91/92	2,609	2,575	-1,3	1,564	1,539	-1,6	1,045	1,036	-0,9
92/93	2,541	2,503	-1,5	1,539	1,506	-2,1	1,002	997	-0,5
93/94	2,501	2,485	-0,6	1,515	1,503	-0,8	985	982	-0,3
94/95	2,497	2,472	-1,0	1,493	1,490	-0,2	1,003	982	-2,1
95/96	2,506	2,486	-0,8	1,501	1,488	-0,9	1,004	999	-0,5
96/97	2,509	2,490	-0,8	1,483	1,470	-0,9	1,027	1,020	-0,7
97/98	2,523	2,504	-0,8	1,469	1,454	-1,0	1,054	1,050	-0,4
98/99	2,519	2,496	-0,9	1,439	1,420	-1,3	1,080	1,076	-0,4
99/00	2,461	2,440	-0,9	1,373	1,355	-1,3	1,089	1,085	-0,4
00/01	2,377	2,362	-0,6	1,291	1,283	-0,7	1,085	1,079	-0,6
01/02	2,290	2,262	-1,2	1,220	1,203	-1,4	1,070	1,059	-1,0
02/03	2,171	2,144	-1,2	1,130	1,117	-1,2	1,041	1,027	-1,3
03/04	2,099	2,067	-1,5	1,062	1,048	-1,3	1,037	1,019	-1,7
04/05	1,975	1,942	-1,7	980	965	-1,5	995	977	-1,8

Source: CNS/INS³⁵

Rates of dropping out of school and of lower education levels appear higher in Roma communities.³⁶ As Tables 8 and 9 demonstrate, in 1998 the drop-out rate in the general population was 0.8 per cent, while the research data provided by the Research Institute for Quality of Life (*Institutul de Cercetare a Calității Vieții*, ICCV) show that 11.6 per cent of Roma children stopped going to school at some point in primary

³⁵ Data compiled from: CNS, Education in Romania. Statistical data, 1994, 1996; CNS/INS, Primary and secondary education at beginning of school year for: 1996/1997, 1997/1998, 1998/1999, 1999/2000, 2000/2001, 2001/2002, 2002/2003, 2003/2004, 2004/2005; CNS/INS: Primary and secondary education at the end of school year 1996/1997, 1997/1998, 1998/1999, 1999/2000, 2000/2001, 2001/2002, 2002/2003, 2003/2004, 2004/2005.

³⁶ MER, ISE, UNICEF, ICCV, “Drop-Out and Non-Schooling”, Chapter 4 in *School Participation of Roma Children: Problems, Solutions, Actors*, Marlink Publishing House, in English and Romanian, p. 47.

school, usually fourth grade. Comparing the two data, the difference is extremely significant, more than ten times higher for the Roma population.

Table 8: School situation of Roma children (1998)

School situation	Proportion of school-age children (aged 7–16) (per cent)
Registered	61.4
Stopped going to school	11.6
Never registered	18.3
No answer	8.7

Source: ICCV³⁷

Data from the 1998–1999 school year demonstrate that the drop-out rate is greater in segregated Roma schools, as compared with that for the education system as a whole. For example, the proportion of rural primary schools registering a drop-out rate of over 5 per cent was 1.9 per cent for the system as a whole, but 4.6 per cent for primary schools accommodating Roma pupils.³⁸

Non-enrolment was also found to be higher in segregated Roma schools as compared with the education system overall. While for the total of rural schools, 3.6 per cent of schools report over 5 per cent of non-enrolled students, in schools with a majority of Roma pupils (over 50 per cent Roma) this proportion rose to 14.1 per cent.³⁹

Data from the 2005 UNDP survey show a significant drop in enrolment for Roma as children grow older throughout the primary school years, thus indicating that Roma children are much more likely *not* to stay in school than their majority peers. The narrowness of the gap at the age of eight may also indicate the late enrolment of Roma into primary education.

³⁷ Research Institute for Quality of Life (*Institutul de Cercetare a Calității Vieții*, ICCV), *Indicators Regarding Roma Communities in Romania*, Bucharest: Expert Publishing House, 2002.

³⁸ M. Jigau and M. Surdu (eds.), *Participarea la educație a copiilor romi – probleme, soluții, actori* (School Participation of Roma Children: Problems, Solutions, Actors), in English and Romanian, MER, ISE, UNICEF, ICCV. Bucharest: Marlink Publishing House, 2002, (henceforth Jigau and Surdu, *School Participation of Roma Children*) p.50.

³⁹ Jigau and Surdu, *School Participation of Roma Children*, p. 49.

Table 9: Early primary enrolment – breakdown by age (2002)

Age (years)	Enrolment rate (per cent)	
	Majority population in close proximity to Roma	Roma
7	95	83
8	92	93
9	100	85
10	96	95
11	100	81
12	88	72
13	96	66
14	91	59
15	88	55

Source: UNDP⁴⁰

Another source of data from UNDP sheds light on the situation of drop-outs. Their data show the percentage of people over the age of twelve who have reached the fifth grade from the Roma and non-Roma communities. The data demonstrate a much lower percentage for Roma for having reached the fifth grade or some level of secondary education, which at the same time demonstrates a high drop-out rate for Roma (see Table 10 below):

⁴⁰ UNDP, *Vulnerable Groups*.

Table 10: Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 and who complete grade 5 – for Roma and non-Roma (2002)

Share of pupils aged 12 and over:	Proportion of pupils starting Grade 1 (per cent)		
	Majority population in close proximity to Roma	Roma	National average
With at least incomplete secondary education (i.e. beyond eighth grade)	63	13	–
Who have spent more than 4 years in school (i.e. have at least completed fifth grade)	83	46	94.4

Source: UNDP⁴¹

An expert working on a Phare project targeting education for Roma (see section 3.2), found drop-out rates at the secondary level to be as high as 35 per cent among project schools in some counties at the start of the project in 2003. Roma families in more disadvantaged communities frequently withdrew children from the sixth and seventh grades to work, both outside the home and on domestic responsibilities.⁴²

According to data compiled from the 2002 census, 26.2 per cent of the Roma population over ten years old had not graduated from any level of school, as compared with only 4.9 per cent of the total population. The same census data indicate that 25.6 per cent of the Roma population aged over ten years old (in total 104,737 people) are illiterate, as compared to 2.6 per cent of the total population aged over ten years old.⁴³

Table 11 shows significant differences in school attainment. This reveals that the percentage of Roma that have no education is, at 34.2 per cent, extremely high, given that only 5.5 per cent of the general population are in the same situation.

⁴¹ UNDP, *Vulnerable Groups*.

⁴² Comments submitted to EUMAP by Maria Andruszkiewicz to the present report in draft form, February 2007.

⁴³ 2002 census, Demographic Tables 11, 12, 13, 14.

Table 11: School attainment level – for the Roma population and national population (2002)

Population aged over 10 years old:		Proportion of students attaining this level of education (per cent):				
		No education	Primary education (1–4)	Lower secondary (5–8)	Secondary overall (general (9–12) / professional / vocational (9–10))	Higher education
General population	Total	5.5	20	27.6	64.2	7
	Urban	3	13.5	21.9	67	11.7
	Rural	8.4	27.6	34.2	60.9	1.6
	Boys	4.1	18	25.3	66.6	7.7
	Girls	6.8	21.9	29.7	62	6.3
Roma population (research estimates)	Total	34.2	35.7	23.1	29.1	0.16
	Urban	32.6	33.5	24.4	32.7	0.28
	Rural	35.4	37.2	22.3	26.7	0.08
	Boys	29	36.6	25.1	33.5	0.20
	Girls	39.6	34.9	21.1	24.7	0.12

Source: 2002 census⁴⁴

To allow for a certain level of comparison, another source provides slightly varying information. Table 12 shows a comparison of the educational attainment and age.

⁴⁴ 2002 census.

**Table 12. Relation between educational attainment level and age
– for Roma and non-Roma (2007)**

Age	Education level	Proportion of the population (per cent)	
		Non-Roma	Roma
Over the age of 40	No education at all	2.3	26.3
	Primary education	17.7	33.4
	Lower secondary (5–8)	27.2	26.7
	> Upper primary school, <high school (9–10)	22.4	10.7
	High school (9–12)	22.2	2.2
	Higher education	8.2	0.6
Under the age of 40	No education at all	0.8	20.9
	Primary education	2	23.1
	Lower secondary (5–8)	18.7	38.2
	> Upper primary school, <high school (9–10)	25.3	12.6
	High school (9–12)	42.4	4.3
	Higher education	10.8	0.8

Source: OSF Romania⁴⁵

2.4 Types and extent of segregation

In their analysis of the phenomenon of Roma school segregation, researchers classify as segregated those schools that artificially direct the enrolment of a large proportion of Roma, resulting in separate classes with Roma, or where Roma make up the entire student population.

According to sociologist Mihai Surdu, the situation is as follows:

The use of the term segregated schools for the Romanian case means a *de facto* segregation. *De facto* segregation, in the Romanian case, is not a consequence of a certain law, of a public policy, but a continuation of a tradition, prejudices and inertia. The segregated schools are usually located nearby compact Roma communities, communities that are usually characterised by high poverty. Even if there are no legal barriers in

⁴⁵ OSF-Romania, *Roma Inclusion Barometer*, p. 82.

registering or transfer of children to other schools, in practice there are a set of economic, bureaucratic and mentality barriers.⁴⁶

In April 2004, the Ministry of Education and Research issued Notification 29323 of 20 April 2004 on School Segregation in an attempt to better define the term for the national discourse:

Segregation is a very serious form of discrimination [...] segregation in education involves the intentional or unintentional physical separation of Roma from the other children in schools, classes, buildings and other facilities, such that the number of Roma children is disproportionately higher than that of non-Roma compared to the ratio of Roma school-aged children in the total school-aged population in the particular area [...] the Ministry of Education and Research prohibits the setting up of pre-school, primary and lower secondary classes comprising exclusively or mainly Roma students. This way of setting up classes is deemed a form of segregation, irrespective of the explanation called upon.⁴⁷

According to a recent evaluation report on the 2003 Phare project, “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” (see section 3.2), various practices that led to segregation in the past were as follows:

- The channelling of Roma children into segregated all-Roma schools within, or close to, Roma neighbourhoods. Often, even if there was another school within walking distance of the neighbourhood, parents seeking to enrol their children at the alternative school were turned away by school managers with the explanation that Roma children should go to “their” (Roma-only) residence school.
- The deliberate placement of Roma students in separate all-Roma or mainly Roma classes in mixed schools, due to the fact that school managers expected at least some non-Roma parents to object to ethnically mixed classes.
- “Well-intentioned” segregation, most often seen in situations where schools had very traditional Roma families, including here the use of traditional clothing, in their catchment areas and where school managers perceived Roma parents to have concerns about their children adopting behaviour or forming relationships that would be inappropriate to family customs and traditions if they were allowed to mix with non-Roma children or “Romanianised” Roma.
- “Unintentionally” segregated classes arising from practices such as placing all late-enrolling children in the same class (often the children of Roma occupational travellers), or keeping all-Roma class groups intact when students

⁴⁶ Mihai Surdu, “*Segregare scolara si reproducerea sociala a inegalitatilor*” (School Segregation and Social Reproduction of Inequalities), in *O noua provocare: Dezvoltarea Sociala* (A new challenge: Social Development). Iași: Polirom Publishing House, 2006.

⁴⁷ MER Notification 29323 of 20 April 2004 on School Segregation.

transferred from an all-Roma pre-school or primary school into an ethnically mixed school.⁴⁸

The Phare evaluation report goes on to describe schools located in Roma settlements. While not all of these geographically isolated schools manifested the typical lack of resources and other characteristics of “Roma ghetto schools”, exceptions to the “ghetto school” profile were rare, as this excerpt indicates:

- A number of schools were both residentially segregated and isolated, being in or close to a “compact” Roma neighbourhood, but with no alternative non-segregated school provision within walking distance or easy reach by public transport. Although not all of these schools could be described as “Roma ghetto schools”, most shared some or all of the following characteristics.
- 80 per cent or more of students at the school were from Roma families.
- School managers reported problems in hiring well-qualified and committed teaching staff, there was a high staff turnover and an over-reliance on supply teachers who, because they were not permanently attached to the school, tended to have low levels of commitment to the students there.
- The schools were overcrowded, teaching in two shifts, making it difficult to run catch-up or after-school activities that could improve academic performance, especially of children of seasonal agricultural workers who miss school when they travel with their families.
- The school buildings lacked the facilities that other schools in the area had, such as for teaching science at the lower secondary level. Compared to other schools in the county, school buildings provided an inferior learning environment – conditions were unhealthy, unsanitary, unsafe, cold, overcrowded and poorly lit.
- There were high drop-out rates and problems with student attendance, but little support available to deal with these problems; for example, local authorities were unable or unwilling to fund a School Mediator post to help deal with absenteeism.
- Entrance and pass-rates for the National Exams were well below the County average.
- Low expectations of students: if students achieved basic literacy and completed 8 grades, this was seen as a good achievement.

⁴⁸ Maria Andruszkiewicz, *Desegregarea școlilor – progrese și provocări. Experiențele Programului PHARE 2003: “Acces la educație pentru grupurile dezavantajate”* (School Desegregation – Progress and Challenges; Experiences from the Phare 2003 “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups” Project), unpublished report prepared for Phare 2003, presented in a roundtable in May 2006, pp. 6–10, available at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/6758> (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*).

- Entry into an Arts and Trades College for vocational training was a very good achievement. University was an aspiration that was rarely, if ever, mentioned.⁴⁹

Although there are no national data on the percentage of schools in Romania that could be considered segregated, according to data provided in the Phare evaluation report, of the 108 schools that were included in the 12 county projects, 35 had segregation issues to address, which constitutes 32 per cent of the schools included in the projects.⁵⁰

Different studies offer an estimate of the extent of Roma segregation in the educational system. According to a study released in 2002, 12.2 per cent of the total number of Roma pupils enrolled are learning in segregated educational settings (where the student population at the school is 50 per cent Roma and above).⁵¹

The research quoted does not account for segregation of Roma in separate classes or special schools, and data refer to rural schools only. A characteristic of segregation is that in a majority of cases “Roma schools” are within walking distance from other schools with a non-Roma majority. In this regard, 56.2 per cent of majority Roma schools (50 to 70 per cent Roma pupils) are less than three kilometers from neighboring non-Roma schools, and 52.8 per cent of predominantly Roma schools (over 70 per cent Roma) are less than three kilometers from similar educational level schools.⁵²

Field research conducted by the ERRC in 1997 identified the phenomenon of creating special classes as a problem in Romania. At that time, the creation of separate classes for over-aged children was common, and those classes often used the same curricula used in special schools, that is, one of a lower standard than that of mainstream schools. Since the introduction of the “Second Chance” programme, however, this particular policy problem seems to have been addressed both for primary and secondary level of compulsory education. While the “Second Chance” programme is almost always implemented in a segregated setting, one observer has noted that it remains an improvement over earlier practices of seating over-age children with younger pupils, which many of the older students found humiliating.⁵³

There is no official information regarding special classes in mainstream schools, even if anecdotal information suggests that the practice of creating separate classes for children for other reasons (behavioural, family violence, a parent’s drug abuse⁵⁴) is still present in Romania. An expert reports that some schools expressed concern that there are not

⁴⁹ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*, pp. 5–6.

⁵⁰ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*, pp. 6–7.

⁵¹ Jigau and Surdu, *School Participation of Roma Children*, p. 15.

⁵² M. Surdu, *Final Research Paper*, International Policy Fellowship, 2002, p. 87, Annex 3, Table 3, available at <http://www.policy.hu/surdu/> (accessed 8 March 2007).

⁵³ Comments submitted to EUMAP by Maria Andruszkiewicz on the present report in draft form, February 2007.

⁵⁴ OSI Roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007.

enough support teachers available to work with teachers and children in an inclusive model; not all schools know how to go about getting a support teacher or have the confidence to promote an inclusive model to parents.⁵⁵

Using another methodology based on a questionnaire applied to a representative sample of Roma for both urban and rural inhabitants, UNDP research⁵⁶ from the same year finds a quite similar extent of segregation. By posing the question, “What is the ethnic affiliation of the majority of the children in the class in the school your children are attending?”, the UNDP study obtained the following answers:

- Most of them are from the ethnic majority – 55.5 per cent
- Most of them are Roma – 13.5 per cent
- Most of them represent another ethnic minority – 6.5 per cent
- Do not know – 10.2 per cent

It could be assumed that the 13.5 per cent of predominantly Roma schools found by the UNDP research pinpoints segregation of Roma at the school class level as well as segregation of Roma in separate school buildings. However, the extent of segregation could be higher, if the answers from the “do not know” category prove also to be cases of segregation.

Data collected by the Ministry of Education and Research give quite another picture. Having provided the number of pre-schools and schools that may be considered segregated, this research also provides the percentage of Roma pupils, disaggregated by gender, who may be studying in such environments. The data suggest a potentially even higher percentage, between 37.9 per cent to as high as 45.4 per cent (see Table 13).

Considering that the proportion of the schools described as having segregation issues within the Phare projects stood at 32 per cent, the corresponding UNDP statistic is 13.5 per cent, and the variance in the Ministry data between 37.9 and 45.4 per cent, the actual percentage may lie somewhere in between.

⁵⁵ Comments submitted to EUMAP by Maria Andruszkiewicz on the present report in draft form, February 2007.

⁵⁶ UNDP, *The Roma in Central and Eastern Europe. Avoiding the Dependency Trap*, Andrey Ivanov (coord.), Bratislava: UNDP, 2002, available at http://roma.undp.sk/reports_contents.php?parent_id=1&id=217 (hereafter, UNDP, *Avoiding the Dependency Trap*), Annex 1, p. 91.

Table 13: Number of segregated Roma pre-schools and schools (2006)

		Pre-school	Primary education (1–4)	Lower secondary (5–8)	Secondary overall (general, professional, vocational) (9–12)
Total number of segregated schools		162	315	112	17
Number of Roma enrolled in segregated pre-schools and schools, as a proportion of all Roma enrolled (estimates) (per cent)	Boys	42.14	52.67	37.88	39.10
	Girls	43.68	52.80	41.15	45.43

Source: MER⁵⁷

⁵⁷ MER, Department of Statistics, information provided in August 2006 by email.

3. GOVERNMENT EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

The main Government document addressing the situation of Roma in general is the Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma, adopted in 2001 and updated in 2006. Research has shown that Strategy implementation has been uneven in the areas that it targets, which include education. The “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project, which has been developed and run since 2003 with support from the EU’s Phare programme, includes support for county-level strategies and has been effective in piloting a variety of approaches aimed at improving Roma access to education. In 2004, the Government also drafted an Action Plan as part of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (Decade Action Plan), but this has not yet been adopted.

The ongoing process of decentralisation particularly affects education, as local authorities gain greater autonomy, but often without clear responsibilities, and the central Government retains fewer and fewer mechanisms to combat negative trends such as segregation. As this process continues, the Government should ensure that there are accessible and competent bodies to address potential problems within a more decentralised system, that local authorities are given clear mandates and support to implement their new level of autonomy, and that the needs of Roma communities are appropriately addressed by local policies.

A notification issued by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2004 outlines the steps that schools and school inspectors must take to identify and eliminate segregation; however, as this notification lacks the force of law, its implementation has been limited.

Roma mediators have been working in Romanian schools since 2000, and while the selection and training of 200 mediators were carried out as part of the Phare programme’s “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project, limited resources and a lack of clear regulations for hiring additional mediators have limited the expansion of this initiative and threatened the position of existing Roma mediators. Government efforts to increase the number of Roma teachers and teachers speaking Romanes, as well as Romanes language classes, have been more successful. However, more material reflecting the Roma minority should be included in curriculum content, and made an integral part of the education on offer for all children in Romania, not only the minority itself.

NGO-funded and Government-funded teacher training is available on topics relevant to Roma education, and the Government should establish a system to monitor and evaluate all courses in order to consolidate and build on their good practices.

The National Council for Combating Discrimination (NCCD) has been operating since 2002, but to date has received only one complaint related to access to education, where the Council issued a warning to a school found to be segregating Roma students. The capacity of schools for handling discrimination is low, and there should be local solutions in place for dealing with different situations.

3.1 Government policy documents

3.1.1 Decentralisation

Several governmental policy documents address the issue of education for Roma, including the most recent developments with respect to decentralisation,⁵⁸ an ongoing process for all public administration structures in Romania. The most significant of these documents are the governmental *Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma* (hereafter, *Roma Strategy*)⁵⁹ and several Phare programmes implemented by the Ministry of Education and Research (see section 3.2.2).

Decentralisation is a concept and an essential process earlier envisaged during the Government reform programme of 1998–1999, which effectively started in 2004.⁶⁰ In 2006⁶¹ decentralisation was adopted as an approach to the functioning of public administration.

According to the Ministry of Education, decentralisation of pre-university education is a process of transfer of authority, responsibility and resources, for decision-making and general and financial management, to the local community and education units.⁶² Today, the main issues revolving around decentralisation are the following:

- Redistribution of responsibilities, decision-making authority and public responsibility for specific educational functions, from the central to the local level;
- Participation of non-administrative factors, civil society representatives, to the process of decision-making (parents, NGOs, business, professional associations, social partners);
- Transfer of competencies from central levels to local ones.

In 2001 it was reported that the process of reforming the overall education system in Romania was slow, including with respect to attempts to decentralise financial matters and some decision-making areas, but that at that time, the school capacity in Romania was not being adequately optimised, and nor was it being given appropriate inputs and resources.⁶³ The process of decentralisation continued, moving towards a system giving

⁵⁸ Framework Law no. 339/2004 on Decentralisation.

⁵⁹ Government Decision No. 522/19 April 2006, for the Modification and Completion of the Government Decision No. 430/2001 Regarding Approval of the *Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma*.

⁶⁰ Framework Law no. 339/2004 on Decentralisation.

⁶¹ Framework Law no. 195/2006 on Decentralisation states the principles, rules and institutional framework that will rule the process of administrative and financial decentralisation.

⁶² MER, *Decentralisation Strategy for Pre-university*.

⁶³ UNDP 2000–2001, p. 8.

local administrations more autonomy. Starting in 2004, eight pilot counties⁶⁴ were selected for implementation of a decentralised funding and administration of schools system. At the county level, School Inspectorates act as branches of the Ministry of Education and Research. Elected local authorities assume responsibilities for most pre-university school functions, such as rehabilitation and maintenance of school buildings, teachers' salaries and textbooks. Decentralisation has been accompanied by measures to maintain central monitoring of outcomes with the introduction of two national learning assessment examinations – the capacity exam (“*examenul de capacitate*”) at the end of the eighth grade and the baccalaureate (“*bacalaureat*”) at the end of the twelfth grade).

In terms of education for Roma, the decentralisation process has a possible negative impact on the financial resource allocation to schools. Particularly in economically depressed areas where there is no tax revenue for the local contribution, families may not even receive the full amount of the minimum social benefit payment.⁶⁵ A special issue is the position of Roma mediators within the school system (see section 3.4): the local administration can choose not to retain the school mediators and opt to fund other local priorities, unless there is a conditional transfer of budgets involved.

3.1.2 General policies for Roma

The *Roma Strategy* was adopted on 25 April 2001, and was recently modified and completed by the Government Decision No. 522/19 in April 2006.⁶⁶ According to the *Roma Strategy*, the scope is the “significant improvement of the condition of the Roma through promotion of social inclusion measures”.⁶⁷ The *Roma Strategy* is intended to last ten years (2001 to 2010), while a *Master Plan of Measures for the Period 2006–2008* has also been developed in the framework of the Strategy.⁶⁸

The *Roma Strategy* does address and include education. The main problems identified by the Government and outlined in this document are as follows:

- Poor school participation in the educational system as well as early school abandonment;

⁶⁴ Government Decision No. 1942/2004 regarding the nomination of the eight pilot counties in which the decentralisation of school funding and administration is applied.

⁶⁵ Comments submitted to EUMAP by Maria Andruszkiewicz on the present report in draft form, February 2007.

⁶⁶ Government Decision No. 522 of 19 April 2006, for the modification and completion of the Government Decision No. 430/2001 regarding approval of the Governmental *Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma*; Government of Romania, *Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma* (hereafter, *Roma Strategy*), available in Romanian at http://www.anr.gov.ro/docs/Politici/0371-28_noua_strategie_522.pdf (accessed on 8 March 2007).

⁶⁷ *Roma Strategy*, Chapter III, Scope and General Objectives of the Strategy.

⁶⁸ *Roma Strategy*, General Plan of Measures.

- The tendency to create separate classes, for Roma children only;
- Non-involvement of the members of Roma communities in programmes of school recovery;
- Lack of adequate housing and infrastructure;
- The high number of unemployed within this ethnicity;
- The absence of readjustment or re-qualification and vocational courses for Roma.⁶⁹

The political objectives undertaken by the Government by adopting the *Roma Strategy* in 2001 were aimed first of all at ensuring the full accountability of local and central authorities for the practical implementation of the measures designed to improve the situation of the Roma. Due to Romania's largely decentralised structure, many of the actions organised in the *Roma Strategy* fall to the local authorities. In this regard, according to the updated *Roma Strategy* document,⁷⁰ there are several structures that should be established⁷¹ to ensure an appropriate level of organisation and coordination for the *Roma Strategy* implementation. These are:

- Working Group for Public Policies for Roma (*Grupul de lucru pentru politicile publice pentru romi*);
- Ministerial Commissions for Roma (*Comisiile ministeriale pentru Romi*);
- County Offices for Roma (*Birourile Judetene pentru Romi*);
- Local experts for Roma issues (*Expertii locali pentru problemele romilor*).

Early reports on *Roma Strategy* implementation were critical, indicating that both at the local level and in terms of the central coordination, little progress could be identified.⁷² No recent data on the level of achievement of the measures are currently available, but a system of monitoring and evaluation of the *Roma Strategy* implementation is in preparation with support from a Phare-funded project,⁷³ and it is expected that regular

⁶⁹ *Roma Strategy*, Chapter V, Duration.

⁷⁰ *Roma Strategy*, Chapter VIII, Structures.

⁷¹ According to the *Master Plan of Measures for the Period 2006–2008*. See *Roma Strategy*, General Plan of Measures.

⁷² See EUMAP, *Monitoring the Local Implementation of the Government Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of Roma in Romania*. Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2004, available at <http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/roma> (accessed on 28 February 2007); and Focus Consulting, *Assessment of the Roma Strategy Implementation Mechanism*, report, July 2005. A project supported and funded by the European Commission Delegation in Romania, RO/PHARE 2003 SSTA 05, Bucharest: July 2005, available at http://www.anr.gov.ro/docs/rapoarte/Focus_Final_Evaluation_Report_181.pdf (accessed on 28 February 2007).

⁷³ *Phare 2004, Strengthening Capacity and Partnership Building*.

monitoring and evaluation activities will be performed by the National Agency for Roma.

Within the *Roma Strategy*, there are now six main sectorial domains,⁷⁴ of which one is dedicated to child protection, education, culture and denominations; this includes the following measures:

- Inclusion of Roma personnel, with appropriate training, in institutions for the protection and education of children;
- Improvement of access to quality education, both pre-school and school;
- Continuation of the opportunities for pre-university and university education for young Roma;
- Reviewing the school curricula in order to promote a favourable climate for inclusion of disadvantaged categories, including Roma within the school environment.⁷⁵

In 2004, the Government also drafted an Action Plan as part of the “Decade of Roma Inclusion”, but did not adopt it – the *National Action Plan at the National Level* (hereafter, *draft Decade Action Plan*).⁷⁶ The National Agency for Roma representative declared that the adoption of such action plans should take place only when the documents have been elaborated with overarching goals, specific targets, with indicators and monitoring arrangements defined.⁷⁷

The *draft Decade Action Plan* was developed in March 2004 by the Office on Roma Issues (now the National Agency for Roma), as a “monitoring instrument”.⁷⁸ Its goals in education are the following:

- Increasing the participation of Roma children in pre-school education (by 5 per cent each year);
- Increasing the completion rate of compulsory education (grades 1–10) by Roma children;
- Increasing the participation of Roma children in post-compulsory and tertiary education (by at least five per cent per year);

⁷⁴ *Roma Strategy*, Chapter VI Sectorial Domains.

⁷⁵ *Roma Strategy*, Chapter VI Sectorial Domains, Section F Child Protection, Education, Culture and Denominations,

⁷⁶ Planul Național de Acțiune *National Action Plan at the National Level* (hereafter, *draft Decade Action Plan*).

⁷⁷ OSI Roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007.

⁷⁸ OSI Roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007.

- Achieving an open, inclusive educational climate (eliminating segregated schools by 2008 and teacher training);
- Valuing and preserving the cultural heritage of Roma (tuition, study of Romanes, history, mainstream curriculum enriched with elements of Roma history and culture);
- Fostering the school–community relationship (training school mediators, “Second Chance” for primary and secondary cycle, adult education courses).

As concrete targets, the Government lists such actions as eliminating segregated classes and schools by 2008, increasing Roma pre-school “zero year” enrolment by five per cent annually, and creating opportunities to ensure a full curriculum in Romanes for children in pre-school and primary education; on the other hand, Roma students will be also be targeted by the general education programmes. So far there is no direct allocation of funds other than the general education State budget.

3.2 Government education programmes

3.2.1 General programmes and projects

The Ministry of Education and Research has continued to implement strategic measures and programmes for Roma young people and their Roma teachers that were started during the 1990s, on the initiative of Inspector for Education in Romanes Professor Gheorghe Sarau. Some of them were delivered in partnership with NGOs, with the latter providing the financing. Others were carried out with governmental and/or intergovernmental financing. They include the following:

- “Food in pre-schools and schools” programme – this aims at providing a symbolic meal for all children in pre-schools and schools (at least until the fourth grade). This measure is considered necessary because many children, especially Roma, do not attend school due to poverty. The so-called “bread and milk” programme,⁷⁹ introduced in September 2002, is dedicated both to pre-school and school children up to the fourth grade. Approximately one million children benefited from this programme between 2002 and 2004 (€0.20 per day per child, total over €40 million) and approximately 1.5 million starting in the 2005 school year (€0.28 per day per child, approximately €70 million per school year).
- Reserved places for Roma students in universities, starting in the 1993–1994 school year – first in social work, and afterwards in a large variety of subjects, including law, sociology, public administration, journalism, political science, drama and psychology.

⁷⁹ Government Urgency Ordinance no. 96/2002 for Ensuring Milk and Bread Products for Children in Grades 1–4 was modified by Government Urgency Ordinance no. 70/2003, extending the allocation for the pre-school and increasing the allocation to 0.96 RON.

- After 2000, the Ministry continued the allocation of special places for young Roma graduates of primary school for admission in secondary schools and art and craft schools. In the 2003–2004 school year 1,918 places were accordingly allocated.
- Starting in 2004, the “Multi-annual National Training Programme for Non-Roma Teachers Working with Roma Children and Students”, PNMFCDN (*Programul național multianual de formare a cadrelor didactice nerrome care lucrează cu elevi și copii rromi*, PNFCDNr) was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Research and the NGO Save the Children – Romania branch. The funding for this initiative is ensured by UNICEF Romania, Project on Ethnic Relations (Tirgu Mures office), and the Department for Interethnic Relations within the Romanian Government. Within this programme, 450 Romanian teachers received training on the cultural specificities of Roma communities.⁸⁰
- The “Second Chance” programme started in 2000 (initiated by the Center Education 2000+ in 1999) as an experimental programme, aiming at preventing the social and professional exclusion of young people from very poor families who have dropped out of compulsory education and have not achieved the minimum competencies for getting a job. The programme was initially piloted in 11 schools for 350 students. The programme was then taken over by the Ministry in 2003 and has national coverage through the Phare programme.
- The Roma Education Fund (REF), established alongside the “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015”, is currently funding several projects in Romania. Most are run by NGOs with one seemingly co-implemented by a local government inspectorate. The Ministry of Education and Research received a REF grant to undertake a project to focus on how well the Ministerial Order on desegregation has been implemented.

3.2.2 Phare-funded projects

Considerable EU funding, and matching support from the Romanian Government, have been allocated towards improving the situation of Roma. Before the Phare multi-year programmes, many projects were initiated by NGOs or international organisations. The Phare programme attempted to collect the best practices among these pilot schemes and to formulate a consistent approach with the financial resources and the expertise of Government actors in order to address problems in the educational system as a whole. To promote this approach, the grant-holders became the inspectorates, whereas previous projects emphasised the schools’ ownership and

⁸⁰ Department for Interethnic Relations and MER, *Panorama învățământului pentru minoritățile naționale din România în perioada 2003–2006* (Panorama of the National Minorities’ Education in Romania 2003–2006), Bucharest: Coresi Publishing House, 2006, pp. 60–61.

managerial responsibility. In such a framework, the inspectorates were not the main responsible institutions, but were mainly supporting institutions. No evaluation of the capacity or the assumed level of responsibility of inspectorates in dealing with the access of the Roma to quality education is yet available, and it is expected that real changes will take some time. However, Romania's efforts, with the support of EU funds, to capitalise on the extensive experience of the civil sector in addressing the education of Roma could be an important model for other Governments seeking to scale up successful pilot initiatives in this area.

The Phare programme has been the primary channel for such funding in the run-up to EU accession, including the following projects:⁸¹

- “Improvement of the Condition of the Roma”, implemented in 2000–2001 – within this project, a grant scheme of €900,000 was available for partnership projects between the public administration institutions and Roma communities, as well as support for design of the Strategy and training activities;⁸²
- “Fund for the Improvement of the Situation of the Roma” – an approximately €1.153 million grant scheme implemented between 2002 and 2003, allocated for partnership projects between Roma communities and public administration institutions in the fields of social service, public administration, education, health, communications and the like.⁸³
- “Support for the Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma” – implemented between 2003 and 2005; within this project there were two components: the first for institutional building (€1.2 million) and the second a €4.8 million grant scheme for projects submitted in the framework of the partnership between public administration institutions and Roma communities.⁸⁴ Another €1.6 million was allocated by the Government as a contribution to this programme, but administered separately. The Romanian Government and the European Commission signed the funding memorandum for this project in December 2002.⁸⁵

⁸¹ See the “Sector Fiche document”, describing the previous and current programmes in the Roma domain, available on the Europa Infocentre of the European Union Representation (Centrul Infoeuropa al Reprezentanței Uniunii Europene) website <http://www.infoeuropa.ro/docs/Sector%20fiche-Roma.pdf> (hereafter Sector Fiche document).

⁸² Sector Fiche document, Phare Programme RO.9803.01.

⁸³ Sector Fiche document, Phare Programme Civil Society Development 2000, RO.0004.02.02.

⁸⁴ Phare Programme 2002/000-586.01.02, programme brochure available Romanian and English at the website of the Resource Center for Roma Communities, available at http://www.romacenter.ro/noutati/brosura_sprjin_strategia_imbunatatire_situatie_romi_phare_2002 (accessed on 9 March 2007).

⁸⁵ Sector Fiche document, Phare Programme no. 2002/000-586.01.02.

- The multi-annual Phare 2004–2006 “Accelerating the Implementation of the National Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma” project – this is both a consolidation of the institutional development process and an extension of direct support for the implementation of specific measures in areas where previous projects were implemented.

The “Improving Access to Education for Disadvantaged Communities, with a Special Focus on Roma” (€17.23 million) will continue these education projects (see below). The “Strengthening Capacity and Partnership Building to Improve Roma Condition and Perception” (€26.83 million) will deal with education, identity documents, community development, vocational training, income generation activities, access to health services, and local small infrastructure. All these will be supported by public awareness and information campaigns.

“Improving Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma”

The most important Phare project on education, “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma”, was initiated in 2000 by the Ministry of Education and Research and the National Agency for Roma.⁸⁶ The project has two components: (1) identity papers and (2) access to education. From 2001, the Ministry of Education and Research established multi-year projects with Phare funding. Three phases have been already implemented and all deal specifically with education:

Phase 1 (2001) The first phase of the project⁸⁷ aimed to support the implementation of the Ministry of Education and Research *Strategy of improving access to education for disadvantaged groups with a special focus on Roma*, with the aim to fight social exclusion and marginalisation and to promote human rights and equal opportunities.⁸⁸

The project’s purpose was:

- to increase the availability and to improve the conditions of pre-school education, in order to stimulate early enrolment, as this critical to children’s social and educational development, particularly for children from disadvantaged groups, including Roma;
- to stimulate children to complete compulsory education (prevention of drop-out);

⁸⁶ Most information regarding the training component of the Phare “Access to Education” Programme was provided by Georgeta Costescu, teacher training coordinator in PIU (Project Implementation Unit), Ministry of Education and Research; interviews done in September and November 2006, January 2007.

⁸⁷ Project title: “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups with a Special Focus on Roma” – Lot 1 (Europeaid/113198/D/SV/RO).

⁸⁸ Information provided in the inception report of the project, available at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/6769> (accessed on 8 March 2007).

- to provide second-chance education for persons who have not completed compulsory education (correction of drop-out).

This 2001 project⁸⁹ included two components:

- developing schools' capacity to address the needs of disadvantaged communities, with a special focus on Roma (allocated €3 million);
- a grant scheme for local projects (allocated €4 million), aimed at ensuring better access to education for disadvantaged children, especially Roma, and at preventing and reversing dropping out at the local level.

Projects under the 2001 project were implemented during the 2003–2004 school year, in ten counties.⁹⁰

Phase 2 (2003): The 2003 phase formed the second stage of the initial project. It operated between 2004 and 2006, and received €9 million from the EU plus €2.3 million from the Romanian Government. This second phase aimed at promoting the principle of equal chances in education, without focusing on a specific ethnic group. It included activities intended to improve pre-school education conditions and to stimulate early enrolment, to prevent dropping out and to stimulate enrolment in “Second Chance” programmes at the primary and secondary levels for those who have not completed compulsory education.

In the second phase, the project purpose expanded somewhat, to improve access to education for disadvantaged groups and to promote inclusive education for all, with a special focus on the Roma and students with special educational needs.⁹¹

As with the first (2001) phase, funds were available for institutional development and grant scheme management. Financing was available for activities carried out during 2004–2006, in 12 counties,⁹² selected following evaluation of proposals submitted by the counties' School Inspectorates. Three counties, Arad, Dâmbovița and Cluj, received further support to continue the implementation of their county educational strategies and implement new activities designated for supporting inclusive education and desegregation. Education decision-makers (inspectors and directors), teachers, and Roma school mediators were all involved in intensive training programmes for improving school provisions for children belonging to disadvantaged communities and

⁸⁹ Phare Project RO 01.04.02; a description of the project is available in Romanian at the MEW website at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/3667> (accessed 9 March 2007).

⁹⁰ The following counties: Arad, Bucharest, Buzău, Călărași, Cluj, Dâmbovița, Galați, Giurgiu, Hunedoara and Vaslui.

⁹¹ Information provided in the Inception report, June 2005, available at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/genericdocs/c497/> (accessed on 8 March 2008).

⁹² The following counties received funds supporting the implementation of their educational strategies: Alba, Bacău, Brăila, Covasna, Harghita, Ialomița, Iași, Mureș, Maramureș, Neamț, Sibiu and Vâlcea.

promoting inclusive education. After-school and “Second Chance” programmes were implemented in the pilot schools for supporting school participation of children who dropped out or who were at risk of dropping out due to poor school performance.

The project also specifically targeted segregation in 12 pilot counties, and included support to various local actors working on desegregation. Of the 108 pilot schools that were included in projects submitted by the 12 “new” project counties in 2005, 35 had segregation issues to address. The main components and activities implemented were the following:

- Support for County Strategies;
- Training;
- Curriculum and Materials Development;
- Community Participation in Education;
- Desegregation;
- Special Educational Needs;
- Monitoring and Evaluation Activities;
- Information and Dissemination Activities.⁹³

Several reports have been developed during the project: inception, progress reports, and a final report. The reports were developed by the consultant Technical Assistance WYG International and circulated inside the project framework.⁹⁴

Phase 3 (2004): This third phase of the project is currently in the process of submission of proposals from School Inspectorates.⁹⁵ The project aims at institutional development at the national, county and community level, taking into consideration the Ministry of Education’s strategies related to access to education for all children. The project targets 27 counties that were not involved in the previous phases of the project. The programme is intended to build upon the experience gained under this Phare project’s 2001 and 2003 phases, and focus upon institution and capacity building, as well as seeking to improve the educational environment in specific schools, with financial support through a grant scheme. It is expected that the programme will contribute to results such as the following:

⁹³ See WYG International, Fourth Interim Report, covering the period 1 December 2005 to 28 February 2006, available at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/6752> (accessed on 8 March 2008).

⁹⁴ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation* pp. 6–10.

⁹⁵ According to Phare, *Standard Sector Programme Fiche for Minorities – “Accelerating the Implementation of the National Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma”*, 2004, available at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/fiche_project/document/2004-016-772.01.01%20Sector%20programme%20fiche%20Minorities.pdf.

- Elaboration of county strategies for the improvement of access to education for disadvantaged groups, elaborated with the involvement of stakeholders and implemented in pilot schools.
- Elimination of segregated classes and schools.
- Raising the overall competency level for those involved and contributing to raising the overall standard of education.
- Ensuring a national standardisation of approach on promoting inclusive education.
- Consolidated school mediator programme nationwide.
- Expansion of teacher training for early childhood and remedial education.
- Newly designed school-based curriculum and the revised and adapted “Second Chance” curriculum to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the Roma community; expanded programme.
- Greater student access to ODL (open distance learning)/ RF (reduced frequency).
- Improved education and educational resources in schools from the priority areas for educational intervention.
- A clear image of the results of the project, to help the Ministry of Education and Research and the County School Inspectorates to improve their strategies and to extend the principles of inclusive education in all schools.
- Dissemination of the examples of good practice in order to eliminate segregation and to promote tolerance and multiculturalism.

Phase 3 started in January 2006 and will end in November 2007. With a funding of €5 million, the programme is implemented in the seven counties⁹⁶ involved in Phare 2001, as well as 20 new counties.⁹⁷ The budget allocated is a total of €17.33 million, comprising a €13.5 million EU contribution and a €3.83 million Romanian Government contribution.

⁹⁶ The following counties: Buzău, Călăraşi Giurgiu, Hunedoara, Vaslui.

⁹⁷ The following counties: Argeş, Bihor, Bistriţa, Botoşani, Braşov, Caraş-Severin, Constanţa, Dolj, Gorj, Ilfov, Mehedinţi, Olt, Prahova, Sălaj, Satu Mare, Suceava, Teleorman, Timiş, Tulcea, Vrancea.

Phase 4 (2005): The fourth stage of the programme,⁹⁸ Phare 2005 (€9.33 million), will be implemented from November 2007 in those counties involved in Phare 2004, based on the applications competition.⁹⁹

The Phare financial scheme made it possible to disseminate and strengthen the positive experience gained in various smaller projects initiated either by the Ministry itself, but mainly by NGOs. Expansion of successful pilot projects developed before the Phare “Access to education” projects was implicitly the goal of this large-scale programme.

Other Phare projects

Some initiatives developed before the “Access to education” project, which have become more widely implemented and supported at the regional and national levels since the first or second phases of Phare, include the following:

- Better dissemination of information regarding the reserved places for Roma youth in vocational and arts and crafts schools (starting in the 2000–2001 school year) – this information, disseminated with direct support from different structures (the school system, County Offices for Roma and Roma NGOS) have become more visible and effective. More Roma young people are aware of this opportunity and act accordingly.
- The employment of Inspectors for Roma Education in *all* County School Inspectorates (starting in 1999) – to ensure access to education for Roma children and young people; this process was gradually implemented, and now in almost all counties there are Inspectors for Roma Education.
- Better use and visibility of Romanes and of Roma culture and history in school curricula (starting in 1990) – this campaign is ongoing as part of a long-term process.
- The organisation, by the Ministry of Education and Research, of Annual Olympiads (starting in the 2000–2001 school year) in Romanes – the national contest attracts an increasing number of Romanes-speaking students. It is gaining prestige and the award system is similar to other Olympiad competitions. This idea was initiated by Phoenix foundation NGO.
- Increased quality and availability of Romanes textbooks, including the publication of textbooks in Romanes (starting in 1994).
- Introduction of the “Second Chance” programmes on a national scale (started in 1999–2000 – for young people who have dropped out of school (with support from an active NGO in the field of education, the Center Education

⁹⁸ Programme reference: Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, PHARE/2005/017-553.01.01.02)

⁹⁹ Selected documents of the competition for grants is available in Romanian at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c711/>

2000+) this initiative became nationally available. In the framework of the Phare programme the methodology of recruiting, educating, evaluating and granting certification to “Second Chance” students was there were developed. An extensive collection of curriculum materials has been developed (teachers’ guides, student guides and textbooks).

- Strengthening of the “Social Assistance” programme for children in need – Phare strengthened the multi-agency approach, and this was effective in some counties.
- Redesigning of curricula to include multicultural approaches – teacher training programmes improved the knowledge and skills of the teachers. The conferences, roundtables and workshops also challenged the Curriculum Council representative and pre-service teacher training representatives to include multicultural approaches.
- Provision of transport to school for children living in remote areas – this is supported mainly through the “Rural Education” project, but depending on local conditions and needs, this initiative was undertaken by County Inspectorates as well. This was more frequent in cases of desegregation of Roma schools.
- Modernisation of schools by investing in school infrastructure.
- Integration of students enrolled in special education into the mainstream system.
- Increasing the number of “mobile” (itinerant) and support teachers to support students with special needs.¹⁰⁰

3.2.3 Minority language education

Members of national minorities are entitled to study and receive instruction in their mother tongue, at all levels and in all forms of education.¹⁰¹ In vocational schools, and most forms of secondary and post-secondary public education, specialist training is provided in the mother tongue, but students must also learn specialist terminology in

¹⁰⁰ For more information regarding these Phare 2003 results, see progress and final reports prepared by the Technical Assistance Team of WYG International available at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/6752> (accessed on 8 March 2008).

¹⁰¹ See Romanian Constitution, Art. 32. Right to Education: (1) The right to education is ensured through the general obligatory educational system, the theoretical and professional secondary system and the higher education system, as well as other forms of learning and improvement. (2) At all levels, teaching takes place in Romanian. Under the provisions of the law, teaching may take place in a widely spoken language. (3) The right of the people belonging to national minorities to learn their mother tongue and their right to be educated in this language are guaranteed; the ways to exert these rights are established by law.

Romanian.¹⁰² At all levels of education, the entrance and graduation exams are in Romanian, except for the schools, classes and types of specialisation in which teaching is provided in a foreign mother tongue, with appropriate teaching staff and textbooks.¹⁰³

At their parents' request, Roma students in grades 1–12 may enrol in an additional Roma curriculum, composed of three to four classes weekly for Romanes language and literature and one class weekly on the history and traditions of the Roma in grades 6–7.¹⁰⁴ Many Roma families also choose to study in Romanian or Hungarian. The focus on Romanes is linked to coherent measures taken by the Ministry of Education, especially initiated by Professor Gheorghe Sarau. Beyond these courses targeting especially both Roma students and teachers, additional non-Roma teachers have also been trained.

3.3 Desegregation

The *draft Decade Action Plan* lists the elimination of segregated classes and schools by 2008 as a target in the education section. No further details have been elaborated as to how this aim is to be achieved.

Article 6 of the Romanian Constitution had long guaranteed the right to non-discrimination in law. It emerged, however, over the course of the Phare 2001 “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project, that many inspectorates and school managers did not understand school segregation to be discriminatory and a number of segregation cases were identified in Romanian schools.¹⁰⁵ To further clarify, therefore, in April 2004 the Ministry of Education and Research issued an internal regulation, in the form of a notification, recognising and condemning segregation.¹⁰⁶ The notification authorises Inspectors for Roma Education to formulate action plans to address cases of segregation that they identify, and where schools have a disproportionate number of Roma, or segregate Roma into separate classes. The school itself must ensure that the percentage of Roma is in line with the overall percentage of Roma children in the area within three years.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² MER Order no. 3533 from 31 March 1999 Regarding the Study of Mother Tongue by the National Minority Pupils Learning in Schools Teaching in Romanian Language.

¹⁰³ See Velea Simona and Petre Botnariuc, *Education Reform in Romania during the Last 12 years*, working paper for the Summer university. Budapest: CEU, Hungary Education Policy course July 1–12, 2002.

¹⁰⁴ MER Order no. 3533 from 31 March 1999 Regarding the Study of Mother Tongue by the National Minority Pupils Learning in Schools Teaching in Romanian Language.

¹⁰⁵ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*, pp. 6–10.

¹⁰⁶ Notification No. 29323 on School Segregation of 20 April 2004.

¹⁰⁷ Notification No. 29323 on School Segregation of 20 April 2004.

The inspectorates are required to develop an action plan with the school to eliminate segregation. Such actions should include the following:

- Setting up mixed student groups at all education levels;
- Provision of transport for Roma children to schools with a different ethnic majority, particularly for children from residentially segregated communities;
- Common use of existing school premises and facilities;
- Training and employing Roma school mediators;
- Remedial classes for children with learning difficulties;
- Promoting the Roma ethnic identity in mixed schools, including through the curriculum;
- Roma teachers in schools to teach the specific curriculum (Romani language and history);
- Training teachers in inclusive education to ensure an educational climate suitable for a multiethnic environment;
- Facilitating students' transfer where balancing the Roma to non-Roma students' ratio is required in a school;
- Informing the Roma communities in the quality of education in mixed schools and involving Roma parents in school decisions by regular visits to Roma communities;
- Informing all parents of the benefits of inclusive education, to the end of discouraging parents from requiring that their children be included in classes where there are no Roma children or in all-Roma classes.¹⁰⁸

Despite the new notification, however, there still remain difficulties in implementing desegregation. Experts have noted that inspectors do not have the institutional authority to oversee desegregation efforts, and lack the expertise and experience in mediation at the community level.¹⁰⁹ Sometimes, community pressure made school management difficult, or hindered the inspectorate's task of tracking the steps towards desegregation. In addition, the lack of a strong legislative tool and the lack of any administrative tool to punish segregation diminish their role in fighting against discrimination and segregation. The evaluation report on the Phare 2003 project, "Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups Project Report" reported this as follows:

¹⁰⁸ Notification No. 29323 on School Segregation of 20 April 2004.

¹⁰⁹ OSI roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007.

Nevertheless, problems and misunderstandings continued even after the Notification was issued. Some County School Inspectorates did not submit review documents and action plans, despite the fact that the Notification had specifically requested this. Others responded with a short note to the effect that there was no segregation in their Counties, but provided no evidence to back this assertion. A telephone survey of schools by the [ministry] early in the 2004–5 school year revealed that information about the Notification had not always been passed from Inspectorates to schools and that many teachers were unaware of it. Segregated classes continued to exist and Roma parents seeking to enrol their children in ethnically mixed schools continued to be directed back to their segregated neighbourhood schools.¹¹⁰

The decentralised administrative structure presents certain obstacles to the comprehensive implementation of desegregation. To ensure that Government-level instruments are carried out, the local representatives of the State Government (*Prefecturi* or Prefects) should be given a role in desegregation. These offices could coordinate institutional dialogue among local stakeholders in desegregation projects, such as the local authorities, school staff, county school inspectorates, parents councils and NGOs.

The official evaluation of desegregation measures is under way by the Ministry of Education and Research engaged by notification to monitor the desegregation implementation. Data have been collected in the framework of the Phare 2003 project. The Ministry continues to monitor the process of desegregation in the counties involved in this phase of the programme. In addition, the third phase of Phare also has a focus on desegregation. The Technical Assistance team (Finn Consult/Larive) is collecting data from the new counties involved in the project. They are expected to process and analyse these data and to compare them to the Phare 2003 project trends, challenges and achievements.

One particularly invidious case demonstrates that even where desegregation is nominally ongoing, the actual situation may fall well short of integration. In 1993 a report on the dire conditions in a Roma school in Cehei (Sălaj County) was submitted to the National Council for Combating Discrimination,¹¹¹ (*Consiliul Național pentru Combaterea Discriminării*, NCCD), which found that the school was, in effect, segregated and issued a warning to the school. Thereafter, the Ministry of Education and Research undertook to remedy the situation by ensuring school transport, and hiring qualified teachers, renovating the building and mixing the Romanian and Roma students in classes. Three years after this decision, despite the commitment of the Ministry to mix classes at Cehei School, and despite the fact that the Sălaj County

¹¹⁰ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*, p. 10.

¹¹¹ The National Council for Combating Discrimination (NCCD) was established in 2000 as the public structure responsible for anti-discrimination policies and investigations in Romania. Further details on the NCCD website at <http://www.ncnd.org.ro>.

School Inspectorate was one of the partners in the implementation of a project with external funding to desegregate the school in Cehei,¹¹² the solution that was chosen was to build a new school where the Roma children in the lower secondary grades previously attending Cehei School would be transferred.¹¹³ By building a new school to serve Roma children of both primary and lower secondary grades, the educational segregation of the Cehei community is virtually complete. The executive director of the local NGO Șanse Egale believes that transferring the Roma students from Cehei School to the new school for first- to eighth-graders is the result of a local educational segregation policy:

In Jibou desegregation of the Roma classes was completed, while in Șimleu Silvaniei, more precisely in Cehei – Pustă Vale, there is a local, regional policy of segregation of the Roma students: those who had previously been at the Cehei School are now moved to Pustă.¹¹⁴

Moreover, transfer of the Roma students from the Cehei lower secondary school to the new school in the community is illegal even in the opinion of the newly built school's director. She pointed out that the transfer cannot be legal, since the Roma parents have not applied in writing to the school to demand this transfer, and such an application has not been approved.¹¹⁵

According to the Sălaj County School Inspectorate (CSI) Inspector for Roma Education, the building of the new school in the community should not have affected the desegregation process in Cehei, a process which has led to some success in mixing Roma and non-Roma students from the community. The new school in Pustă Vale was, according to this plan, supposed to enrol only pre-school and primary school children, because of the inadequate space that they had had in Cehei. The Inspector for Roma Education believes that it may be illegal for the Roma children to be transferred,

¹¹² A project funded by the Roma Education Fund (REF). The project was going to pay for a van to take the Roma children to the school, and for training for the teachers in Cehei.

¹¹³ There is remarkable inconsistency in the educational policy pursued by Sălaj CSI (although engaged in a desegregation project in Cehei, they later decided to build a school in the community to ensure educational provision for the lower secondary age Roma children).

¹¹⁴ The opinion was expressed by Silvia Prodan in the article: "*Potrivit Instituției Prefectului, rromii de la școala din Pustă Vale nu sunt segregati*" (According to the Prefect's Office, the Roma in Pustă Vale are not segregated) in *Salajanul*, issue 675 of 10 November 2006, available at http://www.salajanul.ro/arhiva_b.php?act=view&numero=1088 (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, *Salajanul* article).

¹¹⁵ Interview with school director, Cehei, 15 October 2006, case study Șimleu Silvaniei. For each country report in this series of EUMAP reports on "Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma", three case studies were carried out to supplement and corroborate data gathered from other sources. Information from the case studies are integrated throughout the body of each country report. Annex 2 includes additional details from each of the case study sites. In Romania the three sites are: Bobesti village (Ilfov County), Roman municipality (Neamț County) and Șimleu Silvaniei city (Sălaj County).

in the absence of the parents' explicit request and without the approval of the school, and enrolled in the school in Cehei as well, as there is no legal basis (no record of the parents' request and no written approval of the school or of the CSI). The administrative inconsistency and ambiguity of the decision to transfer the children was clear even to those involved:

This whole issue occurred because the number of children in Pustă Vale went up, and they did not have enough space for the pre-school or for the school. It was impossible for the children to go to school in three shifts, because they were already attending school in two shifts, in the morning, and at noon [...] whereas to come in two shifts would have made no difference. From this perspective, it is clear that the issue of schooling space has to be resolved. At that time they were planning to provide only for first-to fourth-graders; they did not think of moving lower secondary education there, because there was a lower secondary school in Cehei. I saw it as a good intention, but unfortunately the building of the new school came out for the worse [...] Instead of doing good, we did not serve the children well, because the children who were already in mixed classes in Cehei moved to the new school in Pustă Vale. I was in touch with the directors of the two schools. I asked the headmistress of the school in Pustă Vale how she accepted the children, on what basis she transferred them. She was not supposed to accept them because no one asked her officially to transfer the children from one school to another. Nothing was done officially: there are no official documents to serve as evidence; at this point if you go to the school in Cehei, you find that the children should be there, and not in Pustă. The Roma children at the school in Cehei came there from Pustă. According to the law, however, they are entitled to go to the school in their locality of residence; this is the issue.¹¹⁶

In a notification filed with the Prefect's Office and CSI Sălaj by the Association Șanse Egale Zalău, together with the Association Șanse Egale pentru Femei și Copii Zalău and ADOSER/S it was requested, *inter alia*, that "transport of the Roma students from Pustă Vale (residentially segregated community) should be ensured to the Cehei School and/or another school in Șimleu Silvaniei, a school with the majority of children of a different ethnic background".¹¹⁷ According to the local paper, *Salajanul*, in its reply the Prefect's Office stated that "there is no issue of segregation of the 380 Roma, because the school is within a Roma community, and the students were not forced to move to this educational institution".

According to the Inspector for Roma Education of Sălaj CSI, the Pustă Vale School should be included as a beneficiary of the Phare 2004 project, which is going to start in Spring 2007. The programme has a desegregation component, and in this the school would become a magnet school, which would also attract non-Roma children from the area with its higher standards of equipment and curriculum. However, according to the

¹¹⁶ Interview with inspector for Roma education, Cehei, Zalău, 16 October 2006, date.

¹¹⁷ *Salajanul* article.

Inspector for Roma Education, the plan of attracting non-Roma students in the Pustă Vale School is not realistic without transport to the school:

Theoretically, according to the courses, it should make the school in Pustă Vale very attractive, so that it would attract the Romanian children from Cehei. This is the theory. Honestly, it is very good, and it works theoretically, but in practice it is very difficult. [...] But this would be solved if free transport was provided from Cehei to Pustă. It might be that poor people would prefer this solution. There are not many rich people in that village, I don't know if there are any rich people, and anyway they would prefer Șimleu.¹¹⁸

At present, it is still not clear what solution is preferable: would the notifications of the local NGOs lead to school transport provision and integration of the Roma students of secondary school age in the Cehei School, or would the Roma go to school in the Pustă Vale School, or would the school in Pustă Vale become a magnet school, which would attract – thanks to its curriculum and equipment – non-Roma students, too?

In the Olympic neighbourhood of Roman, a Roma community was resettled from the city centre in 2001, and classes were established for the children. With intervention from the local inspectorate, the children were sent to an integrated school.

In the beginning, we made two classrooms so as to bring the kids to the school, and the result was astonishing [...] Only the inspectorate stepped in and [said that] we were entering the European Community and we must take our children to another school. Of course, in a way they were right; there are no proper conditions for performance at this school. And out of two inconvenient things, we weighed the situation and asked: what's better, to stay at school for hours, there, in the neighbourhood, or to go to the school that was a kilometre away?¹¹⁹

However, according to the leader of the Association Romii Romascani, the Roma classes that were moved from the Olympic neighbourhood study separately from the Romanians in the local school, on the first floor of the main building. On the other hand, the deputy director stated that in the first grades the students are mixed, so that the Roma students share classes with majority students. As concerns segregation, the deputy director alleged that there is no ethnically-based segregation, but placement is made because of the students' inappropriate conduct, saying "We do not segregate because of ethnicity, but because they are disrespectful and dirty."¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Interview with the inspector for Roma education, Zalău, 16 October 2006, case study Șimleu Silvaniei.

¹¹⁹ According to the information provided by the the vice mayor of Șimleu Silvaniei, Mr. Hanis Geza, 2 November 2006, case study Șimleu Silvaniei.

¹²⁰ Interview with deputy director Ana Borcan, Roman, 1 November 2006, case study Roman.

3.4 Roma teaching assistants/school mediators

The idea of Roma school mediators in Romania was first introduced in 1996–1997 by the NGO Romani Criss together with the Intercultural Institute Timișoara. The Inspector for Education in Romanes, Professor Gheorghe Sarau, coordinated the design of the job description for school mediators during a national meeting of the Inspectors for Roma Education in Tulcea in 2000 (the event was financed by OSCE and the Ministry of Education and Research). Starting in 1998–1999 community mediators have been trained and worked in the pilot project “Second Chance for Older Drop-Outs”, which was initiated by OSF-Romania, and carried out later on by the Center Education 2000+. Since then, in parallel with the positive experience gained in the framework of health programmes (sanitary mediators), the mediator has been acknowledged as an important stakeholder. Experience gained at the NGO and the Ministry level made it possible to clarify the statute and the training requirements for this job.

Since 2002, the Roma school mediators have played an important role in the framework of all the educational projects financed by the Phare 2001 “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project (see also section 3.2). The project called for mediators to be appointed in 76 pilot schools in ten counties, with at least one mediator appointed by the County School Inspectorates for each of the pilot schools.¹²¹ Training and appointment of mediators continued in the second and third stages of the multi-annual Phare project. Approximately 200 school mediators were selected and trained during the implementation of the Phare 2001 and 2003 “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project. Reliable data on the actual number of mediators hired today is not available at present.

The position of school mediators has been a recognised occupation in the Classification of Occupations in Romania (COR) since 2002.¹²² According to the Code of Occupations in Romania,¹²³ the school mediator is part of the “Other personnel in education” sub-group. The main responsibilities of the school mediator include the following:

- Data collection;
- Helping to ensure that all children of compulsory school age are enrolled;

¹²¹ See the information on Roma teaching assistants, available on the website of the Roma Education Initiative (REI), at http://www.osi.hu/esp/rei/RTAs_Romania.html (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹²² HG no 844 of 31 July 2002.

¹²³ Code of Occupations in Romania, Code 334010, approved by the Government Directive No. 721 of 14 May 2004, (hereafter, Code of Occupations). Major sub-group 33 “Teachers and assimilated”, Minor sub-group 334 “Other education personnel”, Basic group 3340 “Education personnel not classified in previous groups”.

- Working to prevent dropping out through communication with parents and local authorities;
- Facilitating pre-school enrolment for Roma children;
- Mediating between families and school authorities to promote social inclusion;
- Identifying potential problems;
- Helping to disseminate information throughout the Roma community;
- Supporting teaching staff, particularly through the use of the local community's language;
- Identifying children and youths who might pursue careers as teachers or mediators themselves.¹²⁴

Roma School Mediators also support children directly, and liaise with the community on a variety of levels.¹²⁵

Although school mediators were selected and trained for a long time, their contribution has been greatest within the context of the Phare project "Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma". County Councils from the counties involved were expected to allocate resources and to hire them, and while the mediator is a formally registered occupation, still there are no supporting rules for hiring or maintaining these positions, and the local authorities have been slow to carry out this process.¹²⁶

The selection of the school mediators is a result of recommendations from the Inspectors for Roma Education and also from the local community Roma leaders; some of the criteria taken into consideration are as follows: residency in the locality, being ethnically Roma, possessing good standing within the local community and coming recommended by a local Roma organisation, speaking the language used in the community, and having communication skills with all parties, including the school director. A high-school level education is considered important but in fact, in some cases, due to the fact that school mediators are formally employed in other positions, this is often not needed; although they work as school mediators, due to budgeting and bureaucratic reasons and maximum limits of the organisational chart, sometimes they are formally hired as guards or cleaners. Given the low prestige associated with this post and the very low wage offered, few applicants actually have a secondary school education. The average salary of the school mediator varies from county to county,

¹²⁴ See a document describing the main responsibilities of the school mediator. Available on the MER website at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/3467> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹²⁵ See a document describing the main responsibilities of the school mediator. Available on the MER website at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/3467> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹²⁶ Interview with Olga Marcus, Inspector for Education for Roma in Cluj County, 17 November 2006, Cluj Napoca.

according to previous work experience, and their level of studies, but is estimated to be around the minimum wage in Romania, which is approximately €100 per month.¹²⁷ Mediators are paid through the municipal budget allocation according to the norms existing for budgetary personnel, as well as from donations and sponsorships directly allocated for the purpose.¹²⁸

Mediators must have completed compulsory education and have been registered in secondary school; however, both Roma and non-Roma consider that the standards for mediator candidates are very high. For example, it is required that the candidate have a baccalaureate diploma, which made it difficult, and sometimes even impossible, to find the right person to apply for the training scholarship. Another expert confirms that the higher the educational level, the lower the motivation to work as a community mediator, because of the low status and salary.¹²⁹

Mediator training is subcontracted by the Cluj Napoca Pedagogical College. Training is based on a modular scheme, has a strong focus on practice, and covers topics including the following: child protection legislation, communication, ICT, Romani language and Roma culture, and community involvement. The training took place in three main regions in Romania in 2006, in Neamţ, Cluj and Arieseni. Students attend face-to-face and tutorial meetings, apply different instruments and tools in the school and community, and receive supervision from tutors.

Training for the mediators is based upon an Individual Training Plan (*Planul Individual de Pregătire*, ITP). The training is organised and delivered by the institution that won the auction/tender to complete the course. School principals provide assistance and supervise mediator's training on site. The school mediators themselves, in cooperation with school directors and teachers, designed the training. The instructors and tutors conduct monthly progress evaluations accordingly with the activities proposed in the ITP to make any necessary adjustments; school principals monitor the mediator's work on a regular basis. The ITP includes:

- Familiarisation with the application of educational policies in the school where the school mediator operates, and familiarisation with school resources;
- Presentation meeting with school staff in which the school director presents the role and responsibilities of the school mediators in the school and community;
- Individual meetings of the school mediators with the school's staff, and evaluation meetings (once a month);
- The calendar of weekly meetings between the mediator and the school's staff;

¹²⁷ Interview with Olga Marcus, Inspector for Education for Roma in Cluj County, 17 November 2006, Cluj Napoca.

¹²⁸ Occupational Profile, according to the Code of Occupation.

¹²⁹ OSI roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007.

- The schedule of meeting with NGOs, local authorities, community representatives, and representatives of parents and pupils.¹³⁰

The situation of the school mediators remains rather difficult, as their status is not clear, and hiring and maintaining them remains a struggle.¹³¹ The County Councils facilitated the hiring of school mediators during the implementation of the Phare “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project, but they seem reluctant or less motivated to continue after the finalisation of their grant contracts.¹³² In light of the ongoing process of decentralisation in Romania, and responsibilities being delegated more and more to the local level, the position of and mechanisms for employing mediators remains uncertain and may possibly be under threat. Unless there is a clear conditioned transfer of responsibilities and budgets for the school mediators, the local authorities may simply decide that there are other priorities and abandon the use of school mediators.

3.5 Romanes teachers

According to the Ministry of Education and Research,¹³³ progress has been made in strengthening the process of teaching Romanes in schools and consolidating the informal network of Romani language teachers.¹³⁴ According to Inspector for Education in Romanes, Professor Gheorghe Sarau, today Romanes is taught as a mother tongue, according to the legal provisions, as a separate subject, by 480 Roma and non-Roma teachers (around one fifth are ethnically Romanian or Hungarian). The number of pupils studying Romanes and Romani History and Culture has risen from 50 in 1990 to over 25,500 now.¹³⁵

Only one school in Maguri, Timiș County, is developing an experiment of teaching mainly in Romanes language. A core of Roma teachers, with the support of the former school director (now Inspector for Roma Education in Timiș County) made pilot

¹³⁰ See Council of Europe, *The Situation of Roma School Mediators and Assistants in Europe* DGIV/EDU/ROM(2006)3, report established by Calin Rus, CoE, Strasbourg, 2006, available at http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/Documentation/Education/RomaMediators06_en.asp (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹³¹ Interview with Olga Marcus, Inspector for Education for Roma in Cluj County, 17 November 2006, Cluj Napoca.

¹³² Interview with Olga Marcus, Inspector for Education for Roma in Cluj County, 17 November 2006, Cluj Napoca.

¹³³ MER Order no. 3533 of 31 March 1999 on Studying Romani Language by the Pupils Belonging to National Minorities Participating in Education in Schools using the Romanian language.

¹³⁴ Information provided by Gheorghe Sarau, interview held on 24 October 2006, Ministry of Education and Research.

¹³⁵ Information provided at OSI roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007; further details available in Romanian on the Ministry of Education and Research website at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c220> (accessed 10 March 2007).

teaching in Romanes possible. For fourth-graders, the main teaching language is Romanes, but educational materials are not available for all subjects. The educational materials printed in Romanes are provided by the Ministry of Education and Research or supplied by NGOs.

The Ministry of Education's representative has indicated that the number of Roma teaching staff has increased as a result of involving young Roma high school graduates in the education system as unqualified teachers to work with children from Roma classes, as primary school tutors or teachers of Romanes as a mother tongue.¹³⁶

In the 2005–2006 school year, out of 280,000 active teachers in Romania, 490 (0.18 per cent) are Roma teachers who had been trained by the Ministry of Education and partners between 2000 and 2005. They are teaching Romanes and Roma History and Culture, starting with the pre-school level and ending with high school, to students who have identified themselves as Roma.¹³⁷

Each year since 1997, approximately 12–16 Roma students have enrolled for regular courses at the Department of Romani Language and Literature of the Faculty for Foreign Languages and Literature of the University of Bucharest. At the same time, 490 students overall have been enrolled since 1997 at the Roma Teacher Training Section of the Department of Open Distance Education of Bucharest University (*Departamentul de Învățământ Deschis la Distanță, Universitatea din București, dezvoltat din Centrul de Resurse, Documentare, Informare și Servicii pentru Învățământ Deschis la Distanță, CREDIS*). Starting in 2007–2008, CREDIS will not select and start another group of students; instead the Department for Romani Language and Literature (*Section Romani-Romanian Language*) will start an open distance education course for approximately 60 students per year.¹³⁸

3.6 Educational materials and curriculum policy

The results of education reform¹³⁹ on school textbooks creation and provision is visible. The main reform with regard to curriculum and assessment reflected the requirements of the country's new democratic and economic structures, along with the wider principle of access for all. In compulsory education, teachers can choose from more than one textbook per subject, which were based on a first round of new curricula, and the textbook market has been opened up, allowing for competition,

¹³⁶ Interview with Professor Gheorghe Sarau, Ministry of Education and Research, 24 October 2006.

¹³⁷ They use several textbooks published with various funding resources. The manual they use to teach with was funded by UNICEF Romania, published through RO Media Publishing House.

¹³⁸ Telephone interview with Delia Grigore, Bucharest, 18 January 2007.

¹³⁹ A comprehensive education reform began in Romania in 1993–1994, and was initiated by negotiations between the World Bank and the European Commission.

which is good for quality. The requirements for textbooks are overseen by the Textbook Approvals Board (*Consiliul Național de Aprobare a Manualelor*, TAB).¹⁴⁰

Students receive all textbooks required for compulsory education free of charge.

In its 2005 report submitted as part of the monitoring of the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), the Romanian Government noted that the curriculum is being reoriented towards greater inclusion of all national minorities.¹⁴¹ However, the presence of the Roma minority's contributions to the development of Romanian society is almost nonexistent in school textbooks, and the way in which minorities are handled in the curriculum remains problematic, since it has been included only in those schools for education in the mother tongue, and not provided to the majority. As one expert noted, "Even the textbook on the Holocaust did not include reference to the Roma minority."¹⁴²

Roma language and history subjects have been included in the national education curricula since 1999, when a first curriculum for studying the history and traditions of the Roma (for grades 6–7) was developed by Liviu Cernaianu. Based on this initial curriculum, in 2003, at the initiative of the Direction for Minority Language Education within the Ministry of Education and Research, the first auxiliary manual, *Roma History and Traditions*, was elaborated by young Roma scholars – Petre Petcut, Delia Grigore and Mariana Sandu. With financial support from UNICEF Romania, in partnership with Romani CRISS and Ministry of Education and Research, a book called *Roma from Romania – Historical Landmarks* (*Romii din Romania – Repere prin istorie*) was published in 2005.¹⁴³ Another initiative of the NGO Save the Children Romania, *Roma History and Traditions*¹⁴⁴ (*Istorie si Tradiții rrome*), also aims to fill the information gap on Roma history and traditions.

Minority students may study their mother tongue and literature for seven to eight hours per week in the first and second grades; in the third and fourth grades such lessons may take up five to seven hours, in the fifth grade five hours, and in grades

¹⁴⁰ Cronin et al., *Education Sub-Sector Review*.

¹⁴¹ Council of Europe, *Second Report Submitted by Romania Pursuant to Article 25, Paragraph 1 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, received on 6 June 2005, Strasbourg, available at http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/minorities/2._framework_convention_%28monitoring%29/2._monitoring_mechanism/3._state_reports_and_unmik_kosovo_report/2._second_cycle/2nd_sr_romania.asp#P475_38732 (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, FCNM, *Second Report*).

¹⁴² OSI roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007.

¹⁴³ The book was published within a project "Roma Children want to learn" implemented by Romani CRISS, *Romii din Romania – Repere prin istorie* (Roma from Romania – historical landmarks). Bucharest: Vandemonde, 2005.

¹⁴⁴ Save the Children, Romania, *Istorie si Tradiții rrome* (Roma History and Traditions), Bucharest: Save the Children, Romania, 2006.

seven and eight four hours.¹⁴⁵ A syllabus on the history and traditions of the Roma minority has been prepared.¹⁴⁶ Textbooks for education in minority languages for different subject matters have been issued for compulsory education.

According to the Government, materials in Romanes, including textbooks and other support materials, have been developed and provided for free by NGOs, or provided through governmental programmes (including the “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project – see section 3.2).¹⁴⁷ Examples of organisations providing such assistance include the PHOENIX Foundation and the Intercultural Institute Timișoara, and member organisations of the Soros Open Network Romania. Among these, the Resource Center for Roma Communities published support materials for Romanes literature, and poetry; Education 2000+ Center published several materials for teacher training, intercultural education, school management, school participation of Roma children, and a series of Romanes textbooks; the Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center published intercultural education material consisting of textbooks, workbooks for pupils and a teachers’ guide.¹⁴⁸ These textbooks have been registered and approved by the Ministry of Education and Research and are distributed by the School Inspectorates.

Although positive efforts have been made towards increasing the available curricular material relating to Roma, the current approach tends to take too narrow a view and overlooks the fact that the majority population must also be educated and have exposure to diversity, even more so than the minority groups.

3.7 Teacher training and support

In 2003 it was reported that “The system of teacher training has registered a slower development, a certain discrepancy or rhythm and efficiency, as compared with other elements of the education reform in Romania.”¹⁴⁹ Despite legal regulation,¹⁵⁰ and both governmental and non-governmental teacher training programmes, there is a gap between the available resources and the need for teaching improvement. Teachers’ salaries, turnover rate, motivation and teaching conditions represent a few aspects that

¹⁴⁵ *FCNM Second Report.*

¹⁴⁶ *FCNM Second Report.*

¹⁴⁷ *FCNM Second Report.*

¹⁴⁸ See the websites of the Resource Center for Roma Communities (<http://www.romacenter.ro>), the Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center (<http://www.edrc.ro>) and Center Education 2000+ (<http://www.cedu.ro>).

¹⁴⁹ Cronin et al., *Education Sub-Sector Review*, p. 16, with reference to: L. B Arrows (ed.), *Institutional Approaches to Teacher Education within Higher Education in Europe: Current Models and New Developments* Bucharest: UNESCO-CEPES, pp. 287–288.

¹⁵⁰ Education Act; Statute of Teaching Staff Law no. 128/1997.

explain the slower level of development for this sector compared to other sectors of the educational system reform.¹⁵¹

Initial teacher training is provided by higher education institutions. Universities organise pre-service teacher training through Departments for Teacher Training (*Departamentul pentru Pregătirea Personalului Didactic*, DPPD). The psycho-pedagogical module is composed of both compulsory and optional courses. According to the structure of the compulsory psycho-pedagogical module, most State universities (including Bucharest, Iași, Cluj and Timișoara) provide courses on intercultural education as part of the pre-service teacher training. If followed during the university studies, this module is provided for free. After graduation, it is possible to complete this module by request and a tuition fee is required. After the successful completion of the module, a certificate is issued, which allows the person to work as a teacher.

Many courses that are part of the psycho-pedagogical module cover topics such as anti-bias, tolerance, diversity and multiculturalism. These topics are embedded in different courses, which are part of the teachers' initial training curriculum (Theory and Methodology of Curriculum, Theory of Teaching, Theory and Methodology of Assessment). There are no national available data concerning the teaching and learning strategies or the ratio between theory and practice for these courses. The new regulation regarding the system of quality management in each university (related to the Bologna Process)¹⁵² are expected to increase the availability of data in this regard.

Compared to the courses provided by universities (which deliver both pre-service and in-service teacher training), in-service training courses could be offered by various types of institutions. Training courses provided by NGOs have a more focused target approach than those offered as part of routine teacher training. Taking into account the education for Roma, it is certain that courses and training courses offered by NGOs focus more on the specific needs of Roma children than courses provided by universities do. Most of these NGO courses are developed in the framework of projects and programmes addressing the educational needs of Roma students. As a consequence, these in-service courses mainly target teachers working in schools with a high percentage of Roma, and even more specifically, the courses target only those teachers working in the schools involved as part of the funded projects.

¹⁵¹ See D. Potolea and L. Ciolan, "Teacher Education Reform in Romania: A Stage of Transition", in B. Moon; L. Vlasceanu & L. Barrows, eds., *Institutional approaches to teacher education within higher education in Europe: current models and new developments*. UNESCO-CEPES: 2003, which provides a comprehensive description of initial and in-service teacher education system in Romania.

¹⁵² The Bologna Process, following from the 1999 Bologna Declaration, is "a series of reforms needed to make European Higher Education more compatible and comparable, more competitive and more attractive for [European] citizens and for citizens and scholars from other continents." Further details on the Bologna Process are available on the European Commission website at http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/bologna/bologna_en.html (accessed on 28 February 2007).

While the psycho-pedagogical module is compulsory for initial teacher training, active teachers are required to collect a minimum 90 credit points in five years. The number of credits provided by the successful completion of a course is evaluated by the National Centre for Training of the Pre-University Teaching Staff (*Centrul Național de Formare a Personalului din Învățământul Preuniversitar*, CNFP), which provides the accreditation of the course and assesses the value of one professional credit (an average of one credit is four hours' course/training).

Two years after entering the profession, it is compulsory for teachers to successfully pass an examination (*definitivat*). After this, teachers can choose to pursue additional degrees, but these are not compulsory. It is, however, compulsory to attend in-service training courses every five years. Training courses, involvement in projects and skills associated with these training courses (use of interactive methods, alternative assessment methods, differentiated instruction, use of ICT in teaching) are more and more valued within the Romanian education system. Most of the training provided by NGOs is free. Some other training sessions are supported by the State, others require a participation fee.

It is difficult to provide a comprehensive picture of in-service teacher training provision, because the system is decentralised, and at the county level, teachers may attend training courses that are provided by the Teacher Training Centres (*Casa Corpului Didactic*, CCD), by NGOs, or by other training providers. At present these other training providers are in the accreditation process, and are expected to be fully accredited by the CNFP. The offer is assessed by the CNFP and, if accredited, completion of the course provides professional credits for teachers. These are part of the assessment criteria for teachers to benefit from rewarding salary schemes (*salariu de merit* and *gradatie de merit*).

The "Multi-Annual National Training Programme for Non-Roma Teachers Working with Roma Children and Students" (PNMFCDN) has been cited as an effective example, from the perspective of the Roma historical-cultural background and following an intercultural approach.¹⁵³ Starting in 2004 every summer hundreds of teachers have received training in the following areas:¹⁵⁴

- *Roma component*: "the cultural legacy of the Roma child: a mystery for the non-Roma teacher;" Roma traditions, history and Romanes language; educational provision for Roma from the perspective of legislative framework for minorities and for the Roma minority;
- *Intercultural component*: inter-ethnic communication; intercultural and inter-ethnic relations; communication techniques with pre-school and school Roma

¹⁵³ Information provided by Gheorghe Sarau, interview held on 24 October 2006, Ministry of Education and Research.

¹⁵⁴ The training was provided by Gheorghe Sarau together with other young Roma scholars previously trained and promoted by him.

children; communication techniques with parents and Roma from the community.¹⁵⁵

The Ministry of Education and Research and the NGO Save the Children Romania, initiated this programme, which has also received funding from other sources. Through the PNFCND, 420 teachers were trained in 2004 and 580 more teachers in 2005.¹⁵⁶ The programme targets non-Roma teachers teaching in classes and schools with at least 30–35 per cent Roma pupils. The training will continue with support from other non-governmental financial sources such as UNICEF Romania.

The Phare projects have provided a good example of a multi-annual training programme with an almost national coverage (see section 3.2.2).¹⁵⁷ Through these Phare projects, the Ministry disseminated the best practices in the field of Roma education developed by different NGOs on a larger scale.

During each phase of the Phare project, training was directed at all relevant stakeholders, including project teams of inspectors and directors, teachers, parents and school mediators. Since its inception, the project has trained increasing waves of trainers, for a total of 900 who will be responsible for training and providing assistance to their colleagues in schools and at the county level. These courses are accredited or under accreditation by CNFP. Although at the beginning of the project the process of teacher training was centralised (training of trainers, training for inspectors and school principals), further steps were designed to increase decentralisation and increased ownership at the county and school level. In this regard, the CCD in each county has the freedom to use all the project training resources, to design and deliver training sessions tailored to the specific needs of the teachers in school with Roma children. An inclusive approach represents a major trend in teacher training for all the schools at the national level.

All the training courses organised in the Phare project were supported by the project funds. Training-related costs (such as materials, transport or accommodation.) were also covered by the project. In addition to the national training courses, local training took place and is ongoing. While approximately 1,700 teachers were trained in the Phare 2001 phase, in the second phase, Phare 2003, 3,300 more teachers were trained in different areas (such as inclusive schooling, change management, school-based curriculum, inclusive teaching, parental involvement, differentiated teaching, support and itinerant teacher and similar approaches).

¹⁵⁵ See MER Newsletter *Buletin informativ privind învățământul pentru rromi nr. 24 din 5 ianuarie 2006*, available at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c419/> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹⁵⁶ The programme was funded with support from UNICEF, the Project on Ethnic Relations, the Department for Interethnic Relation, and the Intercultural Institute, Timișoara.

¹⁵⁷ Most information regarding the training component of the Phare “Access to Education” Programme was provided by Georgeta Costescu, teacher training coordinator in PIU (Project Implementation Unit), Ministry of Education and Research; interviews done in September and November 2006, January 2007.

School inspectorates from the counties where the Phare 2003 “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project was applied were encouraged to provide advice to schools on developing desegregation plans (see section 5.7), including directing teachers towards training in inclusive education to ensure an educational climate suitable for a multi-ethnic environment. Most of the inspectors who were part of the Phare project teams have received training related to inclusive education. A few of these inspectors became local trainers and received support from the technical assistance team during the implementation of the project. The trainers trained in Phare 2003 have an informal network, initiated and activated by the local training coordinator, and share information and experience through an electronic forum, *Scoala incluziva*. However, it is difficult to evaluate the quality of the training courses provided at the county level or school level, since the feedback from the participants is collected and assessed only by the training providers and not circulated at the regional or national level.

The aim of this training structure is to cover as many teachers as possible, by empowering CCDs and local trainers and by providing good quality materials. However, there are no available data regarding the quality and the impact of the local training courses, since the CCDs have autonomy in organising the training process. Feedback suggests that the project’s strong points include the school-based training, which takes into account specific conditions in schools and communities; positioning trainers as “critical friends”; facilitating exchange of experience between schools; the use of demonstrative teaching, and use of a formal network to disseminate new pedagogical approaches and teaching strategies (in professional meetings of teachers such as “*cercuri pedagogice*” or “*comisii metodice*”). Concerns have been raised regarding the overwhelming tasks for trainers in this project, who are regular teachers or inspectors; also, a lack of regulation concerning the trainers’ statute is a problem. Other weak points include insufficient training provided through the national training for trainers (two national training courses for one week each), and poor support provided after the official end of the project.¹⁵⁸

While these examples illustrate training programmes targeting teachers who work in schools with Roma children, other programmes address specifically the pre-service or in-service training needs of Roma teachers. Starting in 1999, the Ministry of Education and Research has organised summer schools, “National Teacher Training Programme for Romani Language and Roma History Teachers” in partnership with other national and international organisations, in which approximately 400 Roma and non-Roma teachers have taken part to date. Funding these summer schools was covered both by the Ministry of Education and Research and other organisations, the most important

¹⁵⁸ Information provided by local trainers involved in the Phare 2003 project and by Maria Kovacs (teacher training coordinator). See also Catalina Ulrich, *Raport privind Studiile de caz – Acces la educație pentru grupuri dezavantajate Phare 2003* (Multiple Case Study Report, “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups” projects, Phare 2003), Bucharest: WYG International, 2006, available at <http://www.edu.ro> (hereafter, Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Report*).

being UNICEF Romania.¹⁵⁹ This programme is still ongoing, with different funding sources (including the NGO Save the Children Romania, UNICEF, and the Regional Bureau of the Project for Ethnic Relations (PER)/Targu Mures). In 2006 the first course took place for national trainers in the field of Roma culture in education, where 150 teachers (Roma and non-Roma) were accredited. As a result of this process, in every county one or two trainers will be available to deliver training on specific cultural issues related to Roma in education. PER's training in the field of education for cultural diversity will soon be accredited by CNFP.¹⁶⁰

In June 2000 the Ministry of Education and Research and CEDU (Center Education 2000+, *Centrul Educația 2000+*) initiated the first summer school for Didactics of Romanes, and in the same year the first Open Distance Learning Course for Romanes teachers was launched, also with support from the Ministry, CEDU and CREDIS. There are several other distance learning programmes for Roma teachers (in the framework of CREDIS or the Rural Education Project). Scholarships have been provided for young Roma who qualify as Romanes language teachers from a variety of non-governmental sources, and between 2002 and 2005, UNICEF provided funds for 90–170 scholarships every year, for Roma students enrolled in the distance learning programme run by Bucharest University.¹⁶¹

A project called “Empowering Roma Teachers” funded by the Roma Education Fund (REF) is planned to support the continuous training of Roma teachers.¹⁶² The project will train 50 Romanes language teachers who have completed or are still attending CREDIS, in Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (*Lectura si Scrierea pentru Dezvoltarea Gandirii Critice*, RWCT), a student-centred teaching methodology. The project plans for all trained teachers and trainers to be invited to join the Romanian RWCT Association.¹⁶³ At the end of the project it is expected that the RWCT method will be incorporated into the regular CREDIS training curriculum for Roma teachers, and the Roma instructors trained will become permanent collaborators of the CCD within their county of residence. Until 31 January 2007, 22 Roma teachers registered with ALSDGC¹⁶⁴ and 11 Roma teachers will be in the course of launching the ALSDGC courses for their Roma and non-Roma colleagues from local schools.

¹⁵⁹ See UNICEF, “Quality Education for Vulnerable Groups”, online article, available at http://www.unicef.org/romania/education_1617.html (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹⁶⁰ Information provided by Maria Korek, from Project on Ethnic Relations, by email.

¹⁶¹ Information provided by Professor Gheorghe Sarau, Inspector for education in Romanes in MER.

¹⁶² The project “*Empowering Roma teachers*” is implemented by the Resource Centre for Roma Communities, Cluj Napoca, in partnership with the RWCT Association.

¹⁶³ A professional teachers’ association and a member of the RWCT International Consortium; see the consortium website at <http://ct-net.net/>.

¹⁶⁴ This is a national professional association – the Romanian branch of the International Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Association (*Asociatia Lectura si Scrierea pentru Dezvoltarea Gandirii Critice, România*, ALSDGC).

Another initiative, a REF project approved in December 2006, will provide funds to the Ministry of Education and Research to draft and promote a Ministerial Order to encourage Teacher Training Facilities to offer attractive and accredited courses on intercultural education.

There are future opportunities for either initial or in-service teacher training, both for Roma and non-Roma teachers. It has been reported that the planned budget of the Ministry of Education and Research for 2007 will allocate more funding for human resources development as in 2006.¹⁶⁵ European Structural funds will be made available to both training providers and schools, but it is thus expected that County Inspectorates must have the capacity to access structural funds, based on the experience gained in Phare projects.

3.8 Discrimination monitoring mechanisms

There is no specific institution for combating discrimination in education. The National Council for Combating Discrimination (NCCD), established in 2002, is the basic structure for addressing complaints and resolution of discrimination cases.

In the context of the preparations for Romania's accession to the EU, the Department for Inter-Ethnic Relations took part in several programmes coordinated by the Ministry of European Integration, since evolutions in the field of minority protection are considered in the chapter "Political Criteria". Moreover, in 2001–2002, the Department for Inter-Ethnic Relations contributed to Romania's EU Accession negotiations for Chapter 13, "Social Policy and Employment"¹⁶⁶ where combating discrimination represents an important issue.

There are no specific complaint measures at the NCCD for different groups. According to the rules of the NCCD, complaints can be addressed in written form, or as result of a direct complaint addressed. Following the registration of a complaint, the NCCD President passes it to the Judicial and Inspection Service; afterwards, the complaint is documented and addressed to the NCCD Board (*Colegiul Director*), which then issues a decision.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ OSI roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007.

¹⁶⁶ See details available (in Romanian) in a report called *Raport privind activitatea Departamentului pentru Relatii Interetnice in perioada ianuarie – iunie 2004* (Report on the Activities of Department of Interethnic Relations for the period January 2001 – June 2004), available at http://www.dri.gov.ro/documents/m_2001-2004.pdf (accessed 9 March 2007).

¹⁶⁷ See relevant legislation for NCCD activity: Government Ordinance no. 137/2000 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination; Government Decision No. 1194/2001 Regarding the Organisation and Functioning of the NCCD; Law No. 48/2002 for approval of GO no. 137/2000; Government Decision No. 1514/2002 for Modification and Completion of the GD No. 1194/2001; see also the CBCD website at <http://www.cncd.org.ro> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

Where the NCCD finds discriminatory treatment, it can issue the following decisions:

- A fine between 200 and 2,000 RON (Romanian New Lei, approximately €60 to €600),¹⁶⁸ if the subject of discrimination was an individual;
- A fine between 400 and 4,000 RON (€120 to €1,200), if the subject of discrimination was a group of individuals;
- Written notification.

The decisions taken by NCCD Board involving fines are not considered as compensation to the victims – the payment of fines is to the State and not the victims, who must continue with the judicial process if they wish to receive personal compensation.

Between 2002 and 2005, the NCCD received 1,342 complaints, out of which 305 were related to race, nationality and ethnicity (at the time of writing this report, figures for 2006 were not available). During this same period 124 decisions were taken by the NCCD, out of which 48 (38.7 per cent) were related to discrimination against the Roma population. Only one case was related to access to education: the “Cehei case” documented the school segregation existing within the local school unit and issued a decision confirming the existing discrimination.¹⁶⁹ In fact, the complaint was about the existence of segregated classes for Roma children between grade 5 and grade 8.

The NCCD decided¹⁷⁰ that the acts detailed in the report constituted discrimination, and the Cehei School received an official warning. Following the NCCD decision, several measures were taken by the local authorities and School Inspectorate, including ensuring transport of children, mixing classes and using of the same space, other educational activities.

However, the capacity of schools for handling discrimination is low and there should be local solutions in place for dealing with different situations – from verbal discriminatory remarks of children and teachers against Roma children, to harassment and physical threats.¹⁷¹ Education of school staff and school boards on discrimination issues is a pressing need.

¹⁶⁸ The exchange is calculated at 3.33 RON = €1.

¹⁶⁹ Documented by the NGO Romani CRISS Bucharest. For details, in Romanian, of the Cehei case and several other cases of discrimination documented, see the Romani CRISS website (Departments section, Human rights, Database), available at <http://www.romanicriss.org/pdf/Raport%20Romani%20CRISS%20vs%20Scoala%20General%20Ungheni%20Mures.pdf> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹⁷⁰ NCCD Decision No. 218 of 23 June 2003.

¹⁷¹ Comments from roundtable, 8 February 2007, Bucharest.

4. CONSTRAINTS ON ACCESS TO EDUCATION

While precise figures on the number of Roma without identity papers are not available, research clearly indicates that the scope of the problem is large; the Government should take steps to collect more data on this issue and, in particular, to assess its significance as a barrier to school enrolment. The costs for maintaining a child in school are not affordable for most Roma families: a clear connection exists between the economic status of Roma and the educational attainment of their children.

The public authorities still largely ignore the problem of residential segregation of Roma communities, and a real change will take place only with systematic State intervention. Widespread geographical segregation in Romania has led to a high proportion of Roma children living in Roma-majority settlements and neighbourhoods, often at a distance from majority communities and infrastructure, including schools.

Although overrepresentation of Roma in special schools for children with intellectual disabilities is not as serious a problem in Romania as in other countries in the region, some Roma children are still placed in these schools to take advantage of meals and accommodation benefits. Such benefits should be made available to students from disadvantaged backgrounds attending any schools, to eliminate any incentive to attend special schools. The Government's "Second Chance" programme, while generally involving exclusively Roma students, remains a better option than previous efforts to integrate older-than-average students, which tended to place such children in classes with younger peers.

Romania has an established system offering Romanes language instruction, with the numbers of both students and teachers increasing steadily, supported by the good cooperation between civil society and Government efforts in this area.

4.1 Structural constraints

Children can be registered for pre-school education starting at the age of three or even earlier (in crèches). It is compulsory for children to attend only the preparatory class before entering the first grade of primary school; they may enroll in this preparatory class between the ages of five and seven (see Annex 1.1). Parents decide whether they enrol their child in pre-school or not, and the law regarding pre-school education does not set a rigid limit.

There is no clear catchment area defined for pre-schools. In urban neighbourhoods and larger villages (*comune*) there is more than one school or pre-school available. Legally, parents can choose any pre-school. In rural areas, primary school buildings frequently also accommodate pre-school groups.

All schools that are functioning legally are part of the national education system and are legally registered. The larger schools have financial autonomy and administrative personnel (*responsabilitate juridical*). The smaller "subordinated" schools are coordinated by these larger schools; they rely on the administrative and financial operations of the larger schools with *responsabilitate juridical*.

Tables 14, 15, and 16 present data on recent pre-school capacity and enrolment.

Table 14: National pre-school data (2005–2007)

School Year	Number of pre-school units		
	Legally registered	School subordinated	Total
2005–2006	1,839	8,160	9,999
2006–2007	1,632	8,208	9,840

Source: MER¹⁷²

Table 15: Pre-school capacity (2000–2004)

Pre-school capacity	2000–2001	2001–2002	2002–2003	2003–2004
Number of units	10,080	9,980	9,547	7,616
Number of children	611,036	616,014	629,703	636,709
Number of staff	34,023	34,631	34,307	35,485

Source: INS¹⁷³

Table 16: Pre-school enrolment rates (1999–2004)

School Year	Children aged 3–6	No. of children enrolled in pre-schools	Enrolment Rate (per cent)
1999–2000	945,333	616,313	65.2
2000–2001	925,001	611,036	67.1
2001–2002	912,440	616,014	67.5
2002–2003	885,898	629,703	71.1
2003–2004	886,205	636,709	71.8

Source: MER¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² MER, data provided by Viorica Preda, inspector for pre-school education by e-mail, September 2006.

¹⁷³ INS, Anuarul Statistic României 2004, *Statistic Annual for 2004*, Chapter 15 Education, Bucharest: INS, 2004, available on the INS website at <http://www.insse.ro> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

National statistics provide information on pre-school capacity against the number of children between the ages of three and six. According to statistical data from the Ministry of Education and Research, for the 2004–2005 school year there were 653,599 places available in pre-schools, with a maximum of 25 children per class. Overcrowding represents a problem especially in urban areas, where the rate of employment is high compared to rural areas and people seek secure, reasonably priced places with good educational support for their children. The national media have reported extensively that at the beginning of the school year, in particular, the lack of places for pre-schools providing full day care (from 7 am to 6 pm) is a problem.¹⁷⁵

In pre-schools with a high proportion of Roma, overcrowding has also been reported as a problem due to the lack of space. In the Phare 2003 project, schools reported a lack of space and, consequently, an inability to enrol all the children from two to six years old. Priority was given to children entering school in the first grade. It was also reported that a number of pre-school classes were overcrowded, and there children did not have adequate play space or room for movement.¹⁷⁶ This was sometimes because schools were using smaller rooms to accommodate pre-school classes as these classes were more recently introduced in the schools.

According to information provided by a representative of the NGO Şanse Egale in Sălaj County, because of the insufficient space in the local school and the poor quality of education there, in 1996 some Roma parents tried to enrol their children in the “Romanian” school in the nearby neighbourhood of Pustă, which is less than a kilometre away. In this school, there is more space than needed, as there were only 12 children enrolled in the primary grades¹⁷⁷ and 15 in the pre-school. Despite the legislation that allows parents to enrol their children in any school, the parents of non-Roma children already enrolled in the school were hostile to the Roma parents, who were then unable to register their children.¹⁷⁸

Lack of available classroom space is likely to be a barrier to extending pre-school provision and any expansion of pre-school access may require investment in additional classrooms. Children not enrolled in pre-school may attend summer classes or summer camps (*gradinita estivala*). Three- or four-week summer pre-school targets Roma children six to seven years old. Pre-school and first grade teachers, who teach basic

¹⁷⁴ MER, data provided by Viorica Preda inspector for pre-school education by e-mail, September 2006.

¹⁷⁵ See such examples in the national newspapers, available at http://www.gandul.info/articol_10230/criza_a_gradinitelor_in_capitala.html (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹⁷⁶ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*, p. 7; Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Report*, p. 22.

¹⁷⁷ According to information on the Sălaj CSI website, available, in Romanian, at http://www.isjsalaj.ro/index_files/inv_stat_urban.html (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Robert Vazsi, executive director of the NGO “Şanse Egale”, Zalău, 14 October 2006.

skills for children, coordinate activities focusing more on socialisation and familiarisation with school, colleagues and future teachers. Usually a Roma adult attends and help with and language barriers.

Such an initiative was piloted early in 1998–1999 – as a so-called “grandparents’ pre-school”, part of the CEDU/MATRA “Equal Opportunities for Roma Children through School Development” project.¹⁷⁹ The NGO Save the Children, Romania, supported similar activities on a larger scale. The idea was gradually supported by the Ministry of Education and implemented by County Inspectorates. While the summer pre-schools began as fairly informal programmes, under the Phare project these classes became more structured, with a curriculum and assessment materials.

It is expected that school enrolment rates will increase in the next school years, as result of the rehabilitation, extension or construction of new buildings for education purposes, which is being carried out through the “Rural Education Development” Programme (*Proiectul Invatamantului Rural*, PIR)¹⁸⁰ and the multi-annual Phare project.

In general, however, the Phare 2003 project team observed no examples of acute overcrowding in primary and secondary schools. The survey carried out in the framework of this project revealed that over 80 per cent of schools had class sizes below 25.¹⁸¹ In segregated schools, the situation is different; the same report showed that the segregated schools visited *were* overcrowded. They often had to teach in two shifts, so limiting the possibilities for extended programmes, catch-up classes and the like. In fact, the shift system is common in most of the schools in Romania, both rural and urban areas. Most schools have two shifts, but in some larger cities it is also possible to have three shifts.

4.2 Legal and administrative requirements

Parents must present a written request for enrolment, a copy of the child’s birth certificate, copies of the parents’ identification cards, and standard forms filled in by the family doctor to enrol a child in pre-school. To enter the first grade, parents must again present the same documentation, plus the child’s pre-school records. These legal and administrative requirements affect a number of people who lack identification cards, mainly due to their lacking birth registration, which makes it impossible for

¹⁷⁹ “Equal Opportunities for Roma Children through School Development” was initiated in 1998 by OSF-Romania and MATRA, and later carried on by CEDU. See <http://egale.ro/english/proiect/experienta.html> (accessed on 14 March 2007).

¹⁸⁰ The project aims to improve the quality of the education in all the rural areas at the national level. It has 4 components: (1) improving teaching and learning activities in rural schools, (2) improving partnership community-school, (3) capacity building for monitoring, evaluation and policy making, (4) strengthening managerial capacity of the Management Unit. The Romanian Government received a loan from BERD for this (long-term) project.

¹⁸¹ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*, p. 8.

them to register with a family doctor. It is difficult to estimate the total number of children in such a situation. The Research Institute for Quality of Life report made in 1998 mentioned 47,000 persons (of whom half are children) without identity papers. Since then, due to several projects funded through Phare¹⁸² that have raised awareness of the importance of identity documents for social assistance benefits, birth registration has increased.

Information from data collected in 1997 identified this issue, lack of proper identification papers, as a major obstacle to access to education for Roma. At that time, Medecins Sans Frontiers, an NGO whose mission was to improve health conditions for marginalised persons, stated the following:

The administrative procedures [Roma] would have to go through to actually get their children into school appear so insurmountable that they don't even know where to begin, and often don't even try [...] the lack of social assistance to marginalized populations often compounds keeping children out of school.¹⁸³

Research in 2004 indicates that over 4.7 per cent of Roma children lack the necessary papers for enrolment.¹⁸⁴ However, it was also reported then that the Ministry of Education Ordinance No. 4562,¹⁸⁵ stated that for nomadic families, registration in school would not be dependent on having an address (a requisite for having identification papers).

The majority of Roma respondents in a survey published in 2002 indicated that they were registered at birth and have birth certificates, while only 11 per cent declared that they never had identity documents.¹⁸⁶ As for those with no birth certificate, most were identified under the age of 25 – no explanation for this situation was offered by the research. In the case of identity papers, about 11 per cent of the population over 14 declared that they did not have such documents. However, it appears that many of those without identity documents are very young (about 39 per cent are under 18 years old). Other results from this research are presented in Table 17.

¹⁸² See the grant scheme brochure published by the Resource Center for Roma Communities, within Phare 2000 project "Fund for Improvement of the Condition of the Roma", *Parteneriatul dintre instituțiile publice și comunitățile de romi. O monografie a proiectelor implementate în cadrul Fondului pentru Îmbunătățirea Situației Romilor* (Partnership between Public Authorities and Roma Communities. A monograph of the projects implemented within the Fund for Improvement of the Condition of the Roma).

¹⁸³ C. McDonald, "Roma in the Romanian Education System: Barriers and Leaps of Faith," *European Journal for Intercultural Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1999 (hereafter, McDonald, "Roma in the Romanian Education System").

¹⁸⁴ REF, *Needs Assessment*, p. 9.

¹⁸⁵ Ministry of Education Ordinance No. 4562 of 16 September 1996.

¹⁸⁶ Sorin Căce & Cristian Vladescu (coordinators): *The Health Status of Roma Population and Their Access to Health Care Services*, Bucharest: Expert Publishing House, 2004.

Table 17: Identity documents situation

Type of document	Proportion of eligible persons with the document (per cent)
Birth certificate	97.6
Identity card (for persons over 14 only)	89.1
Marriage certificate	56.1

Source: Centre for Health Policies and Services¹⁸⁷

Another recent source, a report commissioned by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2006,¹⁸⁸ presents extensive data about Bucharest, where there were reportedly 20,000 Roma without identity papers in 2004. A survey of 8,000 people carried out in Bucharest showed that 25 per cent of the Roma population did not have identity cards and that 45.6 per cent did not have birth certificates. The report developed in 2005 by Liga ProEuropa¹⁸⁹ showed that in Sibiu County the leaders estimate that approximately 30 per cent of Roma do not possess identity papers. At the same time, this report records the actions to solve such a problem for 1,000 persons, under a Phare project initiative.¹⁹⁰

In the framework of the Phare 2003 project, the reported total number of children without birth certificates was 224. Arad County registered the highest number (86), then Harghita (26). Data were collected from databases of the school mediators, school records, students' register, and census lists at the county level with the local implementing agents and regional monitors' contribution. However, even if some children do not have birth certificates, they have been enrolled in schools and pre-schools based on the medical certificates provided by the hospitals where they were born. An observer has noted that in some cases, Inspectors for Roma Education, mediators and teachers from schools included in both the Phare 2001 and 2003 phases assisted families without identification papers to get them; however, the relationships

¹⁸⁷ Data provided through the sample of the Centre for Health Policies and Services, *Health Status of the Roma Population*, pp. 20–21.

¹⁸⁸ Council of Europe, *Third Report on Romania*, commissioned by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), CRI(2006)3, Strasbourg, 21 February 2006, available at http://www.coe.int/t/e/human_rights/ecri/1-ecri/2-country-by-country_approach/romania (accessed on 28 February 2007).

¹⁸⁹ Liga PRO EUROPA, “*Discriminarea rasială în județele Arad, Cluj, Harghita, Sibiu și Timiș*”, (Racial Discrimination in Arad, Cluj, Harghita and Timiș counties) report developed in the framework of the project “Minority Rights – Monitoring – Advocacy – Networking”. Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2005.

¹⁹⁰ Phare 2000, the “Fund for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma” project, implemented by Fundatia Comunitatii Sibiu.

that enabled this assistance to be offered only came about because the child was enrolled in one of the project schools.¹⁹¹

4.3 Costs

In public facilities, pre-school education is free of charge. However, the parents are usually asked to pay for teaching aids and school supplies. Parents must pay for meals (which are subsidised) for children attending “long-programme pre-schools” (*gradinita cu program prelungit*), up to eight hours per day. Additional classes, such as for foreign language, arts, or other extracurricular activities, are also at parents’ expense.

Access to pre-school education has become dependent on the family’s ability to support its share of meals and other costs. Economic background, changes in employment patterns, and demographic patterns have been the main reasons for the decrease in enrolment rates in pre-school. At the same time, the increasing gap between the quality of public pre-schools and private pre-schools – which focus on foreign language study, and individualised and active learning – restricts access to quality due to costs, which go far beyond the possibilities of the average family.¹⁹²

Costs differ from place to place, as they are established at the local level and depend on several factors such as the type of pre-school, whether it is a regular programme from 8 to 12, a long programme from 8 to 5, or a weekly programme, distance, and whether the child takes meals. According to parents interviewed in the framework of this project, monthly cost can run between €10 and €100 for a public pre-school.¹⁹³ Many private pre-schools have also been established, especially in cities. The costs for these facilities are known to run between €100 and €300 per month (and even higher for “elite” pre-schools), while the average monthly salary in Romania is approximately €200.¹⁹⁴ Given that a large number of Roma families survive on the minimum guaranteed income and children’s allowances, which equal approximately €25–30 per month, Roma children have sharply limited access to pre-school education.

One disturbing finding with regard to access to pre-school is the fact that a parent’s ability to assist a school financially (through “gifts” or sponsorship) increases the child’s ability to gain access to certain public pre-schools, which have greater demand than their capacity could handle. While Government policy does not allow the exclusion of pupils based on economic grounds, this situation is the result of an imbalance between

¹⁹¹ Comments submitted to EUMAP by Maria Andruszkiewicz on the present report in draft form, February 2007.

¹⁹² Cronin et al., *Education Sub-Sector Review*, p. 11.

¹⁹³ Data provided by Ms Viorica Preda, inspector for pre-school education MER, information provided by e-mail, September 2006.

¹⁹⁴ Data provided by Ms Viorica Preda, inspector for pre-school education MER, information provided by e-mail, September 2006.

supply and demand, especially in pre-schools where teaching is done in a foreign language.¹⁹⁵

Although free, education requires costs borne by the family. There are costs associated with the purchase of schoolbooks and other educational materials, clothes, meals and transport. These “hidden” costs are associated with enrolment during the compulsory grades – even when education is ostensibly “free”. Usually, the costs of schoolbooks and materials increase in the higher grades. In particular for families coming from poverty, these costs can seem very high, and have a direct impact on access to education.¹⁹⁶ Governmental programmes such as free snacks (*Cornul si laptele*), school aids and supplies (*Rechizite guvernamentale*), scholarships and provision of transport for students from remote areas are targeting these problems which should relieve poorer families from some of the costs.

According to the INS *Statistical Yearbook 2005*, the share of expenditures directly allocated for education by Romanian families varies between 0.7 per cent and 0.9 per cent.¹⁹⁷ Unfortunately there are no data provided specifically on the Roma population. However, the *Roma Inclusion Barometer* presents significant differences in income for the Roma population as compared to the non-Roma population.¹⁹⁸ The average monthly income for October 2006 for Roma respondents was 150 RON (€45) and for the non-Roma was 370 RON (€110).

Children enrolled in special schools can attend day schools or boarding schools. For those children attending day schools, the State provides a monthly allowance for food and school supplies;¹⁹⁹ at present these allowances total 31 RON (€9). Children attending boarding schools receive the same allowances plus accommodation including bed linen and the like. Children in foster care receive an additional allowance as well. A variety of services are also available for free in special schools, including speech

¹⁹⁵ Cronin et al., *Education Sub-Sector Review*, p. 12.

¹⁹⁶ In 1997 during the ERRC field mission to Romania, some data were collected regarding the hidden expenses. At that time, in order to be able to attend school and to function properly, a Romanian pupil needed the following materials per school year: 25 notebooks, 19 fountain pens, pens, coloured crayons, 20 books, book bag, sports clothes and shoes, plus any uniform that may be required in a school. This average has a total cost of €35–40. However, it must be kept in mind that the average Romanian monthly salary at that time was approximately €32 per month. Schools supplies average more than one monthly salary for an average Romanian citizen. This amount would be astronomical for a Roma family living in poverty. See Education Support Project (ESP), *Roma population in Central and Eastern Europe*, OSI, 2001, available at http://www.soros.org/initiatives/esp/articles_publications/publications/resp_20010428/background_20010428.pdf (accessed 10 March 2007), p. 37.

¹⁹⁷ INS, *Statistical Yearbook 2005*, Population income, expenditure and consumption, Table 4.18, available on the INS website at www.insee.ro.

¹⁹⁸ OSF-Romania, *Roma Inclusion Barometer*, p. 35.

¹⁹⁹ Government Decision no 1251/2005 (Hotărâre de Guvern No. 1251/2005), Annex H, available in Romanian at <http://www.cnrop.ise.ro/resurse/capp/reg2005.pdf> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

therapy, physical therapy, counselling and guidance, socialisation activities, and other types of support. All these services are covered by the health care system and make the special schools an attractive alternative for poor parents, including Roma.

According to Romania's *Minorities in Development Processes Report – Romania Case Study on Roma*, "In 2002 the Roma population was almost 5 times more exposed to severe poverty, and more than 50 per cent of Roma ethnics were affected."²⁰⁰ The unemployment rate among Roma is estimated as being between 24²⁰¹ and 56 per cent,²⁰² although cases of 90 to 100 per cent may be registered in some disadvantaged Roma communities. Poor families cannot provide children with clothes and books, the basic items necessary for school. Poverty also limits access to education by requiring that Roma children be engaged in income-generating activities, or by helping to raise younger siblings.²⁰³ According to an interviewed teacher in Bobesti village (Ilfov county) students from poor Roma families rarely have the resources to allow them to have books at home, which contributes to school success.

I believe that a monthly amount of approximately 30–40 RON would be necessary to build a students' home library. In the classroom I am the class teacher for, there are very few parents who could afford to pay RON 30–40 a month. Out of the 20 students I have, I wonder if four or five families could afford to compile a library for the child, to buy the books the students would like to have, or a school bag, because several students come to school bringing their things in plastic bags.²⁰⁴

In the same location, although theoretically textbooks are provided for free by the Ministry of Education, the school received an insufficient number for grades five to eight, so every child did not receive books. Among the textbooks that are in short

²⁰⁰ UNDP, Consultation on "UNDP's Engagement with Minorities in Development Processes", 18–19 October, New York, Romania Case Study on Roma (12 October 2006), available at <http://www.undp.ro/pdf/Roma%20case%20study%2012%20Oct%202006.pdf> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

²⁰¹ UNDP, *Avoiding the Dependency Trap*, p. 33. The percentage is based on the broad ILO definition of unemployment. However, according to the same source, there is a subjective interpretation of unemployment among Roma subjects of the research. 52.6 per cent of Romanian Roma consider themselves to be unemployed while 17.1 per cent see themselves as housekeeping (p. 95, Annex I). Differences between ILO definition and subjective definition of unemployment are due to the fact that while the ILO definition considers informal sector and casual activities to be employment, Roma people have the reverse view.

²⁰² S. Cace and C. Vladescu (eds.), *The Health Status of Roma Population and their Access to Health Care Services*, Center for Health Policies and Services, Bucharest: Expert Publishing House, 2004.

²⁰³ Such aspects are well documented in Save the Children studies, such as: *Copiii care muncesc* (Working Children), webpage on the Save the Children site, available at http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/romania/ce_facem/programe/copiii_strazii.html; *Drepturile copilului intre principii si realitate* (Children's Rights, between Principles and Reality). Bucharest: Save the Children, 2005, available at <http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/romania/resurse/rapoarte.html> (both accessed on 28 February 2007).

²⁰⁴ Interview with a teacher, Bobesti, 22 February 2007, case study Bobesti.

supply are those for religious education, music, English, French, technology and arts. Children have been forced to share their books, or to purchase them.²⁰⁵

4.4 Residential segregation/Geographical isolation

A report published by the World Bank in June 2005, *Roma Social Mapping*,²⁰⁶ shows the following:

the highest concentration of the poor Roma population is in large communities of over 500 people and in medium size communities of 200–500 persons. Over 60 per cent of the Roma population that is clustered lives in large communities of more than 500 persons.²⁰⁷

The highest concentration of poor Roma is found in cities and in small towns. The mean average size of Roma communities larger than 19 households is of about 300 people per community, the median average size being much lower, of about 170 persons per community. That size is minimal in marginal rural communities (of about 260 people) and reaches about 500 people in urban non-marginal communities. Generally, the average size of Roma communities increases from rural to urban locations, from marginal to non-marginal locations, and from “high problem” to “non-problematic” types of communities. Research on the level of contacts that such communities have with majority neighbours has not been published.

A recent publication on housing of Roma and poverty presents a classification of Roma communities. According to this, disadvantaged Roma communities may be any of the following: isolated, satellite, tangent, peripheral, non-integrated yet included, disseminated and enclave.²⁰⁸ Another classification of Roma communities in urban areas defines them as communities “in the centre”, communities in “blocks of flats” and peri-urban communities. For the rural areas, the classification is as follows:

- Para-rural communities – consisting of households of integrated Roma families disseminated in central territory;
- Peri-rural communities – extensions of a village, without access to utilities;

²⁰⁵ Interview with the director of the Bobesti school no. 3, 22 February 2007, case study Bobesti.

²⁰⁶ World Bank, *Roma Social Mapping*, Bucharest: WB, July 2005, p. 22, available at http://www.anr.gov.ro/docs/statistici/Roma_Social_Mapping_187.pdf (hereafter, *Roma Social Mapping*)

²⁰⁷ *Roma Social Mapping*, p. 9.

²⁰⁸ Catalin Berescu and Mariana Celac, *Housing and Extreme Poverty. The Case of Roma Communities*, Bucharest: Ion Mincu University Press, 2006, pp. 30–44.

- Autonomous communities – with a long history of segregation and almost abandoned by local administration.²⁰⁹
- According to the same study, Roma communities' representatives correlate the level of poverty directly with low employment and low income and indirectly with poor education.²¹⁰ Roma rank employment as the main problem in their community.²¹¹
- Poverty often contributes to geographical residential isolation, which has a large impact on access to education for many Roma. According to research conducted for the ERRC in 1997, it was found that for some children, getting to school may be a problem, because they could not afford the bus fare for travel to the school, or because the poor road quality required them to walk through mud in bad weather, and consequently getting so dirty that teachers sometimes would not allow the children to enter the school. It was also reported that Roma community members who live on the margins of cities, in small villages, or even integrated into the city, are separated from regular society and often lack general information about schooling. Poverty was equated with living marginally, which was equated with low access to education.²¹²

The residential segregation of the Roma population is directly related to poverty and lack of access to facilities – running water, heating systems, sewage systems, roads, means for public transport, and so on. The *Roma Inclusion Barometer* shows significant differences in perception of satisfaction with one's own life:²¹³ 35 per cent of the Romanians declare themselves satisfied with the way they live, while 63 per cent are dissatisfied; for the Roma, the percentage of the satisfied drops to 12 per cent, while the dissatisfied make up 87 per cent.

4.5 School and class placement procedures

Legally, parents may choose any school from the system regardless of their domicile under existing laws.²¹⁴ However, some informal agreements of the Inspectorate restrain the free choice of parents to those areas that the county school general inspector defines

²⁰⁹ Catalin Berescu and Mariana Celac, *Housing and Extreme Poverty. The Case of Roma Communities*, Bucharest: Ion Mincu University Press, 2006, pp. 30–44.

²¹⁰ *Roma Social Mapping*, p. 21.

²¹¹ *Roma Social Mapping*, p. 9.

²¹² McDonald, "Roma in the Romanian Education System."

²¹³ OSF-Romania, *Roma Inclusion Barometer*, p. 18.

²¹⁴ Law of Education No. 84 1995, available in Romanian at http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.htm_act_text?id=21091 (accessed on 28 February 2007).

as the catchment areas for a given school.²¹⁵ In practice, the school director takes the decision to allow a particular child to enrol. If the school director does not accept the parents' request, parents may go to the Inspectorate and further on, to the Ministry.

Testing and evaluation of children for placement in special schools are initiated by a child's parents or at the request of the school.²¹⁶ There is no age limit for evaluations, although it is recommended that evaluations be done as soon as possible to allow for early intervention. The Department for Complex Evaluation (*Serviciul de evaluare complexă*) assesses and determines the diagnosis of children with disabilities. This department is part of the County Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection. Legally, before a child can be placed in a separate class or school, he must sit before an evaluative committee (multidisciplinary expertise committee),²¹⁷ which consists of a psychologist, a psychologist-pedagogue, a medical doctor and a social worker. Following the complex evaluation procedure, the level of disability is established and the file is submitted to the Commission for Child Protection, which issues a Decision that will have, as annexes, a certificate for the degree of disability, certificate for school and professional reorientation, and a rehabilitation plan.

A national methodology is used for all the children who are assessed. It consists of a national ministerial order and a methodological guide. First, a neurologist examines the child and, according to his observations, a medical certificate is issued. This examination is usually requested by the parents or by the placement centre. The school could also request such an examination. Then experts (psychologists) use a range of tests, including personality tests, intelligence tests, behavioural and other tests. The decision made by a complex commission composed of seven people guides the child's path. Members are representatives of the child protection agency, special education specialists, psychologists, and NGO representatives. Sometimes the representative of the NGOs is Roma. This commission provides a certificate, and decides the child's placement and educational trajectory. All the tests are delivered in Romanian (or Hungarian in Hungarian-speaking counties) and are not standardised.

The Commission for Child Protection is set up and coordinated by the County Council (*consiliul judeţean*) and makes the decision about school placement and guidance for children with disabilities. Within special schools and in some mainstream schools there are Commissions for Continuous Internal Evaluation, which assess

²¹⁵ See for example the Regulation approved through MER Order no. 4925/for the Functioning and Organisation of Pre-university Education 2005, available on the MER website (<http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c21>).

²¹⁶ See EUMAP, *Access to Education and Employment for People with Intellectual Disabilities*, report on Romania, Budapest: OSI, 2005, available at http://www.eumap.org/topics/inteldis/reports/national/romania/id_rom.pdf (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, EUMAP, *Intellectual Disabilities Report – Romania*, pp. 35–38).

²¹⁷ Education Act, Chapter VI, Art. 43: The type and degree and disability are diagnosed by inter-school and county expert committees under School Inspectorates.

children's progress during the school year and can request a re-evaluation or recommend support services.

However, in practice there are not enough specialists in schools, and a lack of resources also affects outcomes. According to a special education inspector,²¹⁸ other problems include the fact that the assessment service is outside the school, and even if the evaluation is correctly carried out, school services do not meet the individual needs of the children entirely and properly. Sometimes factors outside the child's own capacity influence placement, such as parents' request for social aid, closure of placement centres, and other issues.²¹⁹

Diagnostic criteria are mainly medical and psychological; they rely less on communication skills so that language barriers should not be thought to raise particular problems.²²⁰ Social criteria are also excluded from the diagnosis criteria,²²¹ although there have been reports that the members of the diagnostic panels receive no special training on the diagnostic procedure²²² and there is little overseeing to ensure that the criteria are applied appropriately. At present there are no provisions for participation of Roma (or other ethnic minorities) representatives within the commissions except as NGO representatives.

Concerns about the overrepresentation of Roma in Romania's special school system have been raised in the past;²²³ incentives such as free meals and housing in such schools are generally cited as a draw for children from disadvantaged families, including Roma.²²⁴ According to a representative of the Ministry of Education and Research, until 2000, quite a high number of Roma students were enrolled in special schools due to the social services available there (meals, school supplies, accommodation, therapy, clothes); these students were regarded as "lacking the necessary cognitive skills and

²¹⁸ The Inspectors for Special Education work as part of the County School Inspectorate (CSI). As for their colleagues who are specialised by subject matter or curricular areas, these inspectors are responsible for aspects such as the special education institutions, services and resource centres. They assist and monitor the integration of children with special educational needs into mainstream education, including the activities carried out by support or mobile teachers.

²¹⁹ Comments provided by Simona Nicolae, Ministry of Education and Research, September 2006, February 2007.

²²⁰ Comments provided by Simona Nicolae, MER, 2006.

²²¹ Comments provided by Simona Nicolae, MER, 2006.

²²² EUMAP, *Intellectual Disabilities Report – Romania*, p. 36.

²²³ See EUMAP, *Access to Education and Employment for People with Intellectual Disabilities Romania*, Budapest, 2005, pp. 37–38, available at http://www.eumap.org/topics/inteldis/reports/national/romania/id_rom.pdf (hereafter, EUMAP, *Intellectual Disability Report 2005*).

²²⁴ Save the Children UK, *Denied a Future? The Right to Education of Roma/Gypsy and Traveller Children in Europe*, Vol. 1, London, 2001, p. 326, available at http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/temp/scuk/cache/cmsattach/648_dafvol1.pdf (accessed on 28 February 2007).

behavioural adaptation needed for school integration”.²²⁵ From 2000 on, a diagnosis of disability has been a prerequisite for enrolment in special schools.²²⁶ A report written for the Phare 2003 project noted the following: “Many students in special schools appeared to be there for social reasons. Children with more severe special needs were often not attending school at all.”²²⁷

The Government Urgency Ordinance No. 192/1999 and Law 218/2004²²⁸ stipulate the integration of children from special schools to mainstream schools. These legislative changes were mainly related to the EU accession requirements. Based on these regulations, children with intellectual disabilities have been integrated in mainstream schools, but there is little or no monitoring on their school career and achievements in such schools. Curricular standards vary for children with such special needs, according to the type and level of their disabilities.²²⁹

- Children with sensory-motor difficulties attend mainstream schools and follow different therapies.
- Children diagnosed with *moderate* intellectual disabilities follow the standard curriculum and receive tailored programmes to ensure their integration (personalised individual learning plans);
- Children diagnosed with *severe* intellectual disabilities follow a completely different study programme, focusing on psychometric development, communication stimulation, personal autonomy and social skills.

There are statistics regarding the number of children transferred from special schools to mainstream schools, presented in Table 18:

²²⁵ Comments provided by Simona Nicolae, inspector for special education in the Ministry of Education and Research.

²²⁶ For a child to be enrolled in a special school, it is compulsory to have a decision of school orientation presented by the Commission for Child Protection, according to the provisions of GD No. 1437/2004.

²²⁷ Pat Chick, *Final Tour Expert Visits*, 2006, WYG International, p. 35 (hereafter Chick, *Final Tour Expert Visits*).

²²⁸ Government Urgency Ordinance No. 192/1999 of 8 December 1999, regarding the Setting Up of the National Agency for Protection of Children’s Rights and Reorganisation of Child Protection Activities; and Education Law No. 218/2004 of April 2004.

²²⁹ For full details, see: EUMAP, *Intellectual Disabilities Report – Romania*, pp. 35–38.

Table 18: Children transferred from special schools to mainstream schools (1999–2006)

School year	Students enrolled in special schools	Students integrated in mainstream schools
1999–2000	53,446	1,076
2000–2001	48,237	5,659
2001–2002	37,919	10,779
2002–2003	27,359	11,493
2003–2004	28,043	13,749
2004–2005	27,945	14,179
2005–2006	28,873	14,193

Source: MER 2006²³⁰

Special classes (or remedial classes) within mainstream school represent rather an exception. Sometimes schools organise classes according to ability level, but this kind of placement is not encouraged. According to the community's needs, some schools provide remedial or literacy classes for small groups either after school or during school hours. Most of the schools involved in Phare projects provide this kind of assistance for children with learning difficulties.²³¹ Remedial activities were organised and still are organised for children with learning difficulties or for those who are preparing for national exams. Remedial education was a priority activity for the schools involved in the Phare CEDU/MATRA "Equal Opportunities for Roma Children through School Development" project.

Since the methodology for a "Second Chance" programme – which provides a very flexible study and evaluation programme (see section 3.2) – was approved by the Ministry of Education, remedial classes will most likely eventually be phased out of the system, and replaced with "Second Chance" programmes.

²³⁰ MER Department of Statistics, Data provided by Ion Ivan and Florin Anton by email, 11 August 2006.

²³¹ Chick, *Final Tour Expert Visits*.

There are a few mainstream schools where special classes for Roma children were set up and integrated in one school in Cluj County.²³² Most of the children were mixed within the regular classrooms in the mainstream school, but in two classes children followed a special education curriculum, which testing has indicated is appropriate for their abilities. These students receive free meals, after-school support programmes, school supplies, clothes, and other support. The students are over age and face serious social and economic problems, living in the nearby garbage dump of Cluj Napoca (Pata Rat).²³³

According to the Rules of Organisation and Functioning for Pre-University Education (2005) the transfers of pupils between schools, between profiles or specialisations, or between forms of education, are permitted and specifically regulated. Transfers take place only after approvals of Boards of Administration of both units. As a general rule, transfers should be done at the beginning of school year, and only exceptionally may transfers be made during the school year.²³⁴

The “Second Chance” programme is the most established governmental programme aimed at reintegrating former drop-outs. No formal assessment exists of how many children have transferred from the “Second Chance” programme to a mainstream class, but anecdotal evidence indicates that very few children have made the move back to mainstream classes.

The phenomenon of “white flight” has not been well documented in Romania. However, the Case Studies Reports developed in the framework of the Phare 2003 “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project, compiled by school principals, teachers and parents’ comments on this

²³² School No. 12 Cluj Napoca, together with local Roma and non-Roma NGOs, initiated in the middle of the 1990s different projects targeting the schooling and day care services for children living in the Pata Rat community (the “Dallas” neighbourhood). The school was involved in the “Equal Opportunities” projects developed and funded by the Open Society Foundation and MATRA (1997/2000). The school developed individualised and remedial teaching programmes. In addition, the school provided health projects and care services, and low-income families’ children received free meals, clothes and school supplies. See: *Equal Opportunities for Roma Children through School Development Projects and Parental Involvement*, developed by the Center Education 2000+ (2000–2003), available at <http://www.egale.ro>. The school was also involved in Phare 2001 project “Access to education for disadvantaged groups with a focus on Roma”.

²³³ The Pata Rat community is exceptionally poor, but unfortunately is representative of many other such Roma communities. Based in a garbage dump on the outskirts of Cluj-Napoca, people live in makeshift hovels and survive by selling scrap that they scavenge from the dump itself. The children coming from such a community clearly suffer from disadvantage, which has a high impact on their educational process.

²³⁴ Such a curriculum is approved through Orders of the Minister, based on: Government Decision no. 410/ 23.03.2004, Regarding the Organisation and Functioning of the Ministry of Education and Research.

topic,²³⁵ reported that Roma from higher socio-economic households transfer their children to schools with lower numbers of Roma students.

Achievement indicators are reflected in the national curriculum, and for each subject matter there are indications about the minimum, average level of achievement.²³⁶ There are no indicators for transfer, however, only descriptions of behaviours and skills that should be proven by the students. There are no available data on pupil transfer from segregated Roma classes or schools to mixed classes.

4.6 Language

A Ministry of Education press release (September 2006) highlighted that in Romania, over 240,000 self-identified Roma students attend schools (pre-school to thirteenth grade) and 10 per cent of them study three to four hours of Roma language and history per week. There are more than 460 Roma teachers in all the 42 counties. Data from 2003 showed that of the 158,124 students who identified themselves as Roma, 15,708 Roma pupils between the first and the thirteenth grade were taking advantage of the supplementary Romanes and literature classes, and history and traditions of the Roma in grades six and seven. The Government's most recent report on the implementation of the FCNM in 2005 reported that Romanes instruction is ongoing in 135 schools, with 15,708 students taking part, under 257 teachers.²³⁷

There is no clear available information regarding the number of children using Romanes as their mother tongue who are also proficient in the majority language at the age of three. The last census data (2002) recorded 237,570 Romanes-speakers from a

²³⁵ See Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Report*. This case studies research was done as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation system, which involved several processes: quantitative reporting, self-evaluation by schools, county level quarterly reporting, case studies, a segregation study and supplementary reporting. Case studies covered a sample of 10 per cent of the total number of schools. The principal responsible researcher was the local expert for Monitoring and Evaluation, who carried out the field research and collected data from students, parents, inspectors, school mediators, local authorities and teachers. Case studies were carried out in the counties of Alba, Bacău, Brăila, Covasna, Harghita, Ialomița, Maramureș, Mureș, Neamț, Sibiu and Vâlcea and in three schools involved in Phare 2001 (Arad, Cluj and Dâmbovița). Field research was organised in two tours: the first in 15 September 2005–10 January 2006, and the second in April 2006–20 June 2006. The results of this research have been corroborated with experts' visits in schools, quarterly reports and monthly reports. The report was circulated to the PIU Project Implementation Unit and within the network of inspectorates involved in the Phare 2003 project. Most of the county project teams discussed the case studies findings with the schools' teams. The findings were also presented in the Steering committee meetings and national conferences.

²³⁶ See MER, *The New National Curriculum and Subject Matter Syllabus*, Bucharest: MER, 2000, available in Romanian at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c539/> (accessed on 28 February 2007).

²³⁷ *FCNM Second Report*.

total of 535,140 Roma, (roughly 44 per cent).²³⁸ UNDP research conducted in 2001 finds a significant difference, with 63 per cent of Romanian Roma speaking Romanes at home.²³⁹ In this regard, the Inspector for Education in Romanes, Professor Gheorghe Sarau, has indicated that within traditional communities the children speak only Romanes.²⁴⁰

Table 19: Enrolment in Romanes language programmes (2004–2005)

Subject	Education level	Total number of children/students
Studying in Romanes	Pre-school	20
	Grades 1–4	40
Romanes (3–4 hours each week)	Primary level and above	19,812
History and traditions of Roma (1 hour/week)	Primary level and above	4,257
Total		24,129

Source: Electronic Newsletter for Roma (*Buletin Informativ rromi*).²⁴¹

Romanes is of major importance from two points of view. First, teachers working in schools with a large number of Roma report that the knowledge of the majority language (Romanian in most cases) is a potential constraint to access to education.²⁴² Pre-school participation has strategic importance for educational opportunities, in which many Roma are unable to participate. Providing Roma children with additional opportunities to improve their command of the majority language is therefore a precondition for improving their access to education.

Second, the use of Romanes in teaching has a great impact on strengthening Roma identity, the sense of belonging and children's self-esteem. There are different opinions regarding this issue; reliance on Roma languages as educational instruments may be ineffective and could even contribute to the further isolation of Roma communities.²⁴³ Many experts advocate bilingualism and integrated education as the most effective

²³⁸ 2002 census.

²³⁹ According to UNDP, *Avoiding the Dependency Trap*, p. 87.

²⁴⁰ Information provided by Professor Gheorghe Sarau, 24 October 2006.

²⁴¹ Electronic Newsletter *Buletin Informativ rromi*, edited by Gheorghe Sarau, 2006, available at <http://www.Saraugroups/Bulet.%20inf.%20rromi%2C%2026-2027%2C%20Seminar%20mai%202006.doc>.

²⁴² Catalina Ulrich (2005) Case studies in 14 schools: first tour, WYG International. Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Report*.

²⁴³ See UNDP, *Avoiding the Dependency Trap*, Chapter 5 Education.

means of achieving equal educational opportunities in the long run. Research shows that having a good command of the mother tongue improves learning of the majority language. The Phare project “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” (see section 3.2) encourages the use of Romanes in teaching, training of Roma teachers, training of Roma school mediators, teacher training on intercultural education, inclusion, and cultural diversity.

The *Roma Inclusion Barometer* presents relevant data on the perceived need for learning Romanes in school.²⁴⁴ Approximately 37 per cent of both the “Romanianised Roma” and the rest of the Roma population do not consider it necessary to teach Romanes in school, while 51 per cent of the non-Roma population have the same opinion. The research concludes that Romanes is undervalued and stigmatised within the Romanian society, and the result of this process is a certain underuse of the language in social relationships.

Most children coming from traditional Romanes-speaking families do not attend pre-school, which means that at the age of seven they do not speak the formal teaching language. Although the law expresses the need to attend the zero class, this is not strictly respected in practice. Intensive “summer pre-school” has been introduced as a way to facilitate the preparedness for the first grade (see section 4.1).

The Ministry of Education has elaborated a large number of projects starting as early as 1992; many of these activities were co-funded by UNICEF or by EU funds.²⁴⁵ Moreover, (as described in section 3.7), since 1998 the Ministry has also cooperated with more than 80 governmental, non-governmental or intergovernmental agencies on Romanes materials, culturally sensitive curriculum development, textbooks, teaching methodologies and teaching guides. Coherent policies, training provision, curriculum and curricular materials development, networking and a clear job description for the Inspectors for Roma Education represent a good basis for further positive developments.

²⁴⁴ OSF-Romania, *Roma Inclusion Barometer*, p. 8.

²⁴⁵ Gheorghe Sarau, inspector for Roma language in the Ministry of Education, provided a clear synopsis in the *Buletin Informativ rromi*, 26–27, Seminar rromi mai 2006 (Newsletter for Roma), available at <http://f1.grp.yahoofs.com/v1/oG-qRXAMhoapDcoh2e88G1JyuTQaZZKxQjRN7iQiImJLzU3PV9uMLgwcwA-iTWZmvD8mS61a8fDNX7ziBVwTgFEka9hFnIEbL8dMj3Zi/Bulet.inf.rromi%2C%2026-27%2C%20Seminar%20rromi%20mai%202006.doc>.

5. BARRIERS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

Romania has made some important advances with regard to the quality of education available to Roma. Nevertheless, serious inequalities remain, and the Government must ensure that education reform takes the specific needs of Roma students into account.

Despite a number of reports highlighting the poor condition of schools with a high proportion of Roma students, little has been done to address the basic conditions of such schools – poor heating, inadequate sanitation, and overcrowding. As schools receive much of their funding from local revenue, specific action at the central Government level is needed to supplement funds in disadvantaged areas.

The school results of Roma pupils have been improving, although this is still measured in terms of declining failure rates. Decentralisation has had a positive impact on curricular development, as schools are encouraged to develop modules reflecting local culture and traditions. However, the Ministry of Education and Research should ensure that materials about Roma culture and contributions are part of all Romanian children's education.

A range of training opportunities related to Roma education are available to teachers, many offered by NGOs with specific experience in the field. This is a positive step towards more active techniques; however, after training, there is little support provided to teachers to help them to continue to innovate in their classrooms. In addition, more focused efforts are needed to involve Roma communities in schools; sustained outreach and communication from all parties are needed to bridge the enduring gap between Roma parents and schools. Low expectations and negative perceptions of Roma in the classroom are pervasive, and the Government must take steps to enhance tolerance in schools as a corollary to measures addressing physical segregation.

Romania's network of Roma school inspectors is a model in many regards; the Ministry of Education and Research should reinforce this system and ensure that it continues to work to enhance the inclusion of Roma throughout the country, and through all levels of education.

5.1 School facilities and human resources

National research commissioned in 2001 by the Ministry of Education, “School at the Crossroads”, evaluated the impact of the national curriculum implementation in compulsory education and presented an assessment of the school environment. According to the study, especially in rural areas with low levels of school-age children, the school infrastructure is old and precarious, without decent facilities, with no resources for repairs, and using improvised spaces.²⁴⁶ In only 12 per cent of the schools were there capital repairs in the last five years, and half of the schools did not have any repairs; only 15 per cent of the schools have a central heating system, 21 per cent have

²⁴⁶ Lazar Vlasceanu (coordinator), *Școala la răscruce. Schimbare și continuitate în curriculumul din învățământul obligatoriu*, (Curriculum Reform and Continuity within the Compulsory Education), MER/National Council for Curriculum. Bucharest: Polirom, CEDU, 2001 (hereafter, Vlasceanu, *Curriculum Reform and Continuity within Compulsory Education*), Chapter 5, “School environment”, page 5. there is also an English summary available at www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/school_at_cross-rom-rmn-t06.pdf.

modern sanitary installations, 40 per cent have cold running water, 62 per cent have a fixed telephone and 95 per cent have electricity.²⁴⁷

According to a study of the Institute for Education Sciences published by UNICEF in 2003, 20 per cent of pre-school buildings are in bad condition and in need of urgent repair; over 25 per cent of these buildings are over 20 years old, and 38.3 per cent in rural areas (2.1 per cent in urban areas) do not have running water.²⁴⁸ The REF *Needs Assessment* reports that almost 40 per cent of Roma-majority schools need major repairs, and in general schools with a higher percentage of Roma tend to be older.²⁴⁹ Research from 2002 found that the likelihood of overcrowded classes increases proportionately to the percentage of Roma pupils in a school. The likelihood of overcrowded classes in primary schools in which Roma pupils prevail (over 70 per cent) was more than three times higher than for all rural schools. For secondary schools in which Roma pupils prevail, this likelihood was more than nine times higher than for the system as a whole.²⁵⁰

Compared to other schools, many predominantly Roma school buildings provide an inferior learning environment – conditions are unhealthy, unsanitary, unsafe, cold, overcrowded and poorly lit.²⁵¹

Physical conditions in schools represent an issue highlighted in several recent studies. The reports provided by the technical assistance team of the Phare 2003 project, “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma”, emphasise the huge disparity of provision between different schools (around 100 schools) with regard to the condition of school buildings, adequate heating and sanitary facilities. This is in part related to the local authorities being responsible for school buildings; however, the ownership of many schools is in dispute according to decentralisation policies that are in the development stage.²⁵² Some schools were cold and ill-equipped, while there were others “which had been made as comfortable and attractive as possible with imaginative displays and an evident pride in clean rooms with lots of plants.”²⁵³

In many schools lack of space led to a shift system whereby half of students attended school in the morning and the others in the afternoon. Generally the younger children

²⁴⁷ Vlasceanu, *Curriculum Reform and Continuity within Compulsory Education*, p. 6.

²⁴⁸ See Jigau and Surdu, *School Participation of Roma Children*, p.65.

²⁴⁹ REF, *Needs Assessment*, p. 19.

²⁵⁰ M. Surdu, *Final research paper 2002, International Policy Fellowship*, p. 87, Annex 3, Table 3, available at <http://www.policy.hu/surdu/> (accessed 8 March 2007).

²⁵¹ Andruszkiewicz, Maria (2006) *School Desegregation*, p. 19.

²⁵² See MER website, “Decentralisation” page, available at <http://www.edu.ro>.

²⁵³ Keith Prenton, *Expert Visits to Project Counties and Schools, Report on Tour 1, January–March 2006*, WYG International, EuropeAid/118970/D/SV/RO, unpublished, (henceforth, Prenton, *Expert Visits*), p. 38.

attend the morning sessions, although this is not always the case. While there was some form of heating in all classrooms, this was frequently only from wood-burning stoves, and both students and teachers were required to wear outdoor clothing at all times. In these schools, corridors and entrance halls were extremely cold, which caused a loss of heat from classrooms and prevented their use as comfortable display and meeting areas. There was clear evidence of poor attendance in these schools (down to 20 per cent of those enrolled in a class.) This situation was attributed to parents' unwillingness to expose their children to such conditions and the lack of adequate clothing in disadvantaged groups, which prevented children travelling to school.²⁵⁴

Research undertaken for this report in the Pustă Vale community of Sălaj County found that due to insufficient space, the local school must conduct simultaneous teaching, bringing together students of different grades in the same class.²⁵⁵ The lack of space for the Roma students in the "small school" was also reported in the local newspaper. Like the rest of the community, the school has no drinking water, and no sewage system or toilets – it has outhouses in the school yard – and uses heating from wood-burning stoves, although the supply of wood is often inadequate. Due to lack of space in the school, the pre-school operates in an improvised space on the ground floor of the Baptist Church in the community.²⁵⁶

In the framework of the Phare 2003 "Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups" project, an interview survey of school directors was undertaken to assess the level of physical conditions in their schools. Table 20 below shows the results collected from 70 schools:

²⁵⁴ Keith Prenton, *Second Tour Visits Report*, WYG International 2006 and Catalina Ulrich (2006) Multiple Case studies report, WYG International.

²⁵⁵ Interview with a Romanes teacher on 15 October 2006, case study Șimleu Silvaniei.

²⁵⁶ Case study Șimleu Silvaniei.

Table 20: Results of a survey of school buildings – for 70 schools (2006)

Questions on School Facilities	Response:			Total responses
	Yes	This is planned	No	
Adequate heating in classrooms and teaching spaces	47 (67%)	11 (16%)	12 (17%)	70
Adequate heating in corridors and entrance hall	19 (27%)	21 (30%)	30 (43%)	70
Central heating	15 (22%)	21 (30%)	33 (48%)	69
Adequate indoor toilets	20 (32%)	16 (26%)	26 (42%)	62
Adequate outdoor toilets	25 (42%)	7 (11%)	28 (47%)	60
Adequate washing facilities	33 (56%)	12 (20%)	14 (24%)	59
Modular furniture in all classrooms	36 (57%)	13 (21%)	14 (22%)	63
Modular furniture in all primary classrooms (1–4)	45 (68%)	9 (14%)	12 (18%)	66
Class sizes that are normally below 25	54 (82%)	1 (1%)	11 (17%)	66
How many shifts does the school have?	1	2	3 +	
	28 (42%)	39 (58%)	0	67

Source: WYG International²⁵⁷

Some schools, particularly in urban areas, had adequate central heating, which made temperature conditions in all parts of the school comfortable. In some other schools, corridors were used to display and observe students' work and create welcoming areas for parents and visitors. Referring to the same group of schools, an evaluator noted that some schools had modern toilet facilities, clean and well maintained. However, in rural areas most of the Phare project schools had outside toilets, often without running water. Some were in appalling conditions: "The extremely insecure, dirty, cold and unsanitary toilets observed in these schools will clearly be a source of discomfort to many children (as they are to teachers). They are also a potential health hazard."²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷ Keith Prenton, *Second Tour Visits Report*, WYG International 2006, p. 15.

²⁵⁸ Prenton, *Expert Visits*, 2005, p. 39.

They could clearly act as a disincentive for students to attend schools and a barrier to creating a comfortable and inclusive atmosphere in schools.

The evaluation report of the Phare 2003 “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups” project concluded the following:

In 57 per cent of schools (the sample in the Phare 2003 project) directors reported that modular furniture (separate tables and chairs) was available in all classrooms and 68 per cent of schools surveyed said they had modular furniture in all primary classes. [...] Because of their flexibility, it appears that the provision of modular furniture and additional teaching materials has a positive impact on the development of inclusive teaching approaches.²⁵⁹

At the national level, there is a deficit of qualified teachers in rural schools generally. The highest rates are for foreign languages, IT, and mathematics. The REF *Needs Assessment* reports that an even larger proportion of the teachers in predominantly Roma schools are unqualified – over 45 per cent of teachers in schools covering grades 1–8.²⁶⁰ Data were provided by Roma activists and Inspectors for Roma Education. There are no centralised data regarding the number of unqualified teachers distributed in schools with a high number of Roma students. Although the number of teachers graduating would meet the needs at present, many graduates do not in fact go on to teach. Low salaries, as well as the costs and time spent commuting to a rural school, make teaching in such schools an undesirable career, especially for young people. However there is anecdotal evidence that there are also young, motivated and dedicated teachers.

As most statistical data are not disaggregated in order to identify schools with a majority body of Roma students, it is difficult to determine whether staff turnover is higher at such schools. However, some reports reflect a higher turnover rate in comparison with other schools.²⁶¹

Data from a 2002 study highlight that staff turnover is greater in schools in which Roma pupils are the majority or predominate, as compared with the overall trend of staff turnover for the educational system. For example, there are six times more pre-schools reporting staff turnover in the case of predominantly Roma pre-schools (over 70 per cent Roma) as compared with pre-schools from the entire system. The study also reveals that there are three times more primary and lower secondary schools reporting staff turnover in the category of predominantly Roma schools as compared with the total school system.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Keith Prenton, *Final Report on Experts' Observations*, WYG International, 2006, unpublished, pp. 15–16, (hereafter, Prenton, *Final Report on Experts' Observations*). Report prepared for the PHARE 2003 project Access to education for disadvantaged groups.

²⁶⁰ REF, *Needs Assessment Study*, p. 20.

²⁶¹ Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Report*.

²⁶² Jigau and Surdu, *School Participation of Roma Children*, p. 65.

5.2 School results

There are national tests in the eighth grade (*examen de capacitate*) and twelfth grade (*bacalaureat*). The results of the *capacitate* exams indicate whether students will pursue their studies at a vocational school or a general secondary school. Although there are no clear available data for the 2005–2006 school year regarding the results of Roma students at this critical point of the system, interviews reflect lower results in the case of Roma students.²⁶³ The results should also be corroborated with the high drop-out rate of Roma students at the secondary level. However, older data show that in rural schools the percentage of Roma pupils graduating *examen de capacitate* is much lower than that for all the pupils enrolled in these schools.

Research conducted for this report revealed that in some localities, teachers believe that the main reason for school failure is the students' poor attendance. Roma children are absent from school for varying lengths of time when they accompany their parents, who travel for business reasons. One teacher reported as follows: "They come today [to school], and tomorrow they are off to other villages, and they cannot make up for what they miss out on."²⁶⁴

In the framework of the Phare 2003 project, progress data were recorded on 31,205 students in 111 schools within the 12 participating counties.²⁶⁵ Two thirds of the schools, and about 56 per cent of the students, were located in rural areas. About 42 per cent of the students were identified as being Roma. Progress reports conclusions indicate the following:

- The proportion of Roma students awarded an "I" (insufficient) fell from 12.2 per cent in semester 1 to 9.7 per cent in semester 2. In semester 1, 12.2 per cent of Roma students designated as having special educational needs received 'I' qualifications, which dropped to only 5.6 per cent in the second semester.
- The proportion of Roma students dropped significantly between grade 1 and grade 8, from about 50 per cent at the primary level, to 36 per cent at the secondary.
- By the beginning of grade 8, only 29 per cent were Roma, showing significant drop-out over the eight years of schooling.
- In the mathematics discipline, the proportion of Roma students awarded failing grades dropped from 15.2 per cent in semester 1 to 12.2 per cent in semester 2.
- There was little change in the proportion of Roma students awarded 7 or above.

²⁶³ Interview with Gheorghe Sarau, Bucharest, 24 October 2006, at the Ministry of Education and Research.

²⁶⁴ Case study Șimleu Silvaniei.

²⁶⁵ See Nigel Simister, *Progress Report*.

- The proportion of non-Roma students awarded failing grades fell in both disciplines.
- The proportion of Roma boys awarded failing grades fell from 15.4 per cent to 12.9 per cent, while the proportion of Roma girls awarded failing grades fell from 10.2 per cent to 7.7 per cent.
- There was a significant decrease in the proportion of Roma children with special educational needs awarded grades of 5 or less (in secondary level), falling from 16.3 per cent in semester 1 to 11.1 per cent in semester 2.²⁶⁶

School results from the previous school year are unavailable for comparisons. However, the schools reported improvements of students' academic performance. The quarterly reviews and schools' self-assessment indicate correlation between remedial education and after-school support programmes and the improvement of students' academic results. The progress report for the end of the second semester showed the following:

- In Romanian Language, the failure rate for Roma students dropped from 12.2 per cent in semester I to 9.8 per cent in semester II. This is a decline of about 20 per cent.
- In mathematics, the failure rate for Roma students dropped from 11.3 per cent in semester I to 9.7 per cent in semester II. This is a decline of about 14 per cent.
- In Romanian language, the percentage of Roma students awarded the 'FB' (*foarte bine*, very good) or 'B' (*bine*, good) grades rose from 33.9 per cent to 34.5 per cent.
- In mathematics, the percentage of Roma students awarded the 'FB' or 'B' qualification fell slightly, but the percentage awarded the highest 'FB' qualification rose from 10.8 per cent to 11.1 per cent.
- For the secondary level, in Romanian Language, the failure rate for Roma students dropped from 12.8 per cent in semester I to 10.2 per cent in semester II. This is a decline of about 20 per cent.
- In mathematics, the failure rate for Roma students dropped from 15.2 per cent in semester I to 12.2 per cent in semester II. This is also a decline of about 20 per cent.
- In Romanian language, the percentage of Roma students awarded the 'FB' or 'B' grades fell slightly.
- In mathematics, the percentage of Roma students awarded the 'FB' or 'B' qualifications rose slightly, but the difference is insignificant.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶ See Simister, *Progress Report*, p. 23.

Data on the percentage of students who repeat a grade are not available at the national level. A new database established in the 2005–2006 school year will provide such data starting in the 2006–2007 school year.²⁶⁸

As in the case of other indicators, there are no available data on Roma performance in national academic competitions, as results are not disaggregated by ethnicity. There are available data for the participants in the national competition (*olimpiada*) for Romani language only. Data on functional illiteracy in grade four are not available for Roma or non-Roma students. There is no known national average.

There is information, however, regarding the illiteracy rates for age groups within the overall Roma population:

Table 21: Illiteracy rates for the Roma population, by age group (2002)

Age (years)	Reading level (per cent)			Total
	Good	Difficult or not capable	Don't know / not answered	
10–16	57.0	37.5	4.6	100
17–45	64.5	31.4	3.6	100
Over 45	38.4	45.3	16.3	100
Total population (over age 10)	57.6	35.8	6.5	100

Source: ISE, ICCV, MEC²⁶⁹

Another source provides the following data on literacy rates, rather than illiteracy rates:

²⁶⁷ Information provided by the technical assistance team WYG International to the PIU-MER. See *Final Report*, on the Phare 2003 project Access to education for disadvantaged groups October 2006, available at <http://www.imcconsulting.ro>., unpublished.

²⁶⁸ The software and database have been developed in the framework of the Phare “Access to Education” project.

²⁶⁹ MER, ISE, UNICEF, ICCV, *School Participation of Roma Children: Problems, Solutions, Actors*, p. 48.

Table 22: Overall literacy rates – for Roma and non-Roma (2005)

Total (aged 15 and over)	Proportion of the population who are literate (per cent)		
	Majority population in close proximity to Roma	Roma	National average
	96	69	97.30
15–24	95	72	97.76
25–34	97	70	–
35–44	97	75	–
>=45	95	63	–

Source: UNDP, *Vulnerable Groups*

5.3 Curricular standards

The National Curriculum document states that “the curricular standards of achievement are national standards that are absolutely necessary when a diversified educational offer is being introduced”.²⁷⁰ Standards represent for all the students a common and equivalent reference system at the end of a school level; they are performance specifications referring to the knowledge, skills and attitudes set forth by the curriculum. It is expected that the standards (which are student-centred) be relevant from the point of view of the students’ motivation for learning.

The curricular standards of achievement are also criteria for assessing the quality of the teaching process. As many Roma students stop attending secondary school, do not participate or are not successful at the *capacitate* exams at the end of the eighth grade, this reflects poorly on their teachers and may affect these teachers’ level of job satisfaction.

All mainstream schools use the same national curriculum. However, schools are encouraged to develop school-based curricula (*curriculum la decizia scolii*) to reflect the characteristics of the local community and to meet the employment needs and opportunities of the region.²⁷¹ When launched by the Ministry of Education in 1997 the school-based curriculum was designed to represent up to 30 per cent of the school curriculum. Since then, the average percentage decreased gradually (depending on local facilities of school and human resources it varies from 20 per cent to none at all) and showed that despite the innovative character, a good policy could fail because of the difficulties in implementation: teachers need to cover the teaching load and extra hours

²⁷⁰ Planul Cadru pentru Învățământ, National Curriculum Framework Bucharest: 2002, available at <http://cnc.ise.ro/>.

²⁷¹ Ministerial Order nr. 3638 of 11 April on School-based Curricula provided in the National Curriculum Guidelines, available at <http://www.cnc.ro>.

for the regular subjects added to the core curriculum, there are not funds available for teachers, and the resources of the school do not allow the implementation of such a large number of optional courses.²⁷²

The decentralisation project (see section 3.1) focuses very much on the school responsibility and initiative on developing school-based curriculum tailored to the student's and local community needs (labour force market tendencies). The Phare 2003 project encouraged the development of a school-based curriculum related to Roma history, traditions and culture. A guidebook for teachers on the subject of the school-based curriculum was prepared for use in training and dissemination to schools; this was published as "School-Based Curriculum in an Inclusive Environment."²⁷³ Additional modules for the "Second Chance" Curriculum on Romani Language and Culture have been developed.²⁷⁴

In mainstream schools, national standards provide that at the end of the second grade students should read and write at a basic level. There are no specific reading and writing standards for students who follow the special schools curriculum. The main principle is to follow the individual rhythm and provide optimal learning opportunities and support for students with special needs. The students cannot fail a class "*repeten*", repetition is not allowed for students with special educational needs. Students with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes are assessed individually, based on individualised intervention plans (*plan de invatare individualizat*) designed and followed by both visiting or support teachers and the regular teacher of the class.

The Phare 2003 project supported the establishment of resource centres for inclusive education, where support materials and guidance are provided for regular or support or itinerant teachers in order to meet students' needs. For the project, 82 courses were outlined. Different curricula were developed on topics related to Roma education, Roma language and culture, anti-bias education and intercultural education. About one third of the courses use the civic education and other core curriculum subject matters or optional subjects (such as geography or history) to insert topics related to cultural and ethnic diversity, multicultural composition of the county, town or village.

In order to meet curricular standards, schools involved in the Phare 2003 project initiated after-school remedial education programmes. A total number of 6,521 children were reported as beneficiaries. However, in most of the cases the total number refers to groups of children targeted for different types of activities (such as after-school programmes or summer pre-school). 344 children received additional help from itinerant or support teachers or participated in resource centres' activities. Data

²⁷² Information collected in 2006 during the field research for 14 case studies developed in the framework of the Phare 2003 project. See Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Report*.

²⁷³ Maria Kovacs, *School-Based Curriculum in an Inclusive Environment*, "Step-by-Step" Centre, Bucharest, 2006.

²⁷⁴ Five separate students' or teachers' books were printed. Textbooks can be downloaded for free from the MER portal at <http://www.edu.ro>.

provided rely on different sources, such as the remedial education register, individual working contracts (support teachers), teachers' portfolios, students' portfolios, intervention activity plans, personalised intervention plans, observation records, handouts, children's products, minutes of the evaluation commission, check sheets, and monitoring forms.²⁷⁵

5.4 Classroom practice and pedagogy

At the beginning of the 1990s, research regarding Roma students in schools in Romania revealed that classroom and school practice were marked by bias, teacher-centred instruction, stereotypes, lack of motivation for individualised instruction, irrelevant curriculum, a lack of remedial teaching, poor self-esteem for Roma students and parents.²⁷⁶

Due to the different projects and NGO training courses that have taken place in Romania over the past ten years, there are different approaches dealing with classroom and pedagogy. Some of the approaches include an alternative methodology of reading, writing and lecturing focusing on individual cultural respect as the basis for cooperative education and individualisation.²⁷⁷ Another approach underlines the central web of mutual representations among Roma and non-Roma, and focuses on Roma children's self-esteem as a crucial factor to be taken into consideration by the educators.²⁷⁸

The Intercultural Institute, Timișoara, has developed several projects in the area of classroom pedagogy and practice, with a focus on a constructivist approach and distance education opportunities for in-service teacher training.²⁷⁹ Training courses provided by the NGO Save the Children, Romania, have approached both the issue of *Romanipen* (Roma cultural identification) and that of the teaching and learning strategies at the classroom level. A large number of materials and teachers' guides have

²⁷⁵ Information provided by the Final report for Phare 2003 project Access to education for disadvantaged groups, report circulated in the project framework, not published, 2006, WYG International.

²⁷⁶ Adela Rogojinaru, in English "School Development and Individualised Education" *Roma Education Resource Book Educational Issues, Methods and Practice, Language and Culture*, Budapest: OSI, 1997 (hereafter, Rogojinaru, "School Development").

²⁷⁷ Rogojinaru, "School Development".

²⁷⁸ Catalina Ulrich *et al.*, "Romii: construirea strategiilor de rezistență la frustrare" (Roma Strategies to Overcome Frustration), in *RROMATHAN: Studii despre romi* (ROMATHAN: Studies about Roma), No. 2, 1997.

²⁷⁹ See their website at <http://www.intercultural.ro>.

been developed in the framework of another project, the CEDU/MATRA “Equal Opportunities for Roma Children through School Development”.²⁸⁰

A teachers’ guide series addresses various aspects, such as intercultural education, classroom management, cooperative learning and family involvement. Further publications have been developed based on the initial project, also addressing issues including “Reading and Writing in Bilingual Cultural Environments”, and “Project-Based Learning.” Training courses provided in the framework of the MATRA project followed important principles: to be practical, to inspire teachers, to use the available published materials (teachers’ guides), to stimulate communication among teachers and schools, and to be cross-curricular (topics covered by the training sessions to be related to different components, such as family involvement and intercultural education). Romanian experts have developed research projects, training programmes and support materials for teachers in order to better respond to educational, emotional and social needs of the children in multicultural settings.²⁸¹

Other important training input (with national coverage) was provided by the “Step-by-Step” methodology, implemented by the Centre for Education and Professional Development. This focuses on child-centredness, democratic practices in the classroom, learning through play, parental involvement, and cooperative learning.

Most of these training courses use a constructivist approach (knowledge is built by the participants, and is not something imported from outside) and experiential learning philosophy for teacher training. Interactive methods, critical thinking, group work and positive relations between trainees represent some of the key features of the teacher training activities. There are many other examples of training provision for teachers working in a multicultural setting. Despite the variety and number, the impact at the school and especially at the classroom level is not well documented.

While it is difficult to track teachers trained in specific areas, and the research on this topic is rather an exception, pedagogical improvement is a long process. Although there are notable initiatives (like those mentioned above) that make a difference at the classroom level, there are a few difficulties related to the teacher training in the framework of such projects. For example, in schools with a large number of Roma students the turnover rate is higher compared to other schools. Some of the teachers are not “titular” and starting with a new school year will work in another school. It is likely that at the beginning of the school year the teachers trained during the previous school year will move to another school. Participation in training courses leads to

²⁸⁰ Both projects have been implemented by the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum and Center Education 2000+ and focused on institutional exchange stimulation and full support for actions taken in adapting the school configuration so as to fit parents and children needs. For more information, see <http://www.cedu.ro> and <http://www.egale.ro>. Projects were developed with support from MATRA financing scheme of the Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

²⁸¹ Gheorghe Sarau, Anca Nedelcu Butuca, Lucian Ciolan, Dakmara Georgescu, Mihaela Ionescu and Serban Iosifescu have all published work in this area.

better teaching skills, which leads to increased professional self-image. This makes it possible for a trained teacher to gain professional credits and to apply for a job in a “better school”.²⁸²

The experience built on different projects made it possible to refine institutional and teaching standards in recent years.²⁸³ Since 2000, different training and teaching materials have been piloted, and positive experience gained in different projects is now being disseminated on a larger scale. More and more County Inspectorates have expressed the will to implement such standards in all schools. The Romanian Agency for Ensuring Quality in Pre-University Education (ARACIP) has developed standards with the goal of monitoring the respect of quality standards in all the schools. There are different categories of standards (which will be under public debate soon), regarding institutional, administrative and managerial structures, school facilities, human resources, curriculum, learning achievements, scientific activity and the financial activity of the institution.²⁸⁴

The comprehensive study regarding the impact of the new curriculum in compulsory education, *School at the Crossroads*²⁸⁵ showed that most of the teachers in Romania see the result of knowledge transfer more as an output than as an outcome. Teaching consists mainly of lectures and memorisation, while knowledge as process is very little practised. Moreover, the concept that knowledge is valuable in and of itself, as well as having practical applications in real life, is not developed. This reflects the attitudes of most teachers towards change, and inhibits progress for student achievement.

More specifically, the impact of the training and use of materials strengthening Roma identity represent an important issue. Every project had its own monitoring and evaluation system and products. Besides the internal evaluation external evaluation is

²⁸² Data compiled from different field research: Butuca Anca, Ulrich Catalina, Mardar Nicolai, Mariana Koseba, and Silvia Varbanova, in English, “Roma Children in Schools: Social Perceptions and Self-Esteem” (HESP contract 2000/263/2000), unpublished; Ulrich, *Multiple Case Studies Report* (2006, WG International, not published); Catalina Ulrich, Alexandru Crisan, Simona Moldovan, Nancy Green, Evaluation Report for the project “Equal Opportunities For Roma Children Through School Development Programs and Parents’ Involvement”, 28 April 2002, available at <http://www.osi.hu/esp/rei/Documents/EvaluationRomaniaFinalDraftcolumbiareport2002.doc> (hereafter, C. Ulrich et al., *Equal Opportunities Through School Development Programs*).

²⁸³ For example, a managerial tool for self-evaluation was developed in the framework of the Equal Opportunities project 2001/2002. See: Serban Iosifescu, *Dezvoltarea instituțională în comunitățile cu romi ghid de autoevaluare, caiet de autoevaluare și modele de instrumente de autoevaluare* (School development in Roma communities). Bucharest: Humanitas CEDU Publishing House, 2003 available at <http://www.egale.ro> (accessed on 7 March 2007). The book has three parts: self-evaluation, school self-evaluation guide, self-evaluation workbook and self-evaluation tools. The Phare 2003 project provided checklists to be used by school management team and teachers (available at <http://www.imcconsulting.ro>.) Both projects piloted standards and indicators regarding good quality education in schools with Roma students.

²⁸⁴ Information provided by Serban Iosifescu, President of ARACIP.

²⁸⁵ Vlasceanu, *School at the Crossroads. Continuity and Change in the Compulsory Curriculum*.

done after a period of time to assess the impact of the intervention. Evaluation reports referring to teaching and learning practices at the classroom level have been prepared in several cases:

The evaluation report on the CEDU/MATRA “Equal Opportunities for Roma Children through School Development” projects, implemented from 2001 to 2004, provides an assessment of the actual outcomes of the projects over that period:

- Increased capacity of schools to define, solve and evaluate issues specific to education of Roma children and youth;
- Replacement of the inert school administration with an active approach at all management level: the culture of total dependency on State resources was strongly challenged by the project approach and many schools have a different attitude concerning the assistance received and many skills acquired for taking initiatives;
- A more individualised approach to students;
- Positive results in changing the school and classroom ethos, made possible by addressing at the same time school factors, family factors and social-economic factors;
- Changing the classroom ethos: improvement of the level of the participation in classroom life of the Roma students (not the simple formal involvement).²⁸⁶

Another evaluation, carried out in the framework of the “Equal Opportunities for Roma Children through School Development” project,²⁸⁷ focused mainly on the effect of the training on the classroom as a learning environment. The analysis targeted physical, emotional and social aspects of the classrooms. The evaluation report, prepared by an international research team in 2002, showed that over three quarters of teachers found a range of activities useful, including group work, cooperative learning activities, extra-curricular activities (reading clubs, exhibitions), intercultural activities and other activities promoting Roma culture. Teachers described these activities as leading to the following results: “better understanding of each other, mutual acceptance”, “respect for cultural values” and “diminished prejudices and stereotypes”. At the same time, extra school activities “improve student–student, student–teacher and student–teacher–parent relationships”.²⁸⁸ An important detail is the fact that the “Equal Opportunities” project has two stages: the first stage started in 1998 and ended

²⁸⁶ Catalina Ulrich, Alexandru Crisan, Simona Moldovan, Nancy Green, *Evaluation Report for the project “Equal Opportunities For Roma Children Through School Development Programs and Parents’ Involvement”*, 28 April 2002, available at <http://www.osi.hu/esp/rei/Documents/EvaluationRomaniaFinalDraftcolumbiareport2002.doc> (henceforth Ulrich et al., *Evaluation of the “Equal Opportunities” project*).

²⁸⁷ Ulrich et al., *Evaluation of the “Equal Opportunities” project*.

²⁸⁸ Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Research*.

in 2000; the second stage, a follow-up project, started in 2000 and ended in 2003, with some activities carried out in 2004. Both stages were implemented by the same organisations – MATRA and CEDU (previously the Open Society Foundation), and some schools were involved for a longer period of time. The duration and the continuity of experience made it possible for some of these schools to become resource schools at the county level in the framework of other projects.

The Phare 2003 project evaluation reports are another example of assessment in this area. Different reports provided by the technical assistance team emphasise various effects of the projects' activities. For example, the evaluation report on the Phare 2003 "Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups" project, (which covers a sample of 10 per cent of the schools involved in the project) documents the impact of teacher training on classroom practice and pedagogy. The research found that teachers have done the following:

- Increased awareness about inclusion and the characteristics of individual learners among most teachers participating.
- Increased personal professional development in the case of about half of the teachers: they applied for other training courses, gained more professional credits and upgraded their professional position, and became more active and visible in professional meetings and events.
- Achieved better communication and team building – in a majority of schools training helped the staff to know each other, to socialise. The shift system of the school programme, commuting (transport) conditions in rural areas and the lack of communication between primary and secondary level teachers offer little opportunity for team building in schools.
- Achieved deeper professional reflection – awareness of other projects aims and similarities; teachers made comparisons between training courses, materials and experience gained in different projects, such as Phare's "Equal Opportunities" and "Rural Education" projects.²⁸⁹

These conclusions are similar to those reached in the evaluation reports on the CEDU/MATRA "Equal Opportunities" projects. More specifically, the evaluation reports on the Phare 2003 project drew a number of valuable conclusions regarding teacher training. While teacher training has an effect on all teachers who take part – many participants praised sessions on active methods – they often returned to their traditional methods when they returned to their classrooms. In about half the cases studied, the reports found an improvement in the resources available to students in the classroom; in a smaller percentage of classes the reports noted a more pervasive impact, such as "active and interactive lessons, genuine group collaboration, differentiated tasks to suit group needs, displays of good recent work, friendly teacher–pupil

²⁸⁹ Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Research*.

communication.²⁹⁰ The training was least successful among secondary school teachers, where the reports concluded that teachers are already pressed to cover material and meet assessment requirements.²⁹¹

Other important conclusions of all different pieces of research reflect correlations between the following:

- Teachers' teaching skills and "taking the risk" of using new methods;
- Teachers' exposure to different training courses;
- Support and guidance offered to teachers after the project's end, which increase the training's impact at the school level and at the teacher's level;
- Teachers' motivation to work in disadvantaged areas and improvement of their professional training and preparation;
- Residence of teacher, as commuting teachers have less time to spend in school and appear less interested in training and activities in school and communities;
- Teachers' use of imitation as a favourite strategy of innovation, as exchange visits and demonstrative lessons are considered to have a higher impact than the training courses.

There are no available data concerning the proportion of teachers using the skills that they studied in these training courses. Some teachers could be counted several times as training participants, because their school was involved in several projects. It is also possible that trained teachers are not working in the same school or in the educational system. Although difficult to evaluate, in most of the projects there was also little support provided to teachers after the end of the project. Those schools that benefit from different projects and, in this way, had a longer period of time to "digest" changes appear most successful. Phare 2001 and Phare 2003 schools benefit from CCD support and assistance provided by a "local implementation agent" as part of the Technical Assistance. Anecdotal comments reported the need for more consistent support and continuous training.

5.5 School–community relations

According to the Education Act, there are several structures in which parents are represented.²⁹²

²⁹⁰ Keith Prenton, *Final Report on Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups*, WYG International, 2006; and Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Research*.

²⁹¹ Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Report*.

²⁹² Education Act, Art. 145.

The School Board (*Consiliul de Administratie*) functions at the school level. The board has a decision-making role in administration and in the organisation of school activities. The board is delegated by the Local Council to administer the infrastructure of the school, including buildings, land, equipments and materials. It is consulted on decisions regarding: annual school planning, staff allocation, the budget, the general report on the quality of education within the respective school, the overall school development plan and the promotion of improvement measures. The School Board consists of 9–15 members, including representatives of parents. The other members are the school director, school vice-director, local council representative, mayor's representative, up to five teachers and local companies' representatives.

There are also representatives of parents at the level of the Commission for Evaluation and Quality Assurance (*Comisia pentru evaluarea si asigurarea calitatii*) at the school level. The Commission members also include: one coordinator, up to three teachers elected by the Teachers' Council, a trade union representative, a local council representative, a representative of the pupils (in high schools) and representatives of ethnic minorities. The role of this structure the Commission is to evaluate and ensure the quality of education and functioning of the school unit according to the existing standards.

At the level of each class, parents are represented in the "Class Council", together with teaching staff and pupils' representatives. Parents are also expected to set up a Parents' Committee at the level of each class and to work closely with the class representative (*Diriginte*).

At the school level, a Parents' Representative Council (*Consiliul Reprezentativ al parintilor*) consisting of all the presidents of class parents' committees is set up and has as its main roles support for material resources development at school unit level. Criteria for monitoring quality of the school units emphasise the involvement of parents in decision-making as well as the parents' satisfaction with the quality of the education provided to students. There is no evidence that Roma parents have a high level of involvement in such committees.

The evaluation reports for both phases of the "Equal Opportunities" projects also emphasise the difficulties and challenges faced in the field of parental involvement.²⁹³ Many projects report that parental involvement is difficult. Many parents lack a culture of PTAs or the sense of being involved in school matters, and historically have not been engaged in such activities. In addition, disadvantaged communities show a low level of trust in education and schools.²⁹⁴

In its conclusions, the evaluation made in the framework of the CEDU/MATRA "Equal Opportunities" project (at the school and national levels) found that "parental involvement represented both a key principle and a strategic goal to be achieved

²⁹³ Ulrich et al., *Evaluation of the "Equal Opportunities" project*.

²⁹⁴ Ulrich et al., *Evaluation of the "Equal Opportunities" project*.

through the project”.²⁹⁵ The evaluation noted that regional parent–teacher meetings presented regular opportunities for concerns about Roma education to be discussed, as well as linking the school with the wider Roma community. Later stages of the project saw Roma families becoming more active in groups outside the school, such as political or regional associations.²⁹⁶

An evaluation report of the first phase of the Phare project “Access to education for disadvantaged groups” (2001), prepared in 2004, found that there is evidence that parents do participate in the children’s classes. They were invited either to assist the classes or to help the teacher in the learning process. They were also encouraged to help organising and preparing the school events.²⁹⁷ Although Roma parents were represented in school decision-making bodies, they are not very much involved in the decision-making process regarding the school: “Their involvement is at the information and consultation level. The school’s door is more open to them, they are asked about their opinions regarding school activities and are asked to contribute with labour.”²⁹⁸

In the framework of the second phase of the Phare project “Access to education for disadvantaged groups” (2003), 7,268 community members were reported as participants in different activities initiated by schools. However, despite this, the final project evaluation report concluded that, with some notable exceptions, there was little evidence of real involvement of parents and communities in planning, managing or participating in project activities. The report also found little evidence that most project-steering committees were any more than an advisory body, to which project activities are reported.²⁹⁹ Observations from meetings with steering committee members revealed that the level of community participation and multi-agency working varies greatly from county to county and school to school. For example, in Maramureş a high-level coordinating committee has been established. In the quarterly reports (November 1995–January 1996) some counties reported that partnerships with local authorities had become more effective, and that there is an increased level of involvement of local authorities in school life. Community police, priests and local mayors were often involved at the local level. They were often key figures in desegregation activities.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁵ Ulrich et al., *Evaluation of the “Equal Opportunities” project*.

²⁹⁶ Ulrich et al., *Evaluation of the “Equal Opportunities” project*.

²⁹⁷ The evaluation was made in 21 schools, from each county, covering small ones (66 children in Dambovită, all Roma) to very large ones (1,268 children, 20 per cent Roma), schools with grades 1–8 or only pre-school, schools from traditional Roma communities (Calvini/Buzău), schools from small communities (rural) to very large ones (Bucharest). See Godfrey Claff, *Evaluation Report on Community Capacity Building*, Bucharest: IMC Consulting, 2004 unpublished report, (hereafter, Claff, *Evaluation Report 2004*).

²⁹⁸ Claff, *Evaluation Report 2004*, p. 6.

²⁹⁹ Prenton, *Final Report on Experts’ Observations*, p. 22.

³⁰⁰ Prenton, *Final Report on Experts’ Observations*, p. 22.

Meetings with parents revealed that parental attitudes towards the project were largely concerned with material conditions, although many parents commented on the improved school environment and that their children appeared happier in school.³⁰¹ Interviews conducted with Roma parents as part of the case study research (see also Annex 2) indicated that parents had relatively low expectations of their children's educational career prospects. The first quarterly reports, prepared by the county project teams in all the participating counties, reported that many parents were not confident about the impact of the 2003 Phare project "Access to education for disadvantaged groups" and believed that "nothing will change". The attitudes of Roma and non-Roma parents were identified as barriers to change.

ARACIP is responsible for the elaboration of an evaluation system and instruments/tools for schools.³⁰² These include several indicators on school and community relations. In addition, ARACIP standards follow the Ministry of Education's *Decentralisation Strategy of the Pre-University Education*, which envisages important effects of the decentralisation process directly related to parents: from participation in decision-making, participation in the school life, and access to information to participation in the evaluation of the quality of the educational services offered by schools.³⁰³

5.6 Discriminatory attitudes

In the framework of the second phase of the 2003 project, "Access to education for disadvantaged groups project", experts reported that they did not observe any lessons where teachers deliberately discriminate against pupils, but were concerned by some prevalent behaviour that is unintentionally exclusive (although paradoxically the teachers probably intend the exact opposite). For example, some teachers proudly pointed out children in the class as being Roma or as having special needs, meaning to show that the class is inclusive but in fact drawing unwelcome attention to the children.³⁰⁴ In many schools, children with disabilities were singled out and given inappropriate attention in front of visitors. For example, children were referred to as having "very severe deficiencies" in front of themselves and their classmates. Many mainstream teachers use the labels that are written on certificates of special educational needs to describe children.

The case studies carried out for this report (see also Annex 2) revealed that the teachers' expectations of Roma students vary considerably. Teachers' interest in training on

³⁰¹ Prenton, *Final Report on Experts' Observations*, p. 22.

³⁰² OSI Roundtable, Bucharest, February 2007.

³⁰³ See: Romanian Agency for Ensuring Quality in Pre-University Education (Agenția Română pentru Asigurarea Calității în Educație, ARACIP), *Decentralisation Strategy for Pre-University Education*, Annex no.3 Effects of decentralisation, p. 31, available at <http://www.aracip.edu.ro>.

³⁰⁴ Prenton, *Final Report on Experts' Observations*, p. 23.

Roma issues tends to be higher at the primary school level. This matches observations that primary classrooms are more likely to be attractive learning environments and that primary teachers appear to use more varied and appropriate teaching methods. In the Pustă Vale neighbourhood of Şimleu Silvaniei, one parent noted, “[my child] is in the fifth grade [...] and he doesn’t even know to write his name correctly. What did he study for? Is that education? They treat children differently, children of our ethnic group, they simply did not learn, and they should have.”³⁰⁵

Roma children who attended the Cehei School near Şimleu Silvaniei (see section 3.3) experienced a range of differentiated treatment, starting with allocation of inappropriate space for study, and lack of access to school equipment, and ending with the Romanian colleagues’ hostility and the teachers’ lack of motivation. Some Roma parents interviewed for this report expressed the opinion that while the new school built in Pustă Vale is segregated, it may be a preferable option to the conditions in Cehei:

We did not choose this school but it is better [than the one in Cehei] and I hope [the children] will learn here. It is better because it is closer and the children do not get dirty in the rainy season in spring or in autumn.³⁰⁶

This school started in the autumn. They won’t be bullied here. They should study here in the community because here they insist on teaching them. Not with the Romanians, because they end up beaten.³⁰⁷

I am pleased because it is close and because they don’t get bullied, they were bullied there and it was a long walk and they were often late. They beat the children, and the children did not learn anything, they were in trouble because they were dirty, no one paid attention to them. A Protestant minister comes who teaches them religion, and they pray together. They love the school here, they always were afraid to go to the other one.³⁰⁸

With the Romanians they always insisted that they learn, and they would leave our kids alone without heating. God help us that they would indeed study here at this school.³⁰⁹

The NCCD found discriminatory treatment at the Cehei School, yet the measures taken to address this situation have in fact further entrenched segregation and possibly reinforced the view that integration is harmful to the children involved. However, according to the teachers, some Roma parents are aware that the complete segregation of the new school may not be a preferable solution.³¹⁰

³⁰⁵ Interview with a parent Pustă Vale, 15 October 2006, case study Şimleu Silvaniei.

³⁰⁶ Interview with a Roma parent, Pustă Vale, 15 October 2006, case study Şimleu Silvaniei.

³⁰⁷ Interview with a Roma parent, Pustă Vale, 15 October 2006, case study Şimleu Silvaniei.

³⁰⁸ Interview with a Roma parent, Pustă Vale, 15 October 2006, case study Şimleu Silvaniei.

³⁰⁹ Interview with a Roma parent, Pustă Vale, 15 October 2006, case study Şimleu Silvaniei.

³¹⁰ Interview with a Roma parent, Pustă Vale, 15 October 2006, case study Şimleu Silvaniei.

The report prepared on Roma schools as part of the Phare “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” project reported that in Roma-majority schools, expectations for students were low: “If students achieved basic literacy and completed 8 grades, this was seen as a good achievement. Entry into an Arts and Trades College for vocational training was a very good achievement. University was an aspiration that was rarely, if ever, mentioned.”³¹¹

The study *The Education of Roma Children in Romania: Description, Difficulties, Solutions* discusses the manner in which the Romanian educational system deals with (or fails to deal with) the integration of Roma children in public education.³¹² It is very difficult to assess the level of respect or the quality of the social relations or school climate within the entire educational system, with regard to Roma and non-Roma. Different field research reflects very different comments from both sides, Roma and non-Roma. The range of comments varies from respect and mutual understanding to rejection and discrimination. Research at a local school shows that there is much willingness on the part of Roma children to participate in mixed schools (Roma and non-Roma) but that there is much reluctance on the part of the majority children and their parents to accept the Roma as their equals.³¹³

At the Inspectorate and teaching staff level it is noticeable that actors regularly use key concepts such as respect, diversity, intercultural, multiculturalism, inclusion, self-esteem, individualisation, individual needs, emotional support, and so on. New regulations on quality management are mirrored in managerial documents, where schools’ missions and development plans reflect students’ needs and community cultural diversity. Parents’ comments are less politically correct (compared to teachers’ comments) and express negative comments against Roma based on poverty and health issues. In the second phase of the Phare project “Access to education for disadvantaged groups”, in 2003, most of the negative comments against Roma were raised with regard to desegregation.³¹⁴

Research conducted by the National Council for Combating Discrimination (NCCD), released in October 2004 (a representative sample at the national level), also gives some indication of popular attitudes towards Roma.³¹⁵ For example, for the question “How

³¹¹ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*, p. 6.

³¹² Teodor Cozma, Constantin Cucos and Mariana Momanu, [Educația romilor în România: dificultăți, soluții], *The Education of Roma Children in Romania: Description, Difficulties, Solutions*, [Polirom Publishing house], 2000, (hereafter, Cozma *et al.*, *Education of Roma Children in Romania*).

³¹³ Cozma *et al.*, *Education of Roma Children in Romania*, p. 20.

³¹⁴ Andruszkiewicz, *School Desegregation*, pp. 6–10; Ulrich, *Multiple Case Study Report*, p. 30.

³¹⁵ National Council for Combating Discrimination (Consiliul Național pentru Combaterea Discriminării, NCCD), *Barometrul de Opinie privind Discriminarea în România* (Public Opinion Barometer on Discrimination). Bucharest: NCCD, October 2004 (hereafter, NCCD, *Public Opinion Barometer*).

often do you think the following situation takes place in everyday life? A person suffers because he/she is Roma?" the answers often showed a significant level of discrimination in relation to employment, authorities and schools.

Table 23: Popular attitudes towards Roma (2004)

Responses to the question: <i>"How often do you think the following situation occurs in everyday life – "A person suffers because he/she is Roma:"</i>	Proportion of respondents answering the question with: <i>"often"</i> or <i>"very often"</i> (per cent)
In finding a job	50
At the workplace	37
At school	35
In family	10
In relation to authorities	37
In justice	26
At hospital	28
In public places	25

Source: NCCD³¹⁶

With regard to the social distance of the population towards Roma, findings from the same research indicate that contact between Roma and non-Roma in daily life is often limited.

³¹⁶ NCCD, *Public Opinion Barometer*.

Table 24: Social distance (2004)

The statements:	Share of respondents (per cent)	
	False	True
I avoid having anything to do with Roma	55	40
There are Roma that I know	21	75
I shop in a store where the seller is Roma	66	26
I have Roma neighbours that I greet	61	33
I have/had Roma colleagues	57	36
I visit Roma	79	14
It happens to me that I ask a Roma person for help	80	14
I have Roma relatives	88	5
In personal problems I often ask advice from a Roma	86	8

Source: NCCD³¹⁷

There is a need for similar research on social distance to allow for a comparison over time and to assess Government measures to increase social inclusion.

A recent study by Laura Surdu and Mihai Surdu, *Broadening the Agenda: The Status of Romani Women in Romania*,³¹⁸ analyses the situation of Roma women. According to their research, almost a quarter of the women had no formal education, compared to Roma men, where only 15 per cent had no education. These data are highly relevant for children's educational career; the importance of parental expectations with regard to children's work and future is well documented. Low educational levels are likely to be reflected in pregnancy problems, poor provision of early childhood education, poor encouragement for intrinsic motivation (in school and daily life), emphasis on short-term goals, low self-esteem, low levels of autonomy, and dependence on social assistance support.

³¹⁷ NCCD, *Public Opinion Barometer*.

³¹⁸ Laura Surdu and Mihai Surdu, *Broadening the Agenda: The Status of Romani Women in Romania*, Open Society Institute, Budapest, March 2006, available at http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles_publications/publications/broadening_20060313 (accessed on 28 February 2007) (hereafter, Surdu, *Broadening the Agenda*).

At the school level the “hidden curriculum” is significant, as well as visible interaction patterns and behaviours. In most cases teachers use politically correct language speaking about students. Negative comments refer mainly to adult unemployed Roma and reflect social distance documented in other social research studies.³¹⁹

Research has also uncovered that poverty, which is often linked to the Roma minority, may also have a direct impact on discriminatory attitudes, and that children coming from extremely poor conditions are often rejected and teased by majority children. One teacher said “The other children would not accept the Roma kids. They would tease them, beat them, and completely ostracise them.”³²⁰

5.7 School inspections

Data on school inspections are imprecise; there are different types of inspection activities, according to the Inspectorate’s agenda and priorities, RODIS, MARODIS³²¹ criteria, and ARACIP’s new regulations.³²² The frequency of inspections is generally determined by the specific problems related to an individual school or community. Every county has an Inspector for Roma education.

Regarding the *Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma* (see section 3.1), the Ministry of Education has continued programmes that had previously proved efficient, such as the establishment of the position of Inspector for Roma Education within the County School Inspectorates. They are responsible for issues of Roma education at the county level. Inspectors for Roma Education fall under the administrative structure of the County School Inspectorate. They are under the competence of the Inspector for Education in Romanes, Professor Gheorghe Sarau, who provided many opportunities for networking and professional development. At present, such inspectors are working within all 42 counties of Romania, and they include 20 inspectors of Roma origin and 22 non-Roma inspectors.

In practice most of the Inspectors for Roma Education spend half their working time on Roma issues and the other half on other issues, such as special education. All the inspectors have similar resources; Inspectors for Roma Education do not receive any additional support. Most training is provided by the Ministry (Professor Gheorghe Sarau organises regular national meetings with inspectors and Roma language teachers

³¹⁹ See different opinion poll reports: Public Opinion Barometer, (Barometrul de Opinie Publică) available at Open Society Foundation web site http://www.osf.ro/ro/detalii_program.php?id_prog=18.

³²⁰ McDonald, “Roma in the Romanian Education System.”

³²¹ RODIS and MARODIS represent acronyms for inspection models piloted in pre-university education system. Both models involve in-depth data collection process of qualitative information, highlight the importance of beneficiaries consultation and participation in school life, decision-making. Beneficiaries’ satisfaction is an important indicator for the quality of the education provision of a specific school unit.

³²² ARACIP activity is different from the Inspectorate’s activity.

and provides assistance by site visits, for example) or by the national multi-annual projects (such as the Phare project “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups”). The electronic newsletter and the virtual network and electronic forum keep the inspectors updated and make it possible for them to share experience and good practice.

Professor Sarau states that practice has shown that, besides the support offered by the Inspectors for Roma Education, the most effective way to assist teachers working with Roma children is to involve a mixed team, composed of a school mediator, a didactic specialist for schools with a large number of Roma, a Romanes teacher and a non-Roma teacher.³²³

However, most of the Inspectors for Roma Education are overwhelmed with work. The Phare project raised awareness about the number and types of problems schools face in very difficult situations. In most of the schools involved in the second stage of the Phare project “Access to education for disadvantaged groups” a “tutoring” system was developed, by which the schools benefit from continuous monitoring and assistance, provided by the inspectors, trainers or teachers from resource schools.³²⁴ Still there are no available consistent data regarding the quality and impact of such a system.

³²³ Interview with Gheorghe Sarau, Bucharest, 28 October 2006.

³²⁴ This was stated in the project application and county strategy, see the see MER Applicants’ guide (*Ghidul Aplicantului*), at <http://www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c711/> (accessed 10 March 2007).

ANNEX 1. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

A1.1 Structure and organisation

In Romania, education policies rely on a set of general principles, including the following:

- Education is lifelong, free of restrictions or discrimination;
- Education is a national priority;
- Education should not be subjected to the influence of various political ideologies;
- The Romanian education system is democratic, open to European and universal values;
- The education system must provide equal opportunities to all citizens;
- Public institutions must provide education free of charge for the pre-university level, as well as for the university level to the limit of the existing subsidised places;
- Ethnic minorities are entitled to pursue their studies in their respective mother tongues;
- The education network must be permanently adjusted to demographic developments and to vocational training requirements;
- The Ministry of Education and Research is the central public body defining and implementing policies in the field of education.³²⁵

At the pre-university level, the basic educational units are the pre-school, and the school for compulsory education. Schools are subdivided into “classes” (one or several, depending on the number of pupils enrolled). The teachers are grouped, according to their specialisation, in Chairs. Schools are led by the director, the deputy director, the managing board and the staff board. In rural areas there are also primary schools (only grades 1–4) where teaching can be carried out simultaneously if the number of pupils is very small. In the post-compulsory education, the basic units are the High School, organised into sections and profiles, with each section running from grade 9 to grade 12. Elite high schools with outstanding achievements are given the title of “National Colleges”.

Pre-primary education (ISCED level 0) is part of the educational system. This education level includes children aged 3–6 and is carried out in specialised institutions called pre-schools (*gradinita*), most of which are public. Children’s attendance of public pre-schools

³²⁵ Romanian Constitution.

is generally free of charge and optional, except for the compulsory preparatory class, which may be held in a pre-school or a primary school. Children from age five and up to age seven may attend such preparatory classes. Children should be enrolled in a primary school if they attain the age of six at the beginning of the school year, but there can be a postponement of up to one year in certain approved cases.

Compulsory schooling lasts for 10 years and includes three stages:

- Primary education (*Școala Generală Primară*) (level ISCED 1, for four years – grades 1–4)
- Upper primary education (*Școala Generală Gimnazială*) (level ISCED 2, for four years) carried out in schools for the fifth to eighth grades
- Secondary education (level ISCED 2, for four years – grades 9–12) provides general, specialised or vocational training and may be carried out within general or specialised high schools (*Scoala Profesională* or *Scoala de Ucenici*) or within the schools for arts and crafts (vocational training grades 9–10).
- Senior secondary education (level ISCED 3) includes the senior high-school cycle (two to three years) in academically oriented high schools (Liceu), preceded by a supplementary grade for graduates of schools for arts and crafts. The senior high-school cycle provides general and specialised courses leading to post-secondary education (post high-school level ISCED 4) or in the higher education system (level ISCED 5).

Besides the above mainstream schools, there are also special schools (*Școala Ajutătoare*) for children with intellectual disabilities. However, these schools are not intended for children with severe intellectual disabilities. In addition to special schools, a whole system of orphanages exist (*leagan 0–6; orfelinat; casa de copii*) for those children who have been abandoned or taken away from their families for various reasons.³²⁶

Within the Ministry of Education and Research there is a specialised structure called General Direction for Education in Minority Languages (*Directia Generală pentru Invatamant in Limbile Miinorotatilor*), responsible for designing strategy and educational policies, and the organisation and content of education in minority languages. The General Direction for Education in Minority Languages has a mandate to organise, coordinate, collaborate, advise, approve, elaborate and analyse issues related to minority language education.

Within the General Direction for Education in Minority Languages there is a consultant position responsible for education for Roma, currently filled by Inspector for Education in Romanes, Professor Gheorghe Sarau, a well-known advocate and expert in Romanes.

³²⁶ McDonald, “Roma in the Romanian Education System.”

A1.2 Legal roles and decision-making

The general management of education at the national level is provided by the Ministry of Education and Research. The management of education at all levels – national, regional (county) and local – is regulated by the Education Law.³²⁷ According to the Education Law, the Ministry of Education and Research coordinates and oversees the national educational system, organises the public education network, approves the curricula, syllabuses and school textbooks for primary and secondary education, issues tenders for school textbooks and provides the financing for their publication, coordinates the activity of research, is charge of the training of, and providing refresher courses to, the teaching staff. Some of the Ministry's activities are exerted through agencies, services and specialised offices under its authority.

At the county level, primary and secondary education are coordinated by the County Education Inspectorates, whose authority extends over all school units at the pre-university level. The County Education Inspectorates cooperate with local councils in financing the school units under their authority, monitoring the manner in which the pre-university educational network functions and organises school inspections, secures the application of law and the organisation, management and carrying out of the educational process. They submit the staffing ratio of the network under their authority to the Ministry of Education and Research for approval, coordinate the staffing of educational units, in accordance with the provisions of the Statute of the Teaching Staff, organise and advise the refresher courses for the teaching staff, their scientific research and other complementary activities, and coordinate the organisation of entrance examinations and of the graduation examinations in the educational units, as well as the school contests.

The inspectorates can set up pre-schools, primary schools, gymnasiums, vocational schools, and apprentice schools and research units of public education, with the endorsement of the Ministry of Education.

Within the Ministry of Education there is a General Directorate for Human Resources Management (*Direcția Generală Managementul Resurselor Umane*), consisting of two subordinated structures:

- The Directorate for Training and Development of Human Resources (*Direcția Formare și Dezvoltare Resurse Umane*), where there is a Service for Initial and Secondary Training (*Serviciul Formare Inițială și Perfecționare*);
- The Directorate for School Network and Personnel Policies (*Direcția Rețea Școlară și Politici de Personal*).

³²⁷ Education Law.

In 2004 eight counties were selected to implement regulations in a pilot project decentralising education.³²⁸ Decentralisation is conceived as transferring the authority, responsibility and resources with regard to decision-making, general and financial management towards the school units and local community. The process started in 2005 and will take five years to reach the whole country. Curriculum, assessment and certification, school networks and student cohorts (*fluxuri de elevi*), management and administration, human resources and financing policies represent the field targeted for decentralisation. Anticipated effects in the pilot counties are improvements to public accountability, institutional autonomy, links between decision-making and education, decision-making transparency, human resources being better valued, subsidiarity, cultural and ethnic diversity, and an ethical approach on the part of the educational services.³²⁹

A1.3 School funding

According to a report published by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2005, Romania's budget for education represented under 4 per cent of the GDP (see Table A1), which compares to 5–6 per cent in other EU countries.

Table A1: Public spending for education as a share of GDP (2005)

Year	Public spending on education as a share of GDP (per cent)
2000	3.4
2001	3.6
2002	3.6
2003	3.5
2004	3.5
2005	3.9
2006	Approx. 4

Source: MER³³⁰

Evaluations indicate that public spending is insufficient to meet financial needs, from the infrastructure to salaries.³³¹ New legislative proposals related to the decentralisation

³²⁸ Law No. 354/2004 to Modify and Complete the Education Law No. 84/1995 and Law No. 349/2004 Regarding the Teaching Personnel Statute.

³²⁹ MER, <http://www.edu.ro/index.php?module=uploads&func=download&fileId> (accessed on 27 February 2007).

³³⁰ MER, *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2005*, pp. 37–45, selected data.

³³¹ MER, *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2005*, pp. 37–45, selected data.

of public administration will delegate more responsibilities to the local authorities in education spending. This will allow the increased participation of local resources in funding the public educational system and will also facilitate the establishment of private schools.

Education funds are collected first at the local level, mainly through VAT collection, and afterwards approved annually through the State Budget Law; they are then allocated to the local budgets and distributed afterwards, by the local authorities responsible, to the schools.

An estimate of the Ministry of Education and Research on the per-pupil cost in 2006 is around €340,³³² representing the total expenses incurred by the educational activities for one child. As shown below in Table A2, an estimation of the Ministry of Education and Research (2005) shows that nearly 97 per cent of the per-pupil costs come from the local administration budget (local councils).

Table A2: Per pupil costs – breakdown by source of income (2001–2005)

Income source	Share of per-pupil spending (per cent)				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Local budget	96.02	96.19	96.4	96.43	96.88
State budget	1.44	0.96	1.37	1.35	1.19
Other income	2.53	2.84	2.23	2.22	1.93

Source: MER³³³

Costs for personnel take up much of the budget, as is demonstrated in Table A3, which shows that the total spending on personnel is high, over 75 per cent of the total. The result of this is a low level of spending on school infrastructure and materials. Both indicate that the formula for financing is not followed properly, or that education in general is underfinanced.

³³² MER, *Draft Report on the situation of national education system 2006*, Bucharest, 2006, p. 14.

³³³ MER, *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2005*, pp. 37–45, selected data.

Table A3: Estimated spending on education personnel as a percentage of total school spending, by level of education (2001–2005)

	Spending on educational personnel, as a proportion of total spending (per cent)				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Pre-schools	82.12	78.70	75.66	77.78	73.95
Primary education (grades 1–4)	83.86	84.98	80.13	78.81	75.76
Secondary education (grades 5–8)	84.19	84.13	80.29	78.60	84.86
High school/post-high school	81.08	77.45	76.17	76.51	85.73
Total (overall)	82.95	81.38	78.16	77.87	78.23

Source: MER³³⁴**Table A4: Total education spending – breakdown by education level**

Education level	Proportion of education spending (per cent)			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
Pre-school	13.20	13.82	14.53	14.24
Primary (1–4)	19.71	19.72	20.72	52.04*
Secondary (5–8)	34.39	32.63	31.71	
High school/post-high school	32.32	32.95	32.94	27.23
Total	99.62	99.12	99.9	93.51

*approximate figure for both categories

Source: MER³³⁵

The decentralisation process to be completed by 2010 will put the students, instead of the teachers, at the centre of the educational process, and is expected to allow a better administration of funds, and an increase in public spending on education to 5 per cent of GDP (16.4 million RON). The Ministry of Education received a supplemented budget of €1.126 million in 2006.

³³⁴ MER, *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2005*, pp. 37–45, selected data.

³³⁵ MER, *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2005*, pp. 37–45, selected data.

ANNEX 2. CASE STUDIES

For each country report in this series of EUMAP reports on “Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma”, three case studies were carried out to supplement and corroborate data gathered from other sources. Information from the case studies are integrated throughout the body of each country report. Annex 2 includes additional details from each of the case study sites. In Romania the three sites are: Bobesti village (Ilfov County), Roman municipality (Neamţ county) and Şimleu Silvaniei city (Sălaj County).

A2.1 Case Study: Bobesti village

A2.1.1 Administrative Unit

Glina Commune (a larger village unit) is in Ilfov County, approximately 3 kilometres from Bucharest (on the southern edge of the city). The villages that are included in the administrative structure of Glina commune are Glina, Catelu and Bobesti.

According to the 2002 census, Glina Commune had 7,147 inhabitants,³³⁶ including 5,921 Romanians, 1,222 Roma, 2 Hungarians, and 2 Bulgarians. Roma therefore make up 17 per cent of the total population of Glina commune.

According to the mayor, the largest Roma community is in Bobesti village, where approximately 500 people declared Roma ethnicity on the census. The mayor estimates that there are, in fact, more Roma than shown by the census data, and that the actual number is approximately 1,000.³³⁷ The Local Council includes six Roma councillors, who were included on the electoral lists of mainstream parliamentary parties.

According to the mayor, the budget allocation is made according to the most urgent needs, and not according to the ethnic composition of the settlement or streets of the commune. In 2006, for instance, Bobesti School was allocated 2.5 million ROL (Approximately 250 RON or €75) for infrastructure modernisation.³³⁸

A2.1.2 Roma and the Community

The Roma community of Bobesti consists of settled Roma, some of whom have preserved their traditional occupation as violinists. The infrastructure of the community is poorly developed: there are dirt roads which are impassable in rain or snow; there is no running water or sewage system in the community, nor is there a natural gas supply. The community of Bobesti is connected to the electricity network. Housing conditions are poor: most homes are improvised from all sorts of construction

³³⁶ 2002 census.

³³⁷ Interview with Manole Marin, the mayor of Glina, 22 February 2007.

³³⁸ Interview with Manole Marin, the mayor of Glina, 22 February 2007.

remnants collected from the garbage dump “Ochiul Boului”, near the settlement. It is visible that there is no garbage collection system in Bobesti, as household waste is dumped on the streets. In January 2007, an internationally funded project started to introduce water and construct a sewage system in Glina Commune, which is planned to finish in December 2009.³³⁹

Most of the Roma in Bobesti have low levels of education and hardly any qualifications that would allow them to obtain stable jobs. According to the estimates of the Roma school inspector, only about ten per cent of the Roma in the community work in Bucharest, while the rest live on social allowance, child benefit and on money made from recycling waste collected from the neighbouring dump site.³⁴⁰ The Roma who are professional musicians are somewhat better off, because they have managed to get temporary jobs abroad. According to the mayor, the community is divided into two parts: half of the Roma live on the edge of poverty, while the other half have an income from abroad.³⁴¹ The mayor states that at present approximately 130 Roma families have social allowance files submitted to the town hall.³⁴² The Roma families who live on social allowance survive on approximately 300 RON (€85) a month.

According to the Roma school inspector, approximately 40 per cent of the Roma in Bobesti speak Romanes,³⁴³ although the mayor indicated that all the Roma in Bobesti speak Romanes.³⁴⁴ According to the school director, approximately two per cent of Roma have never been enrolled in school.³⁴⁵

The school-aged population of Glina commune and of Bobesti is declining, according to the mayor.³⁴⁶

A2.1.3 Education

The school and education network

Bobesti school no. 3 was established in 1962. Until 1991, the school included grades one to ten, but at present only goes up to the eighth grade. The school also has two

³³⁹ Interview with Manole Marin, the mayor of Glina, 22 February 2007. Information about the project is available on the website of Bucharest municipal hall at http://www1.pmb.ro/pmb/primar/proiecte/externa_nerambursabila.htm (accessed on 3 March 2007).

³⁴⁰ Interview with the Roma school inspector, 22 February 2007.

³⁴¹ Interview with Manole Marin, the mayor of Glina, 22 February 2007.

³⁴² Interview with Manole Marin, the mayor of Glina, 22 February 2007.

³⁴³ Interview with the Roma school inspector, 22 February 2007.

³⁴⁴ Interview with Manole Marin, the mayor of Glina, 22 February 2007.

³⁴⁵ Interview with the director of the Bobesti school no.3, 22 February 2007.

³⁴⁶ Interview with Manole Marin, the mayor of Glina, 22 February 2007.

groups of students in the pre-school, totalling about 40 children. At present, a new pre-school is being built, within a town-hall-funded project.

There are currently a total of 170 students in Bobesti school no. 3 in primary and lower secondary cycles (grades one to eight). Except for one Romanian student who was transferred to this school for disciplinary reasons, all the other students are of Roma ethnicity.

Material conditions

Several years ago, the school started a modernisation process, including the introduction of running water, central heating, indoor toilets, whitewashing the classrooms, and replacing the old windows and doors. This investment in infrastructure was made by the town hall. The old furniture was replaced with new furniture received from the Ministry of Education. However, there are still problems with the conditions at the school, according to the school director, “the school would need a sewage system, now we have the septic tank which is not enough [...]”³⁴⁷

The school has only one computer, which is used by the director and the school staff; the students have no access to computers or computer classes. There is no telephone line or fax machine.

The school received some equipment for the physics lab, posters and equipment for biology, as well as books for the library, which was set up a year ago. Many other teaching aids are out-of-date, however, and the chemistry laboratory is not yet functional, “we don’t have the substances, or microscopes, some of the posters are old and need to be changed”³⁴⁸

The school does not have a gymnasium or sports field, although the area of the school yard is large. The courtyard is somewhat neglected, the fence is broken and there is a lot of garbage around the school.

Human resources

The school has had fluctuating staff, according to the principal. Out of the 13 teachers who make up the teaching staff, only 5 have tenure,³⁴⁹ while seven are substitute teachers who teach at all the three schools in Glina Commune. This fluctuation is especially true for the primary school teachers “who obtain tenure and then they leave”.³⁵⁰ Fluctuation affects tenured and substitute teachers alike. Some teachers

³⁴⁷ Interview with the director of the Bobesti school no. 3, 22 February 2007.

³⁴⁸ Interviews with teachers, Bobest, 22 February 2007.

³⁴⁹ Tenured teachers have passed an examination and have a permanent contract to work in the school. The substitute teachers may have taken the examination and not passed it, so their employment is temporary, for the duration of one school year. At the beginning of every school year, substitute teachers fill the vacancies in the system. Substitute teachers may be qualified or unqualified.

³⁵⁰ Interview with the director of the Bobesti school no. 3, 22 February 2007.

regard Bobesti school as a temporary job: “some stay for a couple of months, others stay for a year”,³⁵¹ a necessary stage to obtain transfer to schools with better student performance.

In the best cases, primary school teachers stay for two or three years. Turnover of the teaching staff is the major problem the school faces, according to the director, who noted “I would not hire them if I knew they were going to stay for a year and then leave”. Of the 13 teachers, only two live in Glina, while the other 11 commute.

The issue of turnover was even worse in previous years. According to the county school inspectorate, in the 2003–2004 school year, staff turnover in the primary school was 26.9 per cent, while in the secondary school it was over 50 per cent.³⁵² In the 2004–2005 school year, according to the county school inspectorate, out of the 19 teachers hired by the school, 14 were not qualified, and four were completing their training.³⁵³

The school has a Romanes teacher and plans to hire a second one. All the students in Bobesti study Romanes.

The school hires a counsellor who is available in the school for four hours a week. The counsellor’s role is to advise the students and the teachers, but so far, due to the reduced number of hours, the counsellor has only been working with the students.

The school does not have a school mediator, although the teachers interviewed stated that one is needed to help improve the relationship between the community and the school, and ultimately to better attendance.³⁵⁴

Patterns of segregation

Teachers who have been teaching in this school for a long time revealed that when it was established and for a good while after that, the school was quite mixed ethnically, and at the very beginning, it was preponderantly Romanian.

About 15–20 years ago, this school had up to 80 per cent Romanian students. Up to the [1989] Revolution, that is. After that, each could choose which school to go to, in Bucharest, Glina, Catelu. Many people looked for schools in the city. After Glina school was built, which was modern, they returned. As the school is better when it is closer to where you stay, the parents chose to send their children to such schools.³⁵⁵

The segregation process unfolded in the transition period, after 1990, as Romanian children were taken out of this school. One of the primary school teachers, who has been working at the school for 12 years, reported that when she was hired, the school

³⁵¹ Interview with the director of the Bobesti school no. 3, 22 February 2007.

³⁵² Information from the Glina County School Inspectorate.

³⁵³ Information from the Glina County School Inspectorate.

³⁵⁴ Interviews with teachers, Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁵⁵ Interview with a teacher in Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

still had approximately 30–40 per cent Romanian students. The same teacher indicated that over time, parents preferred to send their children to school in Bucharest:

They started taking them to Ozana [a neighbourhood in Bucharest] once they bought cars: it is more trendy, it's in the city, it's in Bucharest. In addition, the children enjoy this daily trip to the city, it's a sort of fun for them. I don't think the schools in Bucharest are necessarily better. We have a student who was transferred here in the sixth grade from a school in Ozana, and he is a rather poor student.³⁵⁶

Segregation is not necessarily done on ethnic grounds, but rather on social grounds. Both Romanian and Roma students from Bobesti attend other schools in the commune or schools in Bucharest, but this is more common among ethnic Romanians. According to teachers' estimates, approximately two to three per cent of the Roma from Bobesti choose to send their children to other schools in the commune or in Bucharest.³⁵⁷ One of the schools the Roma parents also choose is School no. 1 in Glina, which is only one kilometre away from the Bobesti school and currently where 10 to 15 per cent of the students come from Bobesti. Parents choose to send their children to School no. 1 Glina because the teaching staff is allegedly better, it has better equipment, and the children are safer there both within and around the school.³⁵⁸

In School no. 1 Glina, although there are two to three Roma children in every class, there is a segregated fourth grade (IV B) where Roma pupils far outnumber Romanians. According to the school inspector, no measures can be taken to sanction the schools for segregation, because the students there do not identify themselves as Roma, and moreover, the Notification issued by the Ministry of Education does not provide for sanctions in case of segregation.³⁵⁹

All the teachers interviewed indicated that it would be good for the school to also have Romanian students, saying:

we would like to attract more Romanian students, now the school, has been modernised [...] this is a school which – if popularised – it could attract Romanian students, too [...] I have been promoting it to people.³⁶⁰

Along with other schools from the county, the Bobesti school applied for funds in the Phare 2005 project "Access to education for Disadvantaged groups", hoping to become a "magnet" school for the Romanian children in the settlement, who at present commute to Bucharest schools or schools in the neighbourhood. The decision is still pending and will hinge on the quality of application submitted by the Ilfov County School Inspectorate.

³⁵⁶ Interview with a teacher in Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁵⁷ Interviews with teachers in Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁵⁸ Interview with parents, Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁵⁹ Interview with school inspector, 22 February 2007.

³⁶⁰ Interviews with teachers in Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

Academic achievement

From grades one to four the school results are rather poor, although according to the director, there have been no cases of functional illiteracy: “[at the end of the fourth grade] there are some who read with difficulty and some who read by syllables”.³⁶¹ However, according to another source, “two to three students in a class cannot read and write”³⁶² School performance is not better in the lower secondary school either. In 2006–2007, none of the pupils who completed grade eight managed to pass the national examination, which would have allowed them to continue their studies in the upper secondary school; previous years were no better:

Last year, out of the 15 students who were supposed to complete the eight grade, 14 had to repeat the year, and the only one who enrolled for the national examination did not manage to pass it.”

A teacher explained failure exclusively on the poverty that dominates the community, and on the lower secondary school students’ engagement in various jobs in the household or outside it:

The community is very poor. In the primary grades, the students keep coming, but as the boys grow up, the parents start using them for work, and if they come to school, they only do it now and then. Others simply don’t feel like coming to school.³⁶³

The director suggested that the poor school performance is due largely to absenteeism, a view confirmed by a report from the Ilfov County School Inspectorate that marks Bobesti School as one of the schools with the highest degree of school absenteeism.³⁶⁴ Moreover, the same report points out that there are no actions that aim at improving attendance, and that the teachers believe the entire responsibility for this situation is of the students’ families.

In the schools where there are problems connected to attendance, there are no programs to remedy the situation, or if there are, they are ineffective, and it is customary to blame the families for absenteeism.³⁶⁵

³⁶¹ Interview with the director of the Bobesti school, 22 February 2007.

³⁶² Interview with a teacher, Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁶³ Interview with a teacher, Bobesti,, 22 February 2007.

³⁶⁴ Ilfov County School Inspectorate, *Raport priviind activitatea ISJ Ilfov, a conducerilor unitatilor de invatamant si a intregului personal din invatamant pe semestrul I, an scolar 2005–2006, pentru sustinerea unui invatamant de calitate in conditiile descentralizarii activitatii in invatamantul preuniversitar* (Report regarding activity of County School Inspectorate Ilfov, on the management of educational institutions and on the activities of the entire education staff in semester I, 2005–2006 school year, for supporting quality education in the circumstances of decentralization in the pre-university education), 2006, available at <http://www.isjilfov.edu.ro/images/stories/raportsemI.doc> (accessed 3 March 2007) (hereafter *Ilfov County School Inspectorate Report*).

³⁶⁵ Ilfov County School Inspectorate Report, p. 14.

As concerns the criteria of completion, Bobesti School ranks 78th out of 80 schools included in the report.³⁶⁶ School completion rates in Bobesti School were 61.4 per cent in the 2005–2006 academic year, as compared to the average of 82.2 per cent (including schools above lower secondary level, with ninth to twelfth grades). In primary education (first to fourth grades), its 82.4 per cent completion rate compared to the county average of 93.5 per cent, putting Bobesti School last among the county's primary schools.³⁶⁷ Completion rates in the lower secondary level (fifth through eighth) were equally low; here the completion rate was only 32.8 per cent as compared to the average completion of 75.2 per cent for this level of schools.

Bobesti School furthermore ranks very low as concerns the percentage of students whose did not complete their grade at the end of the school year: 11.3 per cent of the students in Bobesti School, as compared to the average figure of just under five per cent for the entire school network of Ilfov County.³⁶⁸ At the primary school level, Bobesti School has the worst results, as 8.8 per cent of the children do not have their school situation finalised at the end of the academic year, as compared to the county average figure of 1.3 per cent for primary schools. For lower secondary, the school ranks last but one, with 14.9 per cent of the students without a finalised school situation as compared to the county average of 3.3 per cent. The same report points out that in 2005–2006, there are no cases of non-enrolment in Bobesti School.³⁶⁹

According to the Inspector for Roma Education, if an assessment was made according to the curriculum, only 80 per cent of the primary school children would pass, and the real completion rate in lower secondary school would be closer to 50 per cent.³⁷⁰ He reported that the teachers are not very strict, but this is not only in the preponderantly Roma schools, but also true in majority-Romanian schools as well, "If we consider standards, no student in the Romanian schools could get passing grades."³⁷¹

Except for the participants in the Romanes language Olympiad, the students in Bobesti School have never participated in any school competitions for the lower secondary grades. In the Romanes Olympiad, there were 16 students from the primary grades, and 12 from the lower secondary. Two students will participate in the national level competition in the Romanes language Olympiad.

In the 2006–2007 academic year, there were two cases of repetition in grades one to four, although legally speaking these students in grades one and two cannot be made to repeat the grade. In the same school year, in the lower secondary level, the school recorded 5 cases of disruption of schooling: 4 students dropped out, and one repeated

³⁶⁶ Ilfov County *School Inspectorate Report*, p. 39.

³⁶⁷ Ilfov County *School Inspectorate Report*, pp. 42–43.

³⁶⁸ Ilfov County *School Inspectorate Report*, p. 39.

³⁶⁹ Ilfov County *School Inspectorate Report*, p. 42.

³⁷⁰ Interview with the Roma school inspector, 22 February 2007.

³⁷¹ Interview with the Roma school inspector, 22 February 2007.

the grade. According to the data provided by the school inspectorate for the 2003–2004 school year, the school had 9 students who repeated the year in grades five to eight. In the same year, 35 students dropped out, the higher drop-out rates being recorded in grades six to eight (seven students from each grade level).

Costs

Some families cannot afford the costs of school textbooks, materials and extracurricular activities.

The costs per school year for a family to buy 14–15 textbooks amount to 300 RON (approximately €85), and the cost of other school materials amount to another 300 RON.

Although the school organises extracurricular activities, children from poorer families cannot afford them. The last out-of-school activity was a trip to Bucharest, where the children were taken to the circus, but according to the director, “only some students went, some could not afford it, while some others were not allowed to go by their parents”³⁷².

Relations with the community

Collaboration with parents and the community is sporadic, occasioned by various school celebrations. The interviewed teachers believe that the responsibility for this poor collaboration is with the parents and the students, who are not aware of the school’s role, and they blame the social models who have not gained success as a result of doing well at school.

I believe most of them have the wrong examples to follow – footballers, popular music singers have money etc. – the French teacher has torn shoes, they don’t understand why their children should study.”³⁷³

The parents are not really involved. In the first through fourth grades they come to the school (to parents’ meetings), but as their children grow, in the fifth through eighth grades, they stop coming. They come to the end-of-year celebrations, and to the Christmas celebration, especially the parents of younger students, and the rest don’t. For instance, for the December 1 celebration (Romania’s National Day) no parent showed up. The reasons are the same why they fail to send them to school, too: what can a parent understand if they themselves went to school for two years, about what is taught in schools? Some of them collect metal waste from the dumping site [Ochiul Boului in the vicinity]³⁷⁴

There have been some verbal complaints from the parents as concerns the student’s enrolment in first grade. The complaints reflected the fact that parents were not happy

³⁷² Interview with the director of the Bobesti school, 22 February 2007.

³⁷³ Interview with a teacher, Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁷⁴ Interview with a teacher, Bobest, 22 February 2007.

with the way the teachers were allocated because they did not have their children taught by one of the local teachers who is supposed to obtain good results with the children.³⁷⁵ Other complaints related to the lack of security and protection for the children within the school, as the school has no warden. According to some parents, there have been cases of violence among the children in recess, and sometimes people from outside the school enter the school perimeter and disturb the educational process.³⁷⁶ Some parents took out their children from Bobesti School and had them enrolled in Glina School due to the verbal and physical aggression which the parents say their children were exposed to from people from outside the school.³⁷⁷

Training programmes

The director participated in two training programs within the Phare programme, on the topics of “Inclusive Education” and “Intercultural Education” (this latter was organised by Save the Children Romania), as well as a community development course organised by the Resource Center for Roma Communities. Two primary school teachers and two secondary school teachers participated in IT courses. Center Education 2000 + had a community development programme three years ago, which included the school and community of Bobesti.

There are no bilingual education programmes for the teachers who do not speak Romanes, although there are reportedly language barriers between the students and the teachers especially in the primary grades, and to a lesser extent in the secondary grades.³⁷⁸ Bilingual education courses would be useful especially for primary school teachers.

Beginning this academic year, the school intends to hire a second Romames teacher, and to set up a position for a school mediator, if the county’s application within the Phare programme is approved. However, the school director expects it will be difficult to find a candidate meeting the requirements for the mediator post: “We cannot find people who have completed 12 grades, who are unemployed and willing to work for 3 million ROL [300 RON, €100]. And it’s an unreliable job – for 18 months of project duration.”³⁷⁹

³⁷⁵ Interviews with parents, Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁷⁶ Interviews with parents, Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁷⁷ Interviews with parents, Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁷⁸ Interview with a teacher, Bobesti, 22 February 2007.

³⁷⁹ Interview with school director of Bobesti school no. 3, with grades one to seven, 22 February 2007.

A2.2 Case Study: Șimleu Silvaniei city

A2.2.1 Administrative Unit

Șimleu Silvaniei is a city situated in north-western Romania, in Sălaj County. The city of Șimleu Silvaniei includes in its administration the localities of Bic, Cehei and Pustă;³⁸⁰ the last two districts are the subject of this case study.

The total population of Șimleu Silvaniei recorded in the 2002 census was 16,066 inhabitants. Census figures disaggregated by ethnicity put Roma as the third-largest group in the area: Romanians, 10,553 (or 65.68 per cent); Hungarians, 4,010 or (4.95 per cent); Roma, 1,425 or (8.86 per cent). The rest of the inhabitants declared another ethnic identity.³⁸¹ On the census 1,130 Romanes-speakers were recorded, making up 7.03 per cent of the total population of Șimleu Silvaniei.

A2.2.2 Roma and the Community

The Pustă district is 7 kilometres from the city of Șimleu Silvaniei, and it is a neighbourhood predominantly inhabited by Romanians. On the edge of the Pustă district, in the periphery, is the Pustă Vale district – a residentially segregated Roma community separated from Pustă by a stretch of land approximately 500 metres wide. Although considered to be a district of Șimleu Silvaniei, both Pustă and its periphery bear the general aspect of a rural locality.

In 2002, the Roma community of Pustă Vale officially had 800 inhabitants. According to unofficial data provided by the Șanse Egale Association, in 2005 the Roma community of Pustă Vale had approximately 1,600 inhabitants. According to data provided by the office for urban management of the Șimleu I Silvaniei Town Hall to the Șanse Egale Association, there were 257 households in Pustă Vale. On the other hand, according to a Roma leader in the community itself, the *Bulibasha*, in Pustă Vale there are currently approximately 2,600 inhabitants (of whom 800 are 18 years old or under), living in 339 households. According to the *Bulibasha*, the community of Pustă Vale is the most populated neighbourhood of Șimleu I Silvaniei.

The lack of accurate census data on the population of Pustă Vale is also due to the fact that several families do not possess documents to prove ownership of their houses. Robert Vaszi, the executive director of Șanse Egale, estimates that only 20 per cent of the Roma people hold ownership documents, while the rest cannot prove that they own the land where their household stands, which prevents them from obtaining ownership documents for their houses as they cannot get construction authorisation either. In addition, according to the *Bulibasha's* estimate, approximately 250 people in the community do not have identity cards either, and of this group, over 50 are

³⁸⁰ According to Law 2/1968.

³⁸¹ 2002 census.

children without birth certificates. Roma who do not have ownership papers for their homes are unable to obtain identity cards, if they do not have them already.

The Roma community of Pustă Vale does not form a separate administrative unit but it is managed by the city council and is accounted for within the local budget of the city.

The deputy mayor of Șimleul Silvaniei states that they cannot set aside a separate budget for the community (although it is completely separated residentially), but that in theory there could be an investment policy that could target this community exclusively:

There is no separate budget file. We do not have a budget, or a chapter, or a subchapter in the budget for any of the neighbourhoods of the city separately. If there are investments, then yes, we can target one, but not as an area [...] In the area of Cehei we are replacing the drinking water supply network, an investment called SANCTIT, for small and medium-sized towns, and for the rehabilitation of infrastructure. But we do not have a separate one for Pustă Vale. Now we have built some roads, but this is not in a separate budget file.³⁸²

According to interviews with residents and the *Bulibasha* of Pustă Vale, there have been no investments in the infrastructure of the Roma community:

We went to see the mayor a couple of times to talk about the road. [...] Someone told me to look out because some money has been allocated and that they should also build us a road. I went to the mayor one morning and asked him if he would make the road in the near future. He said that the road to the school would be built because that's how much money they have, and when they get more, they would continue building [the road in the community]. When this will happen we don't know. [...] We had no one to complain to about the [lack of] water [supply]. No matter who we complain to, they don't really pay attention to you. Not only here, but in the country, overall. No one told us anything about the water. It would be good, because the children would be cleaner.³⁸³

The only costs covered by the Town Hall are the maintenance costs for the schools (heating and electricity). According to the executive director of Șanse Egale, the budget allocations for School No. 2, which is exclusively for the Roma children, are much smaller than those for schools for children with other ethnic backgrounds in the town. This was visible from the bad state of repair of the school when we visited it, and from the absence of any renovation work or investment in the building in the last years.

The Roma of Pustă Vale are represented in the Local Council of Șimleul Silvaniei by one villager, who has no right to vote, but only a consulting role within the institution.

³⁸² Interview with Geza Hanis, deputy mayor of Șimleu, 16 October 2006.

³⁸³ Interview with the *Bulibasha* on 14 October 2006.

The Roma community of Pustă Vale is a traditional one: all the members of the community speak Romanes, and they still wear their traditional costumes. The women and the girls have long braided hair; they wear long, flowery patterned skirts in bright colours, and headscarves. The men wear less traditional clothes. According to the Romani language teacher in the school, most of the inhabitants speak the *Calderash* dialect, although some speak the dialects of the *Ursars* and *Spoitors*.³⁸⁴

Pustă Vale is residentially segregated and totally isolated from the rest of Șimleul Silvaniei. The public institutions such as the Town Hall or the police station are over 7 kilometres away from the community, and the hospital is over 10 kilometres away. The community does not have the infrastructure that urban settlements usually have, and it does not even have the minimal infrastructure of a village. At present, there is no paved road to the Roma community of Pustă Vale; the existing dirt road is totally unusable for cars or people in rainy weather.

The isolation of the Roma community is a concern especially as concerns access to school and to health care services. According to the *Bulibasha*, in many cases the local ambulance refuses to go to the community, arguing that there are too few ambulances (two in all), the road is impossible to drive on, and the community is too far out.³⁸⁵ The children have to walk to school for a distance of 6–14 kilometres.³⁸⁶ There is no transport in the community, either public or private. The closest bus stop is 4 kilometres away from the community. For this reason, many of the teachers are also forced to walk this distance to the school.

The only institutions besides the school are two food stores (one on the edge of the community on the side of Pustă), and two churches. The churches – Baptist and Pentecostal – were built after 1990, and are attended by almost 80 per cent of the inhabitants.³⁸⁷ In the community there is only one telephone booth, which is placed on the edge of the area. Access to this phone, in cases of emergency, is especially problematic for people living at the other end of the village, which stretches out for 4 kilometres, and means that they must walk a long distance.

The Pustă Vale community is not connected to the drinking water supply network or to the gas pipes, although this type of infrastructure was recently made available in Pustă, just a kilometre away. The inhabitants of Pustă Vale get their drinking water from the approximately ten wells in the community. According to the executive director of Șanse Egale, the quality of the drinking water in these wells was never examined in a laboratory. The lack of drinking water available from the supply system

³⁸⁴ Interview with the Romanes language teacher on 15 October 2006.

³⁸⁵ Interview with the *Bulibasha* on 14 October 2006.

³⁸⁶ Depending on the position in the community, which stretches out for 4 kilometres, and on the school that they attend. Prior to the visit, 94 children walked to the school in Cehei, which is 7 kilometres away.

³⁸⁷ Reported by Robert Vaszi.

is the major problem that the people interviewed, including the *Bulibasha*, raised, and their major reason for being discontented. Limited and often difficult access to a source of drinking water leads to improper hygiene and can give rise to illnesses.

There is social stratification in the community according to occupational status. Most of them (60 per cent) are in commerce.³⁸⁸ According to data provided by the *Bulibasha*, there are approximately 200 family businesses and other small businesses registered as acting in commerce. The commodities they trade in are feathers (ducks, hens and geese), and walnuts. The Roma who are active in commerce buy the commodities from the villages of the county, and resell them. Feathers are processed in the household. The other 40 per cent of the community members live on social allowances and do seasonal work in agriculture. Thanks to commerce, about 20 per cent of the households are “well off”, according to the *Bulibasha*.

Due to the absence of infrastructure, housing conditions of the Roma are poor, although almost 60 per cent of the houses are made of brick, and the rest of 40 per cent are made of earth or a mixture of earth and dried grass.³⁸⁹ Over 80 per cent of the houses in the community are not connected to the electricity system, because, due to the lack of ownership documents for the houses, no contracts can be made with the electricity supplier. As they are not connected to the electricity network, some households connect to their neighbours’ network, and share the costs of electricity.³⁹⁰ Heating is done with wood collected from the forest nearby and with waste.

According to the *Bulibasha*, the most important issues of the community are lack of drinking water, the current state of educational provision, the lack of a medical unit and of identity cards for some Roma people:

The water, which should be available in the community, because we are talking about hygiene, then education and a medical unit. The people go to town to see a doctor, seven kilometres away. If they call the ambulance, they are asked “Don’t you have cars?” There are two ambulances. And something else: people don’t have identity cards. There are about 250 who don’t have them.³⁹¹

A2.2.3 Education

The school and education network

At present, the vast majority of the children in Pustă Vale study in segregated schools. There are two primary schools and one pre-school in Pustă Vale. The older of the two schools, School No. 2 Pustă Vale, is on the edge of the community, which stretches out

³⁸⁸ As estimated by Robert Vaszi, executive director of “Șanse Egale”.

³⁸⁹ As estimated by Robert Vaszi, executive director of “Șanse Egale”.

³⁹⁰ Interview with Robert Vaszi, executive director of “Șanse Egale”.

³⁹¹ Interview with the *Bulibasha* on 14 October 2006.

for 4 kilometres. The area of the school is less than 100 square metres, and as judged from the outside, the building is in a very bad state of repair. The students' distribution by classes is as shown in Table A5:

Table A5: Case study Şimleu Silvaniei: students in Pustă Vale primary school

Grade	No. of students
1	53
2	52
3	71
4	65

Source: CSI Sălaj³⁹²

The new Pustă Vale school for children in grades one to eight was built in the community with governmental funds (6 billion ROL, 600,000 RON, €200,000). The school has two buildings, one for the primary grades, and the other for the lower secondary. Although it is a new construction, and apparently well built, in fact the land where it was built is improper for constructions because of the underground water infiltrations. The foundation of one of the buildings is visibly affected by water seepage.

As for the infrastructure, we have a problem; there is a spring that was not avoided. It should have been diverted, or a support dam should have been built to prevent the water from seeping in.³⁹³

When the researchers for this report visited the school, it did not have running water, because the supply system relies on a pump which often breaks down. Although the recent standards authorising the operation of a school stipulate that the old latrines must be pulled down, and water closets should be built in the schools, the blueprint of the building did not include toilets, and therefore Turkish-style toilets are provided in the school yard. The two buildings that make up the school have an electric heating system. When researchers visited the school, the headmistress, who was a newcomer, reported that when the building was officially taken into ownership, the builder did not test the heating system. In fact, the headmistress said that she had refused to sign the document passing ownership of the school building to the school, because in her opinion there was the risk of accidents or illness to the children. The school does not have a sports ground or playground for the children. As for the equipment, when the monitoring visit took place, there were no teaching materials, or a library or laboratory

³⁹² CSI Sălaj response to MER Notification No. 29323, sent on 17 August 2005. The cited data are from the annex of this answer.

³⁹³ Interview with the school director, 15 October 2006.

equipment for the lower secondary grades (such as physics, chemistry, biology) and no computers.

According to the local paper, *Salajeanul*, as a result of the notification by the Association Șanse Egale Zalău, submitted together with the Association Șanse Egale pentru Femei și Copii Zalău and ADOSE/S, the problems with infrastructure and some of the problems connected to equipment in the school could soon be resolved.

As for the equipment and teaching material provision for the school, the General School Inspector Ioan Abrudan assured the prefect that by the end of the year, the school would have the necessary equipment for the physics laboratory, and would be able to buy books for 3,200 RON. On this occasion, the prefect Andrei Todea personally donated a computer, and School No. 1 of Șimleu Silvaniei donated a computer and a printer. According to the same press release, measures will be taken to stabilise the land where the school building was raised, to build channels that would direct rainfall away from the building, and to build a playground:

As a result of the discussions, the Town Hall of Șimleu Silvaniei will provide the necessary materials for the channels, as well as the gravel to cover the school yard. Also, the Roma Community Initiative Group, together with the County Office for the Roma of the Prefect's Office and the "Șanse Egale" Association, will manage the levelling works in the school yard to prepare the space for a playground. As for drinking water, promises were made by the CSI of Sălaj County to provide a proper pump for the school.³⁹⁴

At present there are 371 Roma students enrolled in grades one to eight in the Pustă Vale School. The school has two classrooms, and according to a notification of the Sălaj County School Inspectorate,³⁹⁵ 241 students attend this school in the primary grades, distributed in ten classes.

Enrolment and completion

It is not clear how many children go to pre-school. According to a letter sent by the Sălaj County School Inspectorate (CSI)³⁹⁶ the pre-school of Pustă Vale enrolls 30

³⁹⁴ Article "Potrivit institutiei Prefectului, romii de la scoala din Pustă Vale nu sunt segregati" ("According to the Prefect's Office, the Roma in Pustă Vale are not segregated") published in *Salajeanul*, issue 675 of 10.11.2006. The article is available at http://www.salajeanul.ro/arhiva_b.php?act=view&numero=1088.

³⁹⁵ Sălaj County School Inspectorate's reply to the Notification of the Ministry of Education and Research 29323 issued on 20 April 2004 regarding the prohibition of segregation. Statistical data are available in the annexes of the letter.

³⁹⁶ Letter sent by Sălaj CSI to MER on 17 August 2005. The letter includes Sălaj CSI's reply to the ministry's request for a situation of Roma children's school segregation.

children, but on the website of the Sălaj CSI³⁹⁷ the data show that there are 40 children enrolled. On the other hand, a report of Şanse Egale states that the number of children who go to pre-school is approximately 100.³⁹⁸ It is very likely that a large number of pre-school aged children do not go to pre-school at all because the space available at the church is not enough for 100 children. According to the *Bulibasha*, there has been no census of school-age children that could have identified the Roma children who do not attend school (including the preparatory year for school, or “zero year”) due to the lack of birth certificates or other reasons.³⁹⁹

Academic achievement

Parents and teachers alike agree that the school results of the Roma children at School No. 2 Pustă Vale are very poor. According to data provided by the teachers of Pustă Vale, in the 2005–2006 school year alone, 24 students did not pass the year. In addition to the formal recording of school failure (by repetition), the teachers admitted that some of the students cannot read fluently and write at the end of the fourth grade. None of the students from School No. 2 Pustă Vale ever participated in a school competition. In fact, the absence of literacy skills at the end of the fourth grade is the major source of discontent of the interviewed parents:

I was not pleased with what he had learnt before he was moved here. Now he is studying. He has begun to understand, to write his name. He is in the fifth grade.

Before the fifth grade he should have learnt to read and write. Now it's more difficult for him [in lower secondary school].⁴⁰⁰

The reasons for the substandard school results are explained differently by the teachers and the parents. Teachers cite the frequent travel of Roma families as a barrier to continuous education for the children. In addition, according to a teacher, the curriculum is too heavy for the Roma children in the community. Another teacher thinks that the Roma children's school failure is due to the “parents' mentality, that's where all starts from”.

On the other hand, the interviewed Roma parents think that the major reason for the children's poor results is the teachers' lack of interest, the discriminatory attitudes, the

³⁹⁷ Sălaj County School Inspectorate's, *Rețea școlară, Anul școlar 2005–2006* (Data for the 2005–2006 school year), available at http://www.isjsalaj.go.ro/index_files/inv_stat_urban.html (accessed on 1 March 2007).

³⁹⁸ Study on the Situation of Housing in the Roma Communities of Pustă Vale, Dersida and Ileanda – Sălaj county, Romania 2005 (Cercetare privind situația locuințelor în comunitățile de romi din localitățile: Pustă Vale, Dersida, Ileanda – județul Sălaj, Romania 2005), unpublished report elaborated by the association “Şanse Egale”.

³⁹⁹ At the time of writing, the Sălaj CSI had not provided statistical data upon request.

⁴⁰⁰ Interviews with Roma parents from Pustă Vale, 15 October 2006.

lack of school materials and the absence of proper conditions for the educational process.

Patterns of segregation

In early September, one month before the area was visited for this report, the new school for students in grades one to eight was inaugurated in the Pustă Vale community. Before analysing the situation that was created by the newly built school in the Roma community, the manner in which schooling was carried out in the lower secondary grades prior to the building of the new school must first be reviewed.

Up to the beginning of the 2006–2007 school year, lower secondary school-age Roma children (grades five to eight) were educated in the Cehei School, 7 kilometres away from the community. In the Cehei School there were 94 Roma children in grades five to eight, but they used a building that was separated from the school where the Romanian children went. According to a report of Romani CRISS, although the number of the Romanian and the Roma children was equal (188 students, of whom 94 were Roma), the building where the Roma children studied had only two classrooms, while the main building where the Romanian children studied had four.⁴⁰¹ According to the report, the adjacent building where the Roma children studied was improper for a school. In addition to insufficient space, the building was in an advanced state of deterioration, with broken windows and doors, unhygienic conditions, old furniture, a leaking roof, and so on. In addition, during the winter, there was not enough wood to heat the building. The Roma children did not have access to the equipment of the Cehei School (computers and laboratory equipment), and two of the teachers who taught the Roma children were not qualified.

The Romani CRISS report was sent to the National Council for Combating Discrimination (CNCD) in March 2003. Later, the CNCD decided⁴⁰² that the facts presented in detail in the report reflected discrimination, and as a consequence, Cehei School was given a warning. The Ministry of Education and Research made efforts to integrate the school, but the ultimate decision to build a new school and transfer Roma students there entirely violates the principle of desegregation.

The *Bulibasha* thinks that it would be good to have the Roma students go to school with the Romanian students. In his opinion, the presence of the Romanian students could lead to better teaching standards and an increased commitment of the teachers to support the children:

⁴⁰¹ Romani CRISS, *Romani CRISS vs. Inspectoratul Scolar Judetean Sălaj și Școala Cehei – Șimleul Silvaniei. Separarea copiilor romi în școala românească* (Romani Criss vs. the Sălaj County School Inspectorate and Cehei School – Șimleul Silvaniei. Segregation of Roma Children in the Romanian Education System), report, Romani Criss, unpublished.

⁴⁰² CNCD Decision No. 218 of 23 June 2003.

It would have been good to have Romanian students also, because I think that the teachers would have been more committed. It would have been a good thing. The subject matter that is taught to the Roma is also taught to the Romanians.

However, the newly created situation seems to be regarded by the *Bulibasha* with some optimism as compared to the previous educational provision at the school in Cehei and since access to the school in Pustă Vale was denied. The community leader even states that he would have preferred the new school to be for only Roma children, because in this way the discrimination so often encountered in the Cehei School would be avoided:

But because the situation is like this, that we do not have Romanians in the school, I think the teachers cannot discriminate. If this school is not attended, they said they would bus Romanian children from Cehei, so that the school would not be closed down. I think they don't need to bring them. But when it becomes necessary, we would not be able to oppose it. Until then the parents must send their children to school.⁴⁰³

As for the school results that the Roma children obtained in the lower secondary grades, it must be pointed out that in the 2005–2006 school year none of them sat for the national examination, which would have allowed them to go on to high school or vocational school. According to the information provided by the Romanes language teacher, none of the Roma students who completed lower secondary education went on to high school in the recent history of the school. Data about repetition of a grade or school drop-out of the Roma students in Cehei were not available.

A2.3 Case Study: Roman Municipality

A2.3.1 Administrative Unit

Roman Municipality is situated in north-eastern Romania, in Neamţ County, along the European road E 85, which crosses Romania to connect Ukraine with Bulgaria. The total population, according to the 2002 census, is 69,268 inhabitants, out of whom 1,594 (2.3 per cent) are Roma, the largest minority and the second-largest ethnic group after the Romanians (67,210 people or 97.02 per cent).⁴⁰⁴

The unofficially estimated number of the Roma inhabitants is approximately 14,000 people,⁴⁰⁵ with the largest Roma community inhabiting Noua Street. The Roma of

⁴⁰³ Interview with the *Bulibasha* on 14 October 2006.

⁴⁰⁴ See 2002 census data available on the Resource Centre for Ethno Cultural Diversity website at http://www.edrc.ro/recensamant.jsp?regiune_id=1&judet_id=253&localitate_id=255 (accessed on 7 March 2007).

⁴⁰⁵ Estimates of the total number of the population of Roman, as well as of the number of Roma inhabitants (officially identified or not), were provided by the mayor, Mr. Dan Ioan Carpusor.

Roma Municipality are represented in the local council by one Roma councillor, elected in the 2004 local elections.

A survey carried out by the Town Hall reveals the “presence of the Roma” as the third-biggest issue of the municipality, after water supply (the most severe issue), roads (the second most severe), and before dogs (the fourth most severe issue). The major problem of the Roma community, underscored by the mayor of the municipality, is lack of education, which leads to poverty and to behaviour issues in society.

A2.3.2 Roma and the Community

Background

The Roma community is situated in the Olimpic neighbourhood, which – according to the mayor – is within the perimeter of Roman, and appeared “as a necessity”. Until 2001, there was an old apartment building put up in the Communist regime, with 104 one-room apartments in the Mihai Eminescu neighbourhood downtown. Approximately 90 per cent of the people who lived in the building were Roma, and the rest were Romanians. By 2001, the building had been turned into a sort of ghetto at the heart of the town, with no utilities: no heating, no electricity and no sewage system. In 2001, the Roma from the centre of the town were moved to the Satul Olimpic neighbourhood, so as to mitigate the tensions between the Roma and the Romanians, who threatened to set the building on fire.⁴⁰⁶

That was the building where the thieves of Moldova met, and exchanged tips. Most of the people there were being prosecuted. They had the entire neighbourhood living in fear and since 1989 the various mayors had tried to solve the issue by involving the police [...] In 2000, because there was such a lot of pressure from the population that we risked a major conflict between the Roma and the Romanians, which I had to mediate with the support of the police, we decided to develop a 12-billion-project with funds from the citizens [...] What did we do? We bought some stables from a company, which was within the building perimeter of the town⁴⁰⁷ [...] and we hired a designer to do the technical project: we got all the authorisations that were needed and we created better living conditions for them than there [downtown] [...] they have a room, a heating stove which works, electricity, water, and outhouses [...]

[...] the moving out itself was recorded [on videotape] and we were praised for the way we handled the Roma issue. We moved them from there, where they lived like in the Stone Age [...] in a whitewashed room, with tarmac roads leading up to the building, with toilets, water, heating stove and wood, which we (the Town Hall) pay for [...] this is what the local authority was able to do. We collected 12 billion so as to mitigate the situation; they

⁴⁰⁶ Interview with the mayor of Roman, 2 November 2006.

⁴⁰⁷ According to the mayor, there is another neighbourhood there, where about 2,000 people live.

wanted to set them on fire. The DIAS (Special Intervention) troops from Piatra had to come out twice to prevent the conflict from getting worse.⁴⁰⁸

Present situation

According to the leader of the local Roma community, Mr. Mircea Daraban, about 2,000 people live in the Olimpic neighbourhood, out of whom an estimated 40 per cent are men. The Roma live in 204 rooms, which had been stables before they were turned into rooms.

The mayor of the town pointed out that the Roma families who were moved out of the centre and into Olimpic (Fabricii Street) were given contracts:

This is what is happening – because this is their habit – they brought in other people too, relatives from the countryside. This phenomenon cannot be controlled; it is the job of the police. The police raid them periodically and check who has a contract and who doesn't, and they give them fines. In fact, they don't even do that because they are all on social support programmes.⁴⁰⁹

Later, with support from the Pacea Foundation, the Town Hall built a medical unit in Olimpic. The Town Hall also made agricultural land behind the houses in Olimpic available to the people there to use. Also, a coin-operated telephone booth was put in, but “two days after it had been put in the pole was taken down and burnt”.⁴¹⁰

At present, the Roman Town Hall is preparing a project to bring gas for heating into the Roma community of Olimpic.

I have a project that I am working on to have gas pipes put in. But it may be in vain, because they won't have the money to pay the gas bill.⁴¹¹

The leader of the local “Romii Romascani” association, Liviu Daraban, points out that for the Roma inhabitants, access to public services in Olimpic is difficult given the distance between the community and the downtown area. For instance, the municipal hospital is approximately 4–5 kilometres away from the community, the police station 5–6 kilometres away, the public clinic approximately 5 kilometres away, the marketplace 3–4 kilometres away, and the Town Hall 4–5 kilometres away. When they go to town, the Roma people take a shortcut across the train tracks.⁴¹²

The mayor states that the vast majority of the Roma community are beneficiaries of social allowances. Some 30–40 people have also been employed by the town cleaning

⁴⁰⁸ Interview with the mayor of Roman, 2 November 2006.

⁴⁰⁹ Interview with the mayor of Roman, 2 November 2006.

⁴¹⁰ Interview with the mayor of Roman, 2 November 2006.

⁴¹¹ Interview with the mayor of Roman, 2 November 2006.

⁴¹² There is another access road, too, which goes round the community first crossing Cordon, neighbouring on Roman. The distance along this is approximately 7 kilometres.

service. Roma people receive emergency funds from the Town Hall, either in the form of firewood, or as medical intervention.

The best Roma neighbourhood in Roman is in Noua Street; the people here have access to the sewage system, running water, electricity, public lighting and tarmac-covered roads. According to the mayor, the opposite of this case is Olimpic.

The Roma people's major sources of income are, according to Mayor Dan Ioan Carpusor, "thieving, social security and emergency aid",⁴¹³ and as for occupations, most Roma people are unqualified workers.

As for a Roma family's monthly budget, both the mayor and the local Roma leader⁴¹⁴ estimate that this is somewhere between 100 and 200 RON a month from social security benefits (approximately €30–60), except for the people who are employed in public cleaning (garbage collection), who have larger incomes (approximately 400 RON, €120).

According to the local leader, approximately 90 per cent of the Roma who live in Olimpic neighbourhood live under the poverty line. They have no relationship with the non-Roma members of the community.

A2.3.3 Education

School and education network

After the Roma community was moved from the centre of the municipality to Olimpic, they set up classrooms for the Roma children's education in one of the stables. However, the County School Inspectorate stepped in and moved the children to another school, apparently in line with reforms taken as part of Romania's accession process to the European Union.

As for funding for the municipality's schools from the local budget, the mayor states that over half of it is passed on to the schools.⁴¹⁵ The Town Hall only withholds expenses for maintenance. For instance, for the operation of the schools (heating, telephone costs, Internet connection, electricity) they allocate annually 3.5 million RON (over €1 million). Also, for the maintenance costs (such as roof repairs, toilets, sports grounds) the Town Hall allocates 1.2 million RON (€360,400). In each school the Town Hall had central heating put in, so that at present heating is not an issue.

At present, approximately 100 Roma students go to school, in School No. 3 Roman for first- to eighth-graders (the former General School No. 3 Roman),⁴¹⁶ and 20 people

⁴¹³ According to information obtained from interviewing the mayor of Roman, Mr. Dan Ioan Carpusor, on 2 November 2006.

⁴¹⁴ Mr. Daraban Mircea.

⁴¹⁵ The total annual budget of Roma is 8 million RON (€2.4 million).

⁴¹⁶ At present, this is under the administration of the Sports School of Roman.

are enrolled in the remedial education class that is part of the national “Second Chance” programme (see section 3.2).⁴¹⁷

In September 2006, School No. 3 merged with the Sports School Roman, and at present it is under the latter’s administration. The budget allocated for the previous period (April–September 2006) was, according to the chief accountant of the institution, 433,000 RON (€130,030) for personnel, utilities, scholarships, and other costs.

In the 2006–2007 school year, there were 19 classes in the school, of which two were for pre-primary education, ten for primary education (grades 1–4), and seven for grades 5–8. The total number of students is 320, of whom 231 are Romanians (72.19 per cent) and 89 Roma (27.81 per cent). From the Olimpic neighbourhood, only the students from grades 1–4 go to the Sports School, the others (grades 5–8) go to the Danubiana Technical College Roman. There are six special needs students who were included in the mainstream school.

The Neamţ County School Inspectorate declined to provide any information on the situation of Roma children in the Sports School. The distribution by years, according to an official reply sent by the Roma Sports School to Romani CRISS, is presented below:

Table A6: Case study Roman Municipality: number of students at the Rom Sports School (school year 2006–2007)

Grade	No. of groups / classes	Number of children		
		Total	Romanians	Roma
Pre-primary	2 groups	48	28	20
1	2 classes	34	17	17
2	2 classes	36	20	16
3	3 classes	40	20	14
4	3 classes	46	29	17
5	2 classes	32	30	2
6	1 classes	22	22	0
7	2 classes	33	31	3
8	2 classes	34	34	0
Total		320	231	89

Source: Romani CRISS⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁷ According to the Roma leader of the community, Mr. Daraban Mircea.

Human resources

There is no Romanes language teacher in the school, but there is a Roma school mediator hired by the Pacea Foundation. There are 11 teachers (seven primary school teachers and four secondary teachers) who were trained to use active learning strategies in the Phare project.

Enrolment and retention

According to the school mediator, there have been cases of Roma children dropping out of school, because the students “are sent to work and to beg”.⁴¹⁹ The mayor agreed that gradually there will be children who will start missing school, because of their social situation, as well as because the parents are illiterate, know how to “steal” or are in prison.⁴²⁰

Patterns of segregation

According to the leader of the Association *Romii Romascani*, the Roma classes that were moved from the Olimpic neighbourhood study separately from the Romanians, on the first floor of the main building. On the other hand, the deputy director, Ms Ana Borcab, states that in the first grades the students are mixed, so that the Roma students share classes with majority students.

School–community relations

Roma parents state that they are pleased with the way in which teaching is carried out at present, because the students are given homework, they are provided with a meal and there is an after-school programme that starts at noon and ends at four in the afternoon.

Education policies and programmes

About the educational programmes implemented for the Roma community in Roman, especially the Phare “Access to Education for Disadvantaged Groups, with a Special Focus on Roma” especially problematic (see section 3.2.2) the mayor states that it has not helped the Roma at all.

Apart from a programme in School No. 7 Roman, the mayor does not know about any educational programmes for the Roma or about any NGO that may have implemented such a programme. However, he states that the mayor’s office submitted various projects that were not funded.

When asked about the implementation of the “Education” chapter from the Government’s *Strategy for the Improvement of the Condition of the Roma*, the mayor

⁴¹⁸ Official reply sent by the Roma Sports School to Romani CRISS dated 17 January 2007.

⁴¹⁹ Interview with the school mediator, 1 November 2006.

⁴²⁰ Interview with the mayor of Roman, 2 November 2006.

points out that the first step was taken for the integration of Roma by the previous Government. Also, according to him, the Roma are abandoned, because there are Roma communities who face very severe financial problems:

Unless there are programmes to integrate the Roma, things will be complicated. There will be tension as in other towns. If people have nothing to eat [...] you give so you live! Education is the key.⁴²¹

⁴²¹ Interview with the mayor of Roman, 2 November 2006.

ANNEX 3. LEGISLATION CITED IN THE REPORT

Constitution

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Law No. 354/2004 to Modify and Complete the Education Act No. 84/1995 (*LEGE nr. 354 din 15 iulie 2004 pentru modificarea și completarea Legii învățământului nr. 84/1995*, available at http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.http_act?ida=51100 (accessed on 1 March 2007).

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Framework Law No. 339/2004 on Decentralisation (*LEGE-CADRU nr.339 din 12 iulie 2004 privind descentralizarea*) available at http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.http_act?ida=50949 (accessed on 1 March 2007).

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Decisions

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<http://dgaspc.cchr.ro/UserFiles/File/rof%20DGASPC%202005.pdf> (accessed on 1 March 2007).

Government Decision no. 410 of 23 March 2004, regarding the Organisation and Functioning of the Ministry of Education and Research (*Hotărârea de Guvern nr. 410/20.03.2004 privind organizarea și funcționarea Ministerului Educației și Cercetării*)

Government Decision No. 1942/2004 Regarding the Nomination of the Eight Pilot Counties in which the Decentralisation of School Funding and Administration is Applied (*Hotărârea de Guvern nr. 1942–2004 privind desemnarea celor 8 județe pilot în care se aplica noul sistem de finanțare și administrare a unităților de învățământ preuniversitar de stat*)

Government Decision no. 1251/2005 regarding Some Measures for Improving Activities of Learning, Teaching, Compensatory, Catch-up and Special Protection of Children, Pupils and Young People with Special Educational Needs from the Special Education System and Integrated Special Education (*Hotărârea Guvernului nr.1251/2005 privind unele măsuri de îmbunătățire a activității de învățare, instruire, compensare, recuperare și protecție specială a copiilor/levelilor/tinerilor cu cerințe educative speciale din cadrul sistemului de învățământ special și special integrat*). Available in Romanian at

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Government Urgency Ordinance No. 192/1999 of 8 December 1999, regarding the Setting Up of the National Agency for Protection of Children's Rights and Reorganisation of Child Protection Activities (*ORDONANȚĂ DE URGENȚĂ nr.192 din 8 decembrie 1999 privind înființarea Agenției Naționale pentru Protecția Drepturilor Copilului și reorganizarea activităților de protecție a copilului*), available at http://www.cdep.ro/pls/legis/legis_pck.http_act?ida=23094 (accessed on 1 March 2007).

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