

# **Needs Assessment: Summary Report<sup>1</sup>**



## **A Background Document prepared for the Roma Education Fund Donors' Conference**

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## **I. Background and Objectives**

In July 2003, the first high-level regional conference on Roma: “Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future” was held in Budapest, Hungary. Participating countries were Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovakia. The conference was co-financed by the World Bank, the Open Society Institute (OSI), the European Commission, UNDP, the Council of Europe Development Bank and the governments of Hungary, Finland and Sweden.

The conference resolved to (a) establish a Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, during which countries would focus on reducing disparities in key economic and human development outcomes for Roma; and (b) establish an international Roma Education Fund (REF). At the conference, the World Bank committed to undertake the technical work necessary to establish the REF, in consultation with international organizations and donors, Roma and other stakeholders. This needs assessment was undertaken to provide the background information necessary for the establishment of the Fund.

The objectives of this needs assessment are to summarize the context for the REF and to identify the issues and challenges which Roma face in the eight “Decade countries” that will be the initial focus of the Fund’s operations. It aims to identify options for the interventions of the Fund, and to provide an aggregate estimate of the potential funding requirements. This assessment is not intended to be exhaustive or conclusive. Rather, it is a first step. Further in depth analysis at the country and local level will be necessary for the Fund once it begins operations. However, this assessment provides a start by outlining the extent of the issues and possible interventions. It is also envisaged that, over time, additional countries, beyond the initial eight, will participate in the Fund. These could include countries in Central and Eastern Europe, or in Western Europe.

The assessment is in four parts. Part I presents descriptive information on the state of Roma education in the eight countries that will participate in the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-15 and will be the initial target countries for grants from the REF. Part II reviews the education sections of these countries’ Decade Action Plans, showing considerable commonality of approaches, but very different financing arrangements and plans. Part III indicates the types of programs and projects that the Fund might support through its operations. Finally, Part IV estimates the financing needs which must be made available from the eight Decade countries and other sources if the education gap between Roma and non-Roma in these countries is to be closed by 2015. The REF can only be expected to provide a relatively small share of these funding needs.

This assessment is based on a number of background sources, including: (a) ten background papers commissioned especially for this purpose<sup>2</sup>, (b) the findings of an education workshop organized jointly by the Open Society Institute and the World

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<sup>2</sup> The authors of the reports were: Eva Sobotka (Critical Review of Roma Educational Interventions and their Cost-Outcome Assessment); Betty Loukanova (Bulgaria); Petra Hobljaj (Croatia); Ilona Klimova (Czech Republic); Agnes Kende and Balazs Kremer (Hungary); Divna Lakinska (FYR Macedonia); Catalina Ulrich (Romania); Saša Milic (Montenegro); Milena Mihajlovic (Serbia); Andrej Salner (Slovak Republic). The World Bank has also commissioned a focus study on desegregation and integration programs which will look at experiences and lessons in the US and several European and Latin American countries.

Bank to assist countries to prepare their education Decade Action Plans<sup>3</sup>, (c) discussions with many people involved in Roma education, (d) the experience of various donors – especially the Open Society Institute – with projects in Roma education, and (e) on analytical work carried out in the World Bank on the costs of education programs in the countries. This report is not intended to be a detailed summary of all of the background materials. The situation of Roma differs considerably across countries, and this brief summary does not adequately reflect these contrasts. Interested readers should refer directly to the source material.

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<sup>3</sup> Further information on the website can be found at: [www.worldbank.org/roma](http://www.worldbank.org/roma).

## **PART I: SITUATION ANALYSIS**

### **I. How Many Roma Children Are There?**

Across the countries included in this study, Roma are significantly younger than majority populations, and have higher birth rates. In the coming years, the share of school-age Roma children will be increasing relative to majority populations. This has implications for education systems, both in terms of planning for the number and location of schools and teachers, as well as for designing measures to ensure Roma school participation, and for teacher training and curriculum reform to adjust school systems to the increasing diversity of their students.

#### ***Methodological Issues***

At the outset it is essential to recognize the limitations of quantitative data related to Roma. Access to credible and high quality data on Roma – including on simple indicators such as population size – is a serious challenge across countries and was faced by all the researchers involved in this study. Census data significantly undercount Roma because of the common practice of relying on self-identification. Administrative data on Roma education are also frequently lacking because of privacy legislation which prohibits the collection of data based on ethnicity. For example, Czechoslovakia stopped collecting data on students by ethnicity in 1990, and Hungary followed suit in 1993.<sup>4</sup>

Even where administrative data are available, the data may not be complete or accurate. A qualitative study in Bulgaria found that administrative data failed to capture significant numbers of Roma children who had never attended school because Roma households were not registered or because of gaps in school databases. Given the serious limitations of data, a combination of multiple data sources and qualitative information tends to be the most pragmatic approach. This study draws from various research and data sources identified in the country background papers. Source information is quoted here and more detailed information is provided in the background papers.<sup>5</sup>

Another important caveat at the outset is the rich diversity of Roma populations both across and within countries. There are numerous cross-cutting subgroups of Roma based on family clans, occupational groups and religion. Use of the Roma language still prevails among some Roma communities, and there are numerous dialects. The diversity of Roma creates significant challenges for researchers and policy makers. Any generalizations are necessarily tentative and should be considered with attention to this diversity.

#### ***Population Size***

Estimates of the size of the Roma population in Europe range from 7 to 9 million. Approximately 70 percent of Roma in Europe live in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and nearly 80 percent of this population live in countries that joined the European Union in 2004, or are in accession negotiations. Roma are estimated to make up between six and eleven

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<sup>4</sup> For more information on the issues surrounding data refer to *Roma Rights* special issue on “Ethnic Statistics,” European Roma Rights Center, Number 2, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Refer to Ringold, et al., 2004 for further information on the methodological constraints.

percent of the populations of Bulgaria, FYR Macedonia, Romania and the Slovak Republic

Across countries, the share of Roma under 20 years of age is up to twice as high as the total population. According to the latest available census data, 41-55 percent of Roma in the Decade countries are under 20 years of age, while the share is generally half that for the total population (Table #).

**Table #: A Comparison of Youth Populations (census data, latest year)**

	% under age 20	
	Roma	Total
Bulgaria	44	20 <sup>a</sup>
Croatia	55	--
Republic of Montenegro	55	--
Romania	46	24
Republic of Serbia	41	22
Slovakia	49	19 <sup>b</sup>

Sources: Latest census data from country reports.

Notes: (a) Refers to ethnic Bulgarian population; (b) refers to ethnic Slovak population.

Because of higher birth rates among Roma, relative to the rest of the population, these shares are likely to increase in coming years. In the eight countries – with the exceptions of Serbia and Montenegro and Macedonia – population growth rates are projected to be negative or zero between 2002 and 2015.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, Roma populations are growing, and are projected to increase relative to total populations. In Slovakia, the Roma population is forecasted to increase by 140,000 persons, or 37 percent, by 2025.<sup>7</sup> By 2015, the proportion of Roma children in primary school (the first eight years of compulsory education) could increase to 15 to 25 percent of the total age group of 6 to 15 year olds.<sup>8</sup>

There are currently an estimated 0.6-1.3 million Roma of primary school age in the eight countries.<sup>9</sup> These figures are based on a combination of census data, surveys, and informal estimates (Table 1). As discussed above, there are significant limitations on the data. However, for the purposes of the analysis in this study – particularly in section 3 on financing – the upper range of estimates (a total of 1.3 million children) is used. Further work will be needed in all countries to refine these estimates. Census data indicate a total of 9.8 million primary school age children in the eight countries – indicating that nearly 13 percent of primary school age children are currently Roma.

<sup>6</sup> *World Development Indicators, 2004*, The World Bank.

<sup>7</sup> Forecast by the Center for Demographic Research (Infostat, November 2002).

<sup>8</sup> The Slovak report estimates that the share of Roma of primary school age group will reach 16 percent by 2015; according to the Hungarian report, in 2008-09, 15 percent of the children due to start school are expected to be Roma, representing an increase of 37 percent from the present proportion (11%).

<sup>9</sup> Primary school refers to grades 1-8. Ages of compulsory education vary by country, generally 6/7-14/15.

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe**

Country (most recent census)	Bulgaria (2001)	Czech Republic (2001)	Croatia (2002)	Hungary (2003)	Macedonia (2002)	Montenegro (2003)	Romania (2002)	Serbia (2002)	Slovakia (2001)
Total population ('000 000)	7	1	4	10	2	0.67	21	7 <sup>10</sup>	5.4
Estimated Roma population ('000s)	550 – 800 <sup>11</sup>	175-200 <sup>12</sup>	40 – 100 <sup>13</sup>	520 – 650 <sup>14</sup>	135 <sup>15</sup>	20-28 <sup>16</sup>	1.5-2,000	450 - 500 <sup>17</sup>	90-380 <sup>18</sup>
% of Roma in total population (estimates and census data)	8 – 10	1.7-2 <sup>19</sup>	1- 2.5; 0.2	5-8	3-8 (census, estimates)	4-5 (estimate including IDP) <sup>20</sup>	2-8 (census, estimates)	6 <sup>21</sup>	7
Size of total primary school age group ('000)	710	1,700 (0-14 age group)	400	1,000	235	250	2,100	430 <sup>22</sup>	730 (age 5-14)
Estimated size Roma of primary school age ('000). Estimates and census data.	91-240	65 (census) – 75 (0-14 age group)	3-30	150	24	5-8	126-600	83-90 <sup>23</sup>	22 -100 <sup>24</sup>

Note: Where ranges are shown, the lower estimate is census data; the upper estimate is from the best possible unofficial population source cited in the country background assessment.

## II. Roma Poverty

For reasons discussed in this assessment, education is a starting point for breaking the poverty cycle for Roma. Education is closely linked to welfare status,

<sup>10</sup> Census of Population, households and Apartments in 2002

<sup>11</sup> This estimate figure is according to the Police data and expert statements. According to the unofficial data of the local authorities and the Ministry of Interior, the approx. number of Roma in Bulgaria is 577,000.

<sup>12</sup> Czech Statistical Office.

<sup>13</sup> According to estimates by the Council of Europe, there are 40,000 Roma while activist in Roma Organizations overestimate the figure to be around 100-150,000 Roma in Croatia

<sup>14</sup> Hungarian National Survey

<sup>15</sup> According to official 2002 census data of the State Statistical Bureau, the number of Roma in Macedonia is 53,879, while field research show there are 150,000 Roma (Petrovski, T. 2000; 56-57) or 135,490 Roma (A.Elezovski, 2003; 1-2)

<sup>16</sup> The estimate is for 20,000 Roma, out of which 5000 are from Kosovo, around 13,3300 refugees from former Yugoslav republics and 28,000 IDPs from Kosovo.

<sup>17</sup> Common estimate made by experts; Roma leaders estimate a significantly higher number between 800,000 and 1 million.

<sup>18</sup> Census data and research by Vano, 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Source: Census 2001 in the Czech Republic

<sup>20</sup> Expert estimate from the Consultant report

<sup>21</sup> Estimate made by experts, the census has lower estimates while the Roma leaders put in a significantly higher estimate.

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Education data

<sup>23</sup> Census data.

<sup>24</sup> Census data and Infostat.

and the living conditions faced by many Roma in Central and Southeast Europe are dire. Roma are poorer than other groups, more likely to fall into poverty, and more likely to remain poor. In some cases, poverty rates for Roma are more than ten times that of non-Roma. A 2003 survey of Roma in Serbia found that Roma poverty rates were ten times higher than non-Roma. A 2000 survey found that nearly 80 percent of Roma in Romania and Bulgaria were living on less than \$4.30 per day. Even in Hungary, one of the most prosperous accession countries, 40 percent of Roma live below the poverty line.

### ***Why are Roma Poor?***

For several interwoven reasons Roma poverty is rooted in their unfavorable starting point at the outset of the transition from planned to market economies. Low education levels and overrepresentation among low-skilled jobs led to disadvantages on the labor market, which are compounded by discrimination and low expectations of employers. Roma have thus had more difficulty re-entering the job market than other groups and have become caught in a vicious circle of impoverishment. Additional barriers include a lack of access to credit and clear property ownership. These factors, combined with an overdependence on welfare, create a poverty trap that precludes many Roma from improving their living conditions or starting their own businesses.

Persistent disadvantages in education, including low school attendance and overrepresentation in “special schools” (discussed further below) intended for physically and mentally disabled children, make it highly probable that, without policy interventions, the next generation of Roma will remain in poverty. Moreover, very few Roma are active in local or national politics, which mutes their political voice.

Access to social services in Eastern Europe’s transition period has been threatened by a growing needs and tight fiscal constraints. These conditions have brought formal and informal charges for previously free services and eroding service quality. Roma are particularly hurt by increasing barriers to access because they are at a higher risk of poverty and are often geographically isolated.

Similarly, because Roma frequently live in settlements where property ownership is unclear, or in remote areas, they may lack the documentation necessary for enrolling in school and claiming social assistance or health benefits. The high prevalence of Roma in informal sector employment – such as petty trade and construction – also limits their access to benefits based on social insurance contributions, including health care and unemployment benefits.

Social and cultural factors also affect access and interactions with service providers. Because of language barriers, Roma may have difficulty communicating with teachers, understanding doctors, and maneuvering through local welfare offices. Poor communication and stubborn stereotypes of both Roma and non-Roma breed mistrust and reinforce preconceptions on both sides. Moreover, the overall absence of Roma personnel involved in policy design and delivery of public services means that few individuals can bridge between cultures.

### **III. Education Status**

The education status of Roma has historically been low across Europe. While forced assimilation efforts during the socialist period led to significant gains in enrolling Roma children in school, the gap in the educational attainment of Roma and

the rest of the population was not bridged in any of the countries for which data are available. In the context of socialist assimilation campaigns, education was viewed as an instrument of political and economic socialization which would facilitate the inclusion of Roma into society and the economy. However, despite the achievements in reducing literacy and increasing school participation, the efforts undertaken during the socialist era laid the foundation for inequities in education quality, as many Roma were channeled into separate or segregated schools outside the mainstream system. The evidence suggests that access has eroded since the transition from socialism, and Roma children of basic school age are increasingly not starting or finishing school.

### ***Educational Attainment***

Gaps in the educational attainment of Roma and majority populations in the Decade countries are stark. Census data illustrate the differentials. Across countries, 70-80 percent of Roma populations have less than a primary school education, while very few have completed primary and secondary education. Some Roma have no education at all and less than 1 percent of Roma continue on to higher education. As an example, in 2002 in Serbia, 63 percent of Roma had not completed primary school, in contrast with 33 percent of the total population. 27 percent of Roma had completed primary, 8 percent secondary, and less than 1 percent higher education.<sup>25</sup> In Bulgaria, according to the 2001 census, 81 percent of Roma had a primary school education or less. Similar patterns exist in the other countries.

Education levels vary notably within countries, between urban and rural areas, and across different types of Roma communities. In Hungary, for example, a 1993 survey found that the share of Roma who had not completed primary education was 16 percent in Budapest, 24 percent in towns, and 27 percent in villages, reflecting different constraints to access (Puporka and Zádori 1999).

Differences between types of Roma are also important. For example, the same survey found that the share of Roma with less than basic education was 23 percent for the Romungro Roma (whose native language is Hungarian), 42 percent for the Bayash (native language Romanian), and 48 percent for the Wallach Roma (native language is Roma) (Puporka and Zádori 1999). Similar findings have been noted in Bulgaria.

### ***Enrollments and Attendance***

Disparities in enrollments between Roma and non-Roma indicate that the gaps in educational attainment will persist into the next generation. Because of the lack of administrative data described above, there is very limited information on enrollments and attendance of Roma students. Household survey data provides the best source of information. A 2000 survey of poverty and ethnicity found that primary school enrollment rates for Roma in Bulgaria were 33 percent lower than for non-Roma, while in Romania, the difference was 20 percent. In Hungary, where a larger share of Roma continue on to secondary school, the gap in primary enrollments was not significant (less than 2 percentage points).

Enrollment rates tell only part of the story. In some cases, students may enroll at the beginning of the year but not actually attend school. In addition, enrollment rates indicate only whether children are enrolled in school – and not whether they are enrolled in the appropriate level. A significant share of Roma begin compulsory education late. In Hungary, 50 percent of Roma children start first grade at the

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<sup>25</sup> According to the 2002 Census.



required age. In Croatia the figure was 28 percent.<sup>26</sup> Roma are also more likely to repeat grades than other students. Data from the Slovak Ministry of Education showed that in the 2001/2 school year 1,917 Roma students completed the mandated ten years of school attendance prior to completing the ninth-grade, indicating a high rate of repeating grades.

Pre-school enrollment rates for Roma are very low across countries – estimated at 1 percent of children in Slovakia and 3 percent in Serbia and Montenegro. In general, pre-school and kindergarten enrollment rates fell in the early 1990s as subsidies for schools connected to state enterprises were withdrawn and fees were introduced. In the Slovak Republic in 1990, 80 percent of Roma children aged 3-6 attended pre-school. This dropped by 60 percent in the 1991 school year. By 1997, less than 20 percent of Roma children were thought to attend.<sup>27</sup> In Hungary, where pre-school is compulsory for all children at age 5, 11 percent of Roma did not attend school in 1997.<sup>28</sup>

Because of the low rates of completion of primary education, few Roma make it on to secondary school, and even fewer complete secondary school. Participation rates vary across countries. With rare exceptions (such as Hungary), not more than 20-25 percent of Roma continue education after compulsory education. In other countries, the rate is less than 10 percent, in comparison with 60-90 percent in the population as a whole. Those Roma who do go to secondary school most frequently enroll in vocational training schools, and only 1-3 percent attend more general secondary schools which allow students to continue on to university. This pattern limits future opportunities in education and in the labor market. Across countries, the share of Roma participating in university and other post-secondary education is negligible at 2 percent in Hungary and less than 1 percent in the other countries.

Drop-outs from compulsory education are a serious issue in nearly all of the countries. Children most commonly leave school at the “breaking points” in the school cycle, when students transfer between schools, or when the educational cycle changes. For example, many drop out following fourth grade, when subject teaching starts, or after the compulsory cycle ends. The share of Roma not continuing primary education beyond fourth grade varies across countries, from 15-20 percent in Bulgaria to 69 percent in Montenegro (Table #). Hungary is an exception, where dropouts are a more serious issue at the secondary level.

**Table #: Selected Education Indicators (latest available year)**

	Bulgaria	Croatia	Czech Republic	Montenegro	Romania	Serbia
% of Roma enrolling in 1 <sup>st</sup> grade			91 (research)	64 (estimate)	82 (research)	75- 90 (research)
% Roma children not continuing primary	15 - 20	20 (estimate)	11-15 (research)	69 (estimate)	30 (research)	50 (research)

<sup>26</sup> Data from the country assessment reports.

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Radó, P. 1997. *Report on the Education of Roma Students in Hungary*. Expert Study for the Office of National and Ethnic Minorities (ONEM), Budapest, Hungary: ONEM and the OSI Institute for Educational Policy.

s of Romany Population under Current Social and Economic Conditions.” Bratislava.

<sup>28</sup> Radó, P. 1997. *Report on the Education of Roma Students in Hungary*. Expert Study for the Office of National and Ethnic Minorities (ONEM), Budapest, Hungary: ONEM and the OSI Institute for Educational Policy.

education beyond the 4 <sup>th</sup> grade % of Roma children not completing compulsory education	32	60 (estimate)	44 (research)- 85 (estimate)	92 (estimate)	64 (research)	63 (census)
Dropout rate of Roma between 1 <sup>st</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> (9 <sup>th</sup> ) grade	20 - 32	9-12 yearly (estimate)		9-16 yearly (research)	8-9 yearly (research)	50 (research)

Sources: Country assessment reports. "Research" data are from surveys; "estimates" are estimates of the country teams reported in the country assessment reports.

The absence of enrollment and attendance data makes it difficult to estimate the total gap in participation in compulsory education for Roma children in the Decade countries. However, based on the country reports, on average, Roma children spend 3 to 4 years less in compulsory primary education than the total populations.

Disparities in school participation by gender deserve special attention. While the serious lack of data disaggregated by both gender and ethnicity makes drawing conclusions difficult, the data that are available suggest that the situation is mixed across countries. Data for Montenegro reveal significant disparities. In the 2003/2004 school year, 66 percent of Roma children in primary school were boys, while only 34 percent were girls.<sup>29</sup>

### ***Education Outcomes***

Most countries do not have assessment data which would allow for analysis of educational outcomes for Roma. Those data that are available indicate significantly lower rates of achievement for Roma than for the majority population. A pilot assessment of third grade student performance in language and math in Serbia and Montenegro did look at outcomes by ethnic group. The findings illustrate much lower grades for Roma students. Nearly eighty percent of Roma students scored "extremely low" or "low." In Romania in 1998, while nationally, 68 percent of secondary school students passed the school-leaving exam for college and vocational school, the rate for Roma was 45 percent.

### **III. Education Quality**

Access to education is directly affected by the quality of schooling, as students may be deterred from attending school if the quality is low. Uneven quality of education also affects equity of education. The quality of education for Roma students is lower than for the rest of the population. The following section discusses aspects of education systems in the region which influence quality, including the prevalence of "special schools," the segregation of Roma students within the mainstream system, and inadequate teacher training and curriculum.<sup>30</sup>

#### ***Special Schools***

One of the most damaging legacies of the socialist era is the tendency to channel children into "special schools" for the mentally and physically handicapped. The legacy has been the persistence of a parallel system of schools which provide lower quality education and fewer opportunities in post-basic education and the labor market than mainstream schools.

<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Education and Science data.

<sup>30</sup> For an in depth discussion of segregation and the issue of special schools refer to: *Stigmata: Segregated Schooling of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe*, European Roma Rights Center, 2004.

Children are placed in special schools for many reasons, including biased testing and placement procedures; discriminatory practices by education officials; low levels of preschool attendance which leave Roma children unprepared to start primary school; and preferences of some parents to keep their children in special schools which provide meals and materials, and shelter Roma children from abuse and discrimination present in many mainstream schools.<sup>31</sup>

Evidence of this practice is widespread. Data for the Czech Republic suggest that between 75 and 85 percent of Roma children are enrolled in remedial “special schools.”<sup>32</sup> The situation is similar in other countries. Estimates cited in the country reports put the share of Roma in special schools in Slovakia at 80 percent, Macedonia at 60 to 70 percent, 80 percent in Montenegro, and 50-80 percent in Serbia.

Regardless of the quality of teaching in special schools, students enrolled in these institutions are at a disadvantage. The curriculum is less rigorous and expectations are lower. A detailed report on the Czech schools produced by the ERRC in 1999 notes that students in special schools receive fewer Czech language lessons per week, and are not expected to read for comprehension until fourth grade – while the expectation is first grade for students in mainstream schools.

Opportunities for graduates of special schools are limited. Even if children are able to overcome low expectations, they are not allowed equal access to school-leaving exams. In the Czech Republic, graduates from special schools are only allowed to enter technical secondary schools, which offer limited training in narrowly defined fields. Students are then at a disadvantage on the labor market, as employers look unfavorably upon graduates of special schools, and technical training fails to adequately prepare young people for the labor market.

There is a recognition that special schools adversely affect the integration and educational development of Roma children. However, the obstacles to change are notable. Not only does resistance to integration come from non-Roma parents and education officials who fear that increasing the share of Roma children in a classroom will lower the quality of education for non-Roma students, but opposition comes from Roma parents as well. Special schools can be attractive to poor Roma families for economic reasons, in that school meals and – for residential institutions, housing – are provided. Special schools are also viewed by some parents as safe havens – free from discrimination that is more pervasive in mainstream schools.

### ***Segregated Schools and Classrooms***

Even where Roma children are kept within the mainstream school system, they are often separated into separate classes or schools. This is frequently related to geography if Roma families live together in a neighborhood. However, there is also evidence of further intentional separation of Roma. An estimated 70 percent of Roma children in Bulgaria study in “Roma” or “ghetto” schools where the share of Roma is at least 50 percent. Additionally, a 2001 study found that there are 300 schools where the share of Roma is 50 to 100 percent. The overrepresentation of Roma in these schools is due to geographic concentration, and attempts by some municipal and education officials to place Roma students together into separate schools.

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<sup>31</sup> Country background reports.

<sup>32</sup> ERRC and data from the Czech government, cited in the background paper.

Research conducted in 2003 in Hungary found levels of segregation to be increasing in primary schools. This was partially due to the trend of grouping children by achievement level. Parents were found to move their children to different schools if the share of Roma pupils increased. Segregated schools tend to be located close to or within segregated Roma settlements and neighborhoods. They are generally separated from majority schools and are in poor condition, frequently lacking basic utilities and school materials.

### ***Teachers and Curriculum***

Teachers are central to the quality of education. Discussions with Roma in qualitative studies indicate strongly that parental and teacher support were key motivating factors for students attendance and performance. However, across countries, teachers are not sufficiently trained to work with Roma students effectively. Teacher training programs generally do not cover areas such as multicultural education, interactive and cooperative learning, managing interethnic relations, and other topics which would facilitate the social integration of Roma and motivate them to achieve. There is also a lack of Roma teachers within the education system.

Turnover of teachers in schools with large numbers of Roma tends to be high. Evidence from the country reports suggest that in some countries teachers in Roma schools have lower qualifications than teachers in other areas. In Romania, 50 percent of teachers in Roma-only schools were classified as unqualified, in comparison with 20 percent in other low income (e.g. rural) areas.

Schools also often lack the necessary support mechanisms to help teachers face challenging classroom environments. Teaching aids, textbooks, regulations, and content and quality standards are generally absent. School curricula do not include multicultural education and lack flexibility to meet diverse educational needs Few schools teach the Roma language, history or culture.

## **IV. Constraints to Access**

In addition to the significant quality issues discussed above, low access to education among Roma is related to a range of complementary and contrasting factors, including economic and sociological factors, discrimination, and characteristics of the education systems at large.

### ***Poverty and Economic Constraints***

***Costs of Schooling.*** Across countries, poverty and poor economic conditions are a main reason why children are unable to attend school. Disproportionately high poverty rates limit the ability of many Roma to afford the direct costs of schooling, such as clothes, food, and school materials, as well as the indirect costs, including the opportunity costs of sending children to school. Families may require children to work, either in the home or outside in the informal sector. The extent of this phenomenon among Roma households is not known, but there are many reports of children dropping out of school in order to work. Because of large families, Roma girls may stay home to take care of children and other household chores, while in rural areas other children may work in agriculture or other common income-generating activities, such as gathering and selling scrap metals and herbs. Children work most frequently in the informal sector and as a result may engage in illegal or dangerous employment.

**Parents' Education.** Parents' education levels play an important role in children's school attendance and performance. In this regard, Roma are at a greater disadvantage because of the gaps in educational attainment cited above. Lack of parental literacy may effect school attendance in different ways. Parents with limited education will be unable to help their children with school work in the same way that parents of other children can. Parents may also be less likely to participate in school related activities. As a result, the communication between teachers and parents may be less frequent.

**Labor Market Dynamics.** Formal registered unemployment is remarkably high in many Roma communities, reaching 100 percent in some of the poorest and most marginalized settlements.<sup>33</sup> These trends may impact attitudes toward school in different directions. In some cases, children may be discouraged from attending school if the value of education for employment and mobility is not perceived. High levels of participation in the informal sector by Roma may also effect school enrollments.

### ***Discrimination***

Discrimination holds Roma back in all areas, including education. Roma have been shunned throughout history, and ethnic tensions have intensified in the transition period with revival of nationalism in some countries. Discrimination, both explicit and implicit, permeates many aspects of life, including education, employment, and housing. Roma have been barred from restaurants and hotels in Central and Eastern Europe. Documented racial violence, including skinhead attacks and police violence, has also been on the rise during the transition period.<sup>34</sup>

Stereotypes and prejudice of Roma continue to be widespread throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Discrimination against Roma by non-Roma parents, children, and teachers contributes to low attendance and can both discourage children from attending school and affect the quality of education in the classroom. Qualitative studies documented examples of discrimination and abuse of Roma students by teachers ranging from teachers ignoring Roma in classrooms, to outright physical abuse. Stereotypes about Roma and their attitudes toward education lower teachers' expectations about the potential of their students.

Discrimination can be both explicit – as in the case of schools creating separate classes – or more subtle if parents discourage their children from interacting with Roma classmates. As mentioned above, Roma parents who experienced discrimination during their own schooling, may be reluctant to send their children to school, or may prefer to send their children to special schools, where they feel that they will be more sheltered and protected from abuse.

### ***Social and Cultural Factors***

**Language.** While most Roma speak the majority language in the countries in which they live, use of the Roma language is still prevalent among some communities. In some cases language affects the ability of Roma children to start school, and children without full language proficiency are at a disadvantage relative to other students. With the decline in preschool attendance, and the lack of Roma-speaking teachers, children who do not speak the majority language are at risk of

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<sup>33</sup> See Ringold, et al. 2004, for further discussion.

<sup>34</sup> The European Roma Rights Center has extensively documented discrimination and human rights violations of Roma. Regular updates and country reports can be found at: [www.errc.org](http://www.errc.org).

being wrongly tracked into special schools and classes for children with learning disabilities and the mentally handicapped, or they may become discouraged and drop out of school all together.

Estimates of the share of Roma households who speak the Roma language at home vary. In Serbia and Montenegro, 76 percent of Roma reported that the Roma language was their mother tongue on the 2002 Census. However, estimates of how many households actually speak it vary. A survey of Roma in settlements estimated 71 percent. Roma, Ashkaelia and Egyptians refugees from Kosovo may also speak Albanian, or a combination of Roma and Albanian.

**Attitudes Toward School.** Negative stereotypes of Roma attitudes toward education are common. In the qualitative studies, interviews with teachers, education officials and non-Roma parents frequently expressed the sentiment that Roma are lazy and not interested in school. However, there is no evidence to suggest that these perceptions are true, and studies for Hungary and other countries suggest the contrary, that given a supportive environment Roma students are no less motivated than other students.

However, social and cultural factors may influence Roma participation in mainstream public education. For example, the division between the Roma and non-Roma communities may be wide in some cases. Roma parents may be protective and reluctant to send their children out of their family and community especially if they fear their child will face discrimination and negative treatment by teachers or fellow students. Parents may also fear that participation in public education will take their children away from their family, physically and emotionally, and weaken family and community ties. Parents in settlements in more rural areas where children may have to travel outside their home village or settlement, may decide to keep their children at home. School organization may also differ significantly from Roma society.

**Low marriage age.** Girls in some Roma communities marry and begin having children at a very young age, constraining their ability to continue education. A survey conducted in Bulgaria in 1994 found that 40 percent of Roma marry before age 16 and 80 percent below age 18. These findings were confirmed in more recent field work.<sup>35</sup> Similar results were found in the Romania study where informal, non-registered, marriages were found to be prevalent, as many couples marry below the legal marriage age (16 for women and 18 for men).<sup>36</sup> As a result, girls tended to drop out of school after the fourth grade. Related to this is the issue of early child birth, which makes it difficult for young mothers to stay in school.

### **Systemic Constraints**

**Geographic Isolation of Roma Settlements.** While on aggregate the former socialist countries inherited education systems characterized by overcapacity of facilities and teachers, some isolated Roma settlements in rural areas, and urban ghettos lack facilities or personnel.

**Lack of Identity/Registration Papers.** For many Roma refugees and IDPs in Serbia and Montenegro and Macedonia, lack of necessary identification, registration

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35 Tomova, I. 1998. "Ethnic Dimensions of the Poverty in Bulgaria." Report Commissioned for the Bulgaria Social Assessment. Sofia, Bulgaria: The World Bank.

36 Rughinis, C. 2000. "Romania: Local Service Delivery Module on Roma Communities." Background paper prepared for the World Bank.

papers, and enforcement of compulsory education keeps children from being able to enroll in school in the first place. In other countries, children who live in illegal settlements or other unregistered housing arrangements also may face barriers to enrolling if they do not have the necessary documentation. Similar constraints exist for street children and children of seasonal workers. Children in these situations are also not identified by education officials responsible for enforcing school attendance. An estimated 47,000 people in Romania lack identification documents necessary to access public services.<sup>37</sup>

## V. Education Policy Issues

Better access to quality education for Roma is linked to the overall effectiveness of each country's education systems. Each of the countries have embarked upon complex systemic reforms to improve the efficiency, equity, and relevance of education. These reform processes are at different stages and will affect Roma to differently across countries. Close monitoring is needed to ensure that the benefits of reform reach all groups.

Across the region, there is an unfinished agenda in education reform. Links between social assistance and education are needed to allow poor households to send their children to school – including fee waivers at the preschool level, school lunches, and provision of textbooks and other materials. Comprehensive reforms of both general and vocational education are needed to better prepare workers for the labor market. Secondary school programs and curricula must be reviewed to ensure that they properly position young people for the labor market by shifting away from narrow vocational and technical training, to more general, rigorous, and academic programs. Improved vocational education, which expands elements of the general education curriculum, could attract young Roma and help them secure marketable skills.

Specific reform issues with particular relevance for Roma education include the following:

***Curriculum reform.*** In many countries curricula are mandated nationally without the possibility of flexibility and individualization in approach by schools and teachers based on local conditions. Such curricula can pose substantial barriers to Roma children, unfairly set expectations, decrease motivation and contribute to early dropouts.

***Inappropriate and biased testing.*** In some countries scholastic aptitude is assessed when children enroll in school in culturally and linguistically discriminatory ways, (e.g. if Roma children have not been exposed to the majority language or are not familiar with testing approaches). Such exams unfairly shunt Roma children into special schools and limit their future opportunities.

***Preparation for school-leaving exams.*** Education testing for school-leaving or school-entrance examinations to higher levels of education can be competitive in a way which requires extra tutoring and private lessons. These additional costs can be prohibitive for poor households, including Roma.

***Inadequate teacher training.*** As mentioned, teacher education and training do not include skills needed for teaching in a multicultural environment, appreciating diversity, individualizing instruction, and appropriately motivating children from

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<sup>37</sup> 1998 data from the background report.

different backgrounds. This may lead to inappropriate or insensitive teaching practices, leading to dropouts at critical points in the education cycle.

**Lack of Roma teachers.** The small number of Roma university graduates means a dearth of Roma teachers in the education systems.

**Preschool fees.** Fees for preschool and a lack of measures to support preschool education for low income children mean that very few Roma can attend preschool. As mentioned, coordination with social assistance schemes is needed to overcome the costs of preschool for low income households.

**Education financing.** Aspects of financing for education systems in the different countries lead to distorted outcomes for Roma. For example, local financing of schools in some cases provides incentives for mayors to segregate Roma. This was the case until recently in Hungary. Financing systems also do not facilitate adjustment to demographic developments. While the general population is declining in the region, the Roma population is either increasing or declining more slowly, yet allocations for education spending are not adjusted. Poorer areas are most affected (e.g. lower levels of teacher qualification, multi-shift schools).



## **Part II: Summary of Decade Action Plans for Education**

### **I. The Decade of Roma Inclusion**

As discussed in the previous section, the eight countries included in this assessment have committed to launch a “Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2005-2015” in early 2005. The Decade provides an action framework for the activities of the Roma Education Fund, as it sets out each country’s goals over the ten-year time period. Simply put, the Decade is a political commitment by countries to reduce disparities in key economic and human development outcomes for Roma through implementing policy reforms and programs designed to break the vicious cycle of poverty and exclusion. Roma participation is central to the Decade, as is the need to have monitorable indicators to measure progress and to hold governments accountable.<sup>38</sup>

During 2004, the country working groups, including Roma and other stakeholders, have been developing “Decade Action Plans” which outline the goals, targets and indicators which each country plans to achieve during the Decade. The Decade Action Plans are intended to complement and reinforce – and not duplicate – national strategies for Roma that are in place in nearly all of the countries.<sup>39</sup> The preparation of the action plans has been guided by an International Steering Committee, chaired by the Hungarian government. At its first meeting in late 2003, the Steering Committee selected four priority areas for the Decade: education, employment, health, and housing, as well as three cross-cutting themes: discrimination, gender, and poverty. A workshop to discuss education policy issues for the Decade was held in Budapest in February 2004, and in each country technical experts involved in education have contributed to the development of the action plans in education.

A central objective of the Decade is to improve the database for monitoring the welfare of Roma in each of the countries. Each country has identified indicators which it will use to measure progress in reaching its Decade goals. Monitoring these outcomes will require a combination of designing and implementing new data collection instruments, and upgrading existing data sources to ensure that Roma are effectively included. UNDP taken a leadership role to coordinate data efforts, first by launching a baseline survey in many of the countries, which will collect new data on the status of Roma as of the launch of the Decade, and second by establishing a “Data Experts’ Group” comprised of statisticians, Roma leaders, government officials, academics and other stakeholders. The group will provide a forum for discussing issues surrounding data availability and quality throughout the Decade, including approaches to overcoming the privacy constraints discussed in the earlier sections.

#### ***The Decade and the Roma Education Fund***

The Decade and the Roma Education Fund were launched together at the 2003 conference in Budapest. While they are two separate initiatives, they are linked together. The Decade provides the policy framework which the Fund will be able to support in the eight countries. A major objective of the Fund will be to support systemic policy change in the area of education, by drawing on the lessons of local NGO projects.

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<sup>38</sup> For more information on the Decade, refer to [www.worldbank.org/roma](http://www.worldbank.org/roma).

<sup>39</sup> At the time of writing only Macedonia did not have a national strategy, but this was under preparation.

For example, there have been a number of successful Roma education projects in the area of preschool, including initiatives which involve parents in the classrooms, and introduce Roma teachers' assistants. The Fund would aim to draw upon these success stories and assist governments in identifying the policy changes necessary to extend these projects to other areas of the country and to integrate lessons into policy. The Decade usefully defines the goals which each country aims to achieve in terms of outcomes for Roma.

A frequently asked question is whether countries which are not participating in the Decade will be eligible to participate in the Roma Education Fund. The future Board of the Fund will have to decide this question. However, it is envisaged at this stage that non-Decade countries would be eligible. It is plausible that countries where Roma populations are very small, relative to the total population, may have serious needs which warrant support by the Fund.

## II. Overview of the Draft Decade Action Plans in Education

As of the preparation of this paper, the nine action plans for the Decade were in nearly final form, in preparation for the launch of the Decade in February 2005.<sup>40</sup> The nine draft Action Plans reflect the considerable effort and planning that has gone into their preparation. The action plans include the goals, targets, and indicators which the countries propose to achieve. The goals are broad objectives linked to outcomes. For example, in the case of education, a goal would be to "improve Roma educational achievement." *Targets* are specific measures which contribute to reaching the objectives. For education, possible targets would be: "all Roma boys and girls complete compulsory education." *Indicators* are the quantitative measures which can track progress, such as primary school enrollment rates.

The goals in the action plans include coverage of the critical issues discussed in the previous section. The format of the action plans varies considerably across countries. Some of the action plans are comprehensive, covering all aspects of Roma education, while in contrast, other plans are more focused, including on 4-5 goals. A brief overview of the goals and targets follows, including some examples from the country plans. However, readers should refer to the draft plans for a more complete understanding.

***Ensuring access to compulsory education.*** All countries include increasing the education status of Roma boys and girls as a primary objective. Common approaches include: introducing Roma teachers' assistants into classrooms (Serbia; Montenegro); improving local implementation of education (Czech Republic); involving parents in education and initiatives to prevent dropouts and work with those who do dropout (Bulgaria, Croatia); free textbook provision (Macedonia); and improving results for Roma students (Slovak Republic).

***Improving the quality of education.*** Goals include increasing the capacity of teachers to work in a multicultural environment (Czech Republic); curriculum reform, including introduction of Roma language teaching (Bulgaria); anti-bias and tolerance teaching (Bulgaria); and training of school mediators (Romania).

***Implementing integration and desegregation.*** Integration of Roma students from segregated schools and classrooms and from special schools to general schools

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<sup>40</sup> The Decade will be launched at a ceremony in Sofia, Bulgaria on February 2, 2005. There are nine action plans as the Republics of Serbia and Montenegro have prepared separate plans.

is a priority issue across countries. Measures include: reassessing the testing methodology for entrance into special schools (Serbia); desegregation of schools, including kindergartens; enforcing legal regulations for desegregation (Bulgaria); eliminating all segregated classes and schools (Hungary and Romania); and antidiscrimination measures and media campaigns to support desegregation (Macedonia).

***Expanding access to preschool education.*** All countries include expanding preschool for Roma in their action plans. Specifics include: information campaigns and work with parents to promote preschool attendance (Croatia; Macedonia); and improving the readiness of Roma children to start primary school (Slovak Republic).

***Increasing access to secondary post secondary and adult education.*** At the secondary level, many countries have included extracurricular programs to keep students in school. Scholarships at the secondary and university levels are also common. Other measures include: volunteer mentor programs (Croatia); partnerships between schools and employers (Croatia); training and career services for school dropouts (Slovak Republic); adult literacy courses (Romania and Montenegro); and career advice for secondary school students (Montenegro).

Other targets included in the action plans include improving the database for Roma education, improving school management and monitoring, and communications activities to address discrimination.

### ***Monitoring of Targets***

Targets included in the action plans are defined, taking two fundamentally different approaches: first, the targets are expressed in terms of absolute numbers, e.g. the rising number, or the percentage, of Roma students who enter primary school, or complete primary school, at any given time during the Decade; second, the targets are to be expressed – for the above example – as the decreasing difference in primary school enrollment or completion between Roma students and the national average. Using the second approach, outcomes will simply need to be interpreted taking into account changes in national averages to measure the true improvement for Roma. In the draft action plans, targets have been set as absolute numbers or percentages of Roma students who achieved them.

Furthermore, targets can be designed as quantifiable outcomes at any time during the Decade, or as a number of specifically defined actions and inputs into the process of changing educational outcomes for Roma. While the quantifiable outcomes are superior in measuring the true result of the programs that were carried out and the resources that were mobilized, the input targets also give a valuable indication of the efforts a country is making to achieve improvements in the educational outcomes of Roma. For instance, one country may measure the increasing number of Roma students who learn in a desegregated school, whereas another country may be counting the number of teachers trained for a multicultural, integrated teaching environment.

### **Part III: Possible Roma Education Fund (REF) Project Options**

#### **I. The Reform Agenda**

As outlined in the Decade Action Plans, educational interventions ranging from pre-school education through adult education and lifelong learning, as well as demand-side interventions and anti-discrimination efforts, are needed to close the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma populations. Analysis of the educational status of Roma, research on at-risk groups, plans adopted by the eight countries involved in the Roma Decade of Inclusion, and the Roma needs assessment reports prepared for the eight countries have identified the many and varied issues needing attention. Increased access to education, improvements in educational quality and learning conditions, increases in educational attainment, and improved job opportunities are needed.

Governments need to adjust their policies and regulations, increase annual recurrent spending, provide targeted investments for Roma, support remedial or “catch-up” assistance to Roma, and improve public awareness and acceptance of Roma. While increased public resources are absolutely necessary, alone they will not solve the problem if the authorizing environment is not sufficient. Legislative changes, new institutional approaches, financing mechanisms, implementing regulations, enforcement, changes in public perception and acceptance of Roma, and increased monitoring and evaluation are essential.

The Roma Education Fund (REF) is designed to provide additional assistance to countries to push forward improvements in the educational outcomes of Roma. The REF is designed to spur changes in government policies and programs, to build the lessons of successful interventions into systemic policy reforms, to pilot programs, and to disseminate knowledge on Roma issues and successful approaches. The REF is not designed to substitute for Government resources but rather to supplement and push ahead efforts by governments, NGOs and other organizations.

The REF will fund projects and programs from public entities – including local, regional and national governments – private or non-profit entities, and combinations of public and private organizations. Possible options include, for example, partnerships between governments and NGOs, and REF co-financing to support programs financed through loans from international organizations. Co-financing arrangements, government financing and in-kind contributions will complement and supplement REF funding to increase the overall commitment to efforts to improve the educational outcomes of Roma and to increase the chances of sustainability. Monitoring and evaluation will be included to determine what works and what does not; these results will be used to improve future activities and disseminate findings. Active participation of the Roma community in all REF-funded activities will be essential.

REF grants, which may be specific to one country or may cut across country boundaries, will be awarded competitively in three categories:

- Grants aimed at systemic reform and educational improvement for Roma
- Grants to pilot and test Roma educational interventions.
- Grants to analyze Roma education issues and develop policies.

This section discusses possible interventions that could be funded by the REF. The discussion is intended to be illustrative and not definitive. Pure educational

interventions are included as well as interventions designed to increase demand for and participation in education. The options discussed in each of the sections below include support for changes in government policies as well as regional, local and school-based activities designed to meet needs of Roma in the local community. Annex 1 to this document lists specific project ideas included in the eight country background reports.

## **II. Expanding Access to Preschool Education**

Providing increased access to preschool education for Roma children will help increase the proportion of Roma children entering school ready to learn, thereby increasing the likelihood that they enroll in basic education and do well once there. Preschool programs can help to ameliorate language issues for Roma and the negative effects of low parental education and income. In developing the Decade goals for education, the working group on education encouraged free preschool for all at-risk children, including Roma.

Costs for governments and communities of providing preschool, costs for families of enrolling in preschool, and the limited availability of high quality preschool are obstacles to preschool education in Central and Eastern Europe broadly and are especially severe for at-risk groups, including Roma. The REF can help to provide additional support to spur more and better preschool education.

REF grants could spur more preschool opportunities through support for government policy changes based on successful Roma projects, help on financing mechanisms, assistance to reduce costs, design and building of safe and appropriate facilities, assistance to improve quality, and outreach to Roma parents and children to see the benefits of preschool education. Combining preschool programs with literacy programs for parents would help to increase participation in preschool while also improving literacy for parents. Providing support for high quality and appropriate preschool education includes support for appropriate content, Roma aides, and bilingual teachers. The REF could help to support programs in specific countries or across countries to develop and implement preschool programs designed to meet Roma needs. The REF could also help to disseminate information on successful models and to serve as a catalyst for systemic reform.

Programs such as the “Step-by-Step” program, initiated by the Open Society Institute, and modeled on the US “Head Start” initiative provide training and support to teachers while involving parents in the classroom. Parental involvement at all levels of education should be explored and fostered, including bringing parents into the classroom as teachers’ aides, parent-teacher associations, and regular parent-teacher interactions. The “Step-by Step” program has been operating successfully in Roma communities.

Preschool activities can be attached to formal schooling or provided in community settings close to Roma children. In addition to assistance with government policies to increase the availability of preschool opportunities for Roma, the REF could support community or school-based programs that allow local communities and schools to design specific interventions that best address their local needs. These activities would provide more opportunities for Roma to influence the shape of their own educational opportunities while helping to build up stronger community and family participation in the local schools. The REF could support partnerships of

communities, schools and NGOs to spur more preschool options building on successful Roma projects actively supported by the NGO community.

As preschool is not generally free of charge, special attention needs to be paid to economic obstacles to participation of Roma. The direct and indirect costs of attendance, discussed below, can be significant barriers to improved educational outcomes.

### **III. Ensuring Full Roma Participation in Basic Education**

Full participation of Roma children in primary education is essential to improved educational outcomes for Roma at all levels. Full participation includes attention to initial enrollment, attendance once enrolled, completion of basic education and successful learning outcomes.

Governments need to adjust their policies and implementing regulations on education for Roma children, increase annual spending, provide targeted investments for Roma, improve public awareness and acceptance of Roma, and provide outreach to Roma to encourage their attendance. The REF can help to support policy changes, including work on financing mechanisms to decentralize financing, responsibility, and accountability for education to local communities. These policy changes need to pay careful attention to the needs of at-risk groups, including Roma, in the funding formulae and the accountability mechanisms. Data collection, monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms are needed to ensure that needs of Roma are well met and that educational outcomes are improving.

The REF could help to support efforts to develop data bases on the education status of Roma, to carry out research and to disseminate the findings. These efforts could be supported within countries and across countries in the region. Information, dissemination and public awareness are important parts of any effort to change the situation of Roma and are closely related to the activities of the Decade of Roma Inclusion where countries have set ten-year goals for improvement in the educational outcomes of Roma.

As local governments and school officials are frequently key players for ensuring access to quality education at the local level, capacity building to improve the management of schools in Roma communities is important to ensure that schools are responsive to local needs. Interventions could include training of school leaders to manage the successful integration of Roma children, managing community relations and the attitudes of non-Roma parents and teachers, and creating a positive learning environment in diverse schools.

Remedial or “catch-up” assistance will be needed for Roma to improve their participation and outcomes of basic education. Tutoring, mentoring, language instruction, working with parents, and encouraging higher expectations are all areas where the REF could support communities, schools, NGOs and others to provide assistance targeted to the needs of local Roma.

Countries also face many issues regarding the quality and relevance of basic education for Roma. These quality issues influence the participation of Roma in basic education as well as the quality of the learning outcomes for Roma if they do enroll. Specialized schools with inappropriate assignments of Roma children, segregated classrooms, wholly inadequate facilities, poor content and materials for teaching, poorly qualified teachers, few Roma teachers or aides, and little or no emphasis on Roma issues in schools all contribute to poor quality schools and poor educational

outcomes. These issues can be addressed through changes in government policies, implementation and enforcement of policies, improved teacher training for Roma at colleges and universities, support for building and rehabilitation of buildings, and improved curriculum design.

The REF could help to support programs and policies in all of these areas with involvement of government, schools, colleges, NGOs and other organizations. Teacher training and curriculum reform present key opportunities for partnerships between schools and colleges and universities, an area of possible support from REF grants.

Pre-school education, discussed above, is a key policy to increase enrollment in basic education. In addition, as poverty is high among Roma, social policies tied to schooling, such as cash transfers conditional on school enrollment, are important demand-side interventions to address economic obstacles to attendance for Roma and are discussed below. The REF can help in both of these areas.

### **Expanding Access to Secondary, Higher Education and Lifelong Learning**

Participation in secondary and higher education is especially limited for Roma as so few Roma complete primary schooling or, if they do, the quality of the education received is quite low. Improvements in participation in secondary and higher education will occur slowly and will be most successful once Roma have universal access to high quality primary schooling. The single most effective intervention is to improve the outcomes of basic education, as discussed above, through changes in government policies and “catch-up” programs of mentoring, tutoring, and remedial work. REF activities for preschool and basic education will make a big difference in secondary and higher education but changes will be gradual over time.

Once students are academically prepared for further education, costs—both direct and indirect—are real obstacles to participation in secondary and higher education. These costs often present even more significant barriers to enrollment in secondary and higher education than in basic education as both the opportunity cost of not working or not caring for children and the direct cost for tuition, fees, supplies and transportation are higher. The REF could help to design, implement and evaluate grant and scholarship programs for Roma to attend secondary and higher education. Mentoring, tutoring and other support programs will be needed to complement programs of financial support in order to help Roma successfully participate and complete further education. Outreach efforts and public information campaigns to help Roma see the beneficial effects of further education could be supported by REF, within specific countries or more broadly across Central and Eastern Europe.

The REF could help to support second chance programs for Roma adults who have had little or no education. Literacy and job training programs are often locally provided and can be tied to local primary schools, general and secondary vocational programs and community centers. Guidance, mentoring, tutoring, and job placement activities must link education and the labor market.

REF grants could also help to develop programs in higher education that encourage Roma participation, including specialized teacher training programs and studies of Roma history and language. REF grants could fund selected colleges and universities to develop programs that could be expanded across higher education institutions and across countries. Collaborative efforts of different institutions would

be particularly helpful in developing, implementing, and evaluating such programs. Scholarship programs can facilitate access to higher education. Also, as countries introduce tuition fees, loan and grant schemes for poor students will be necessary to ensure that students have access to tertiary education and are able to stay in school without dropping out for financial reasons.

### **Overcoming Economic Obstacles to Attendance**

As the Roma population is very poor, some families and children find the costs of school attendance too high and keep their children home even when a school is nearby. These economic obstacles to school include the opportunity cost of children not working, the direct costs of school fees and materials, and the additional costs of clothes, food, and transportation to attend school. Demand-side interventions at the primary and secondary levels can help to address these concerns, especially if coupled with high quality schooling.

Social policies tied to schooling can help to increase school attendance and performance among Roma. Social assistance targeted to poor households, including conditional cash transfers for children who attend school, school breakfast and school lunch programs, and the provision of clothes are demand-side interventions outside pure educational policy. These kinds of efforts, especially if tied to continued attendance at school and if sufficient to cover costs, have proven to be very effective interventions in increasing enrollment of at risk-groups in many countries and could be instituted or expanded to address the needs of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe.

Targeted interventions to address the direct costs of schooling—fees, books and other materials—will help to increase demand for schooling. Grants to cover school materials, fee waivers and scholarships can be used at all levels of education to overcome economic obstacles and increase educational participation.

Interventions in these areas can be addressed through changes in government policies, especially conditional cash transfers for at-risk populations based on school attendance and removal of fees for school supplies and attendance. REF projects can help governments to develop policy frameworks, estimate costs, prepare action plans, monitor and evaluate effectiveness, and disseminate results. This assistance may be needed to build on the lessons of these interventions.

Regional, local or school-based initiatives, together with government policy or independently, can target assistance to Roma based on the specific needs of the local Roma community. The REF could support community or school-based grant programs with the involvement of NGOs and the local community to allow localities to design projects best suited to the needs of local Roma. The local area could determine the extent to which nutrition programs, fees, costs of supplies, opportunity cost of attendance, transportation or other factors present the greatest barriers.

### **Assuring Desegregation and Integration of Roma in Education<sup>41</sup>**

The REF can help to support changes in government policies and implementation practices at the local level to eliminate segregated schools and classrooms. Addressing these issues requires clear government policies and processes to enforce desegregation and integration as well as changes in perceptions, attitudes

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<sup>41</sup> As background for the REF the World Bank has commissioned a study of desegregation and integration experience in the US, Europe and Latin American countries.



and actions by many players in the education system and the public. Changing perceptions and attitudes is difficult and takes time but is absolutely necessary to see full integration of Roma into schools. The REF could help through support at the local level as well as support for policy changes and information from other countries on the many steps needed to bring about full integration.

Desegregation initiatives would build on existing success stories, such as the Vidin program supported by OSI and DROM, a local Roma NGO. Vidin is a town in northwest Bulgaria. Under the project, students are bused from the settlement to school and back. In addition to transportation, the project involves Roma monitors who interact with parents and the school to encourage attendance. Low-income students also receive shoes and school lunches; students are given their lunch on the bus to reduce the stigma of receiving it at school.

The success to date of the program is attributable to three major factors. First, parents feel that their children are protected from prejudice because they are bused and monitored throughout the day by adult Roma; parents also feel that their children can meet the higher scholastic standards. Second, the schools have accepted young adult Roma monitors in the schools who assure that the children are not mistreated. The monitors also follow parental engagement and student participation in extracurricular activities. Moreover, the monitors help the teachers and ease cultural differences. Third, the children are happy to be in schools where real learning takes place. Ongoing assessment of project outcomes is essential to understand the longer-term implications of the Vidin project and similar programs.

## **Part III: The Financing Gap**

### **I. Estimating the Financing Gap**

The financial estimates included in this assessment are intended to provide an initial basis for discussing the level of funding that may be required for various types of education programs and interventions aimed at closing the educational outcomes gap between Roma and non-Roma and the overall size of the proposed Roma Education Fund. The calculations have been based, for the most part, on broad regional data estimates for both education funding in the Decade countries and the numbers of Roma children who will require assistance. The estimates are indicative and should be interpreted and cited as such. Improved country-level analysis will be needed in order to provide better projections of funding needs. The REF is expected to facilitate this work.

Closing the gap in education between Roma and non-Roma populations in the eight Decade countries will require increases in annual recurrent spending by the governments of those countries, as well as increases in investment spending aimed at expanding access to schooling and targeting funding for remedial or ‘catch-up’ programs. The majority of interventions and required funding will be focused on expanding access of Roma children to quality education. This objective includes ensuring the participation of all Roma children in basic education (grades 1 through 8 in most countries), as well as expanding access to pre-school, secondary education and higher education. The additional funding required to achieve these access objectives will be largely recurrent operating costs to be paid by governments, although a significant share of investment funding will also be required.

In addition to expanding access, targeted investments will be required to improve the quality of schooling and to benefit adults who have not benefited from educational opportunities in the past. Broad categories for such interventions would include:

- Roma desegregation and integration programs
- Improving quality through provision of specialized teacher training and materials
- Catch-up programs to improve adult functional literacy
- Job-training programs

This chapter will attempt to provide an estimate of the financing required to expand educational access for Roma children and fund complementary interventions aimed at improved educational quality and adult training. A final summary section will provide some broad estimates of the aggregate need for financing across the Decade countries. These financial estimates will be updated as more analysis becomes available on Roma education needs.

### **II. What are the Priority Areas and Types of Financing Required?**

#### ***Ensuring full Roma participation in basic education***

According to World Bank estimates, the Decade countries spend about €7.6 billion annually on public education at all levels, about 35-40 percent of which is

allocated to basic education. Per student spending ranges from €200 to €500 per child in basic education to around double those amounts for secondary education. As reported in the previous sections of this needs assessment, Roma children across the Decade countries complete, on average, three fewer years of primary education than their non-Roma peers. Using a mid point per capita spending average of €350, and assuming a total population of about 1.3 million Roma children who are distributed evenly over the eight year basic education age group, a three year increase in educational attainment for Roma children would cost €170 million per year, or from 6 percent of overall spending for basic education in those countries.<sup>42</sup>

An alternative method for estimating overall additional funding requirements for basic education would be to use individual per capita funding estimates and estimates of Roma drop outs in each country. Table 3 below provides an estimate of the annual financing gap by country of €107 million. However, the total does not include two countries for which drop out data for Roma were not available (Croatia and Macedonia) and, even more seriously, does not include Roma children in the primary age group who never begin schooling. Assuming an estimate of about 20% of Roma children who never enter formal schooling, and using the estimated Roma primary school age group population (1.3million) and average per capita primary spending (€350), an additional €90 million could be added to the total above, bringing the overall estimate to about €200 million.

**Table 3: Financial Gap in Recurrent Spending for Primary School Drop Outs**

No	Country	Total public expenditure on primary education (€ millions)	Public expenditure per student in primary education (€)	Number of Roma primary school drop out students	Annual financial gap for primary school (€ millions)
1	Romania	495	200	48,000 (30%) drop out without completing grade 4; additional 54,000 (34%) drop out before completing grade 8	20
2	Czech Republic	690	420 (22,000 CZK)	11,250 (15%) drop out without completing grade 4; additional 39,000 (52%) drop out before completing 8 years.	21
3	Serbia	156	365 (31,270 Dinars)	45,000 (50%) drop out without completing grade 4; additional 18,000 (19%) drop out before completing grade 8)	23
4	Bulgaria	235	235 (561 BGN)	29,120 (32%) drop out without completing 8 years of primary education	7
5	Slovak Republic	363	500 (21,000 SK)	45,000 drop out before competing 8 years of primary education	23
6	Hungary	683	500	15,000 (10%) drop out without completing 8 years of primary education.	8
7	Croatia	182	680	NA	
8	Macedonia	90	380	NA	
9	Montenegro	95	380	13,000 (92%) drop out without completing primary education)	5
	TOTAL	2,989			107

Source: Country Assessment Reports and World Bank data

<sup>42</sup> The amount of €170 million is calculated by multiplying an estimated 162,500 Roma (1.3 million/8) in each of the eight primary grades by the average of 3 fewer years of primary education and by the €350 per capita spending average.

It is important to note that the needed increases in annual recurrent spending cited above would occur gradually over the Decade as enrollments actually increase. The broad estimates above also assume that the marginal recurrent per student cost will not change significantly as Roma children are brought into the system in most countries i.e. per student spending rates would be expected to stay about the same. Roma children are commonly more costly to educate per student than majority children because they often require specialized teaching support, new materials, ‘demand side interventions’ (see below), transport to school, etc. However, demographic decline in all the Decade countries has created excess capacity in terms of school places and teacher numbers, which will allow marginal cost savings as new entrants are enrolled. Over time, the incremental recurrent costs associated with the special needs of Roma are expected to be balanced by efficiency gains in terms of better capacity utilization. Despite this net effect, the need for more recurrent spending for basic education by the Decade countries is the single largest expenditure category in terms of closing the gap.

Promoting full enrollment in basic education for Roma children will also require targeted investment funding, particularly for school infrastructure, equipment and better transportation. Given that investment costs in the Decade countries tend to be between 5-10 percent of total spending on education, and that this funding should be increasingly targeted on poor and disadvantaged groups, it is a conservative estimate that 1-3 percent of overall investment funding could be expected to be devoted to improving access for the most disadvantaged group. Based on the above spending estimates (€2.6-3 billion spent annually on basic education), investment needs can be estimated at €5-90 million per year.

In addition to typical education investments such as building, renovating or equipping schools, achieving full participation in basic education among Roma children will require ‘demand side interventions’ that are not typically categorized as education spending and are often linked with social assistance programs. One of the most effective interventions used across many countries to encourage enrollment (or, alternatively, to discourage drop outs) and improve attendance among the poor is the provision of school breakfasts and lunches. A commitment by the Decade countries to provide subsidized meals for the poorest 5 percent of the basic education age group (about 400,000 children) could be expected to make a significant positive impact on Roma enrollments. Based on a 180 day school year and a cost of € per day (covering administration costs as well as food) would entail a financial commitment of about €140 million annually across the Decade countries. Such a program could not be expected to benefit only Roma populations and would need to be based on social assistance targeting criteria that are available in most of the Decade countries.

A second demand side intervention that has proven successful in improving enrollment rates and attendance is conditional cash transfers. Country assessment reports have identified the cost of education – particularly out-of-pocket spending – as the primary reason for non-participation or dropout. Monthly payments made directly to parents and conditioned on continuous enrollment are a powerful incentive to promote participation, particularly in environments where the supply of education in terms of school places can be assured. The amount of cash payments is normally calculated on the cost of a typical basket of out-of-pocket school spending covering costs such as textbooks, educational materials, transportation, clothing, food, etc. Using a rough estimate of €150-230 per year in out-of-pocket costs to parents per

child, conditional cash transfer programs for the poorest 5 percent of students in the Decade countries would require in the range of €60-90 million per year.<sup>43</sup> As much as 10 percent additional incremental funding would be required to increase the capacity of the social assistance services to implement the program. Alternatively, the administration could be carried out by local NGOs and education service providers in the interest of improved targeting and lower administration costs.

### ***Expanding access to pre-school programs***

In all the Decade countries, formal pre-school programs tend to be prohibitively expensive and, therefore, cater predominately to relatively affluent, double income urban families. Per capita spending for pre-schools is often twice as high as that for primary schools as a result of rigid norms for class sizes, staffing levels, space and facilities. In addition to public spending, private contributions to pre-school, which are often required, range from 30 to 60 percent of total expenditures.

Expanding pre-school access for Roma and other disadvantaged groups will require more flexible approaches to education. The first step could be to bring per student spending for pre-schools in line with public spending for primary schooling by merging the two systems – the separate management of pre-schools and general education is a relic of the communist era – and adopting more flexible and affordable norms. Assuming that per capita spending norms for pre-school education can be brought down to about €350<sup>44</sup> – the average per student spending figure for primary education in the Decade countries -- the cost of enrolling 300,000 Roma 5-6 year olds in pre-school would be approximately €105 million per year, or about 3 percent of current spending for primary education.

As with the discussion of basic education funding above, financial support to expand pre-school education will be needed to ensure adequate supply of pre-school places and to provide demand-enhancing incentives for Roma to participate in the system. Over time, the excess capacity created by demographic decline in most of the Decade countries could be used creatively to ensure that pre-school or kindergarten programs become a standard part of the curriculum for all children. However, to ensure that Roma and other disadvantaged groups are not the last to benefit from early entry into education, the introduction of pre-schools into formal education should best be carried out in a targeted manner. Investment decisions with regard to renovating unused school facilities in rural areas and expanding or renovating school facilities in urban areas could be made based on poverty criteria, which will overwhelmingly benefit Roma. Because pre-school reform in most countries involves moving pre-school programs into the compulsory education system, the investment cost of expanding or renovating pre-school facilities is considered to be covered, for purposes of this report, in the investment cost estimates for primary school facilities and equipment in the preceding section.

With regard to increasing demand for pre-school, defraying the private contributions to pre-school for Roma and other disadvantaged groups will be required.

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<sup>43</sup> It is assumed that for equity reasons, cash transfers would not be targeted on the basis of ethnic group, but on the poor. Targeting such assistance on the poor in the Decade countries will disproportionately benefit Roma.

<sup>44</sup> The €350 figure assumes a net cost trade off between slightly lower student-teacher ratios than the average in primary education and the lower teacher qualification, and therefore somewhat lower salaries, commonly found in the lower grades of basic education.

Probably the most efficient and effective approach to covering the private cost of pre-school access would be the expansion to pre-school age groups of the provisional cash transfer scheme discussed in the previous section. Using the estimate of 300,000 5-6 year olds and private costs of €150-230 per year, providing cash transfers to the pre-school age group would require financing of €45-70 million annually. An alternative approach of contracting out to private or NGO providers in hard to reach areas – many Roma are located in hard to reach rural areas -- could also be considered, in which contracting would be carried out on a per student cost basis similar to the recurrent and cash transfer estimates above. These costs are, therefore, considered to be already included in the provisional cost estimates based on increasing access for 300,000 children.

### ***Increasing access to secondary and higher education***

Increasing access to secondary education for Roma children is constrained by the difficulty in increasing primary completion rates and increasing demand for continuing education. The recurrent cost requirements will initially be small, but could be expected to grow significantly by the end of the Decade. Assuming an average per student cost of €760 per student, expanding the participation of the secondary age cohort to 30 percent (about 150,000 students) would require addition recurrent funding by the end of the Decade of about €15 million per year. Investment cost requirements would be expected to be somewhat lower than those required for primary education as secondary schools tend to be located in urban areas where physical facilities can be used more efficiently. On the basis of €2.6-3 billion total spending on primary education in the Decade countries, an allocation of 2 percent of overall funding for expansion, renovation and re-equipping of secondary facilities which cater to Roma populations would imply an annual financing requirement of about €50-60 million annually.

On the demand-side, improving access to secondary education will also require programs designed to defray the high private cost of secondary education which includes books, materials, transportation, and subsistence. Out-of-pocket spending often surpasses by 2-3 times that required for primary school, reaching about €450-680 per year typically, and sometimes more for those students who cannot attend a secondary school near their home. Scholarship and/or voucher programs – the former providing assistance directly to the student and the latter to the school – as well as targeted school grants schemes, are likely to be the most direct and efficient methods for increasing enrollment of Roma children in secondary schools. Providing per student assistance in the amount of €70 to 150,000 Roma children would require an outlay of €90 million per year. It is important to point out, however, that expanding Roma access to secondary education will be gradual and that these cost estimates for secondary are only relevant to the final years of the Decade.

Similar calculations can be made for the cost of increasing access to higher education, along with an even more serious caveat about the gradual nature of increasing secondary completion rates among Roma, who are currently almost totally unrepresented in higher education programs throughout the region. Assuming an average annual per student cost of between €1,500-2,300 for universities in the region, and private subsistence and materials costs that in most cases equal the direct per student cost of tuition, the average per student cost of a year in higher education is estimated at €3,000-4,500. Assuming that only a small number of students -- 400 to

600 total per year – will be able to achieve minimum admission standards on average, the need for increased recurrent spending and scholarship funding would amount to €-3 million in the first year, and €-12 million per year based on a four year university program. More ambitious enrollment targets should be set later in the Decade.

### ***Roma desegregation and integration programs***

Over time, introducing desegregation in areas where Roma are not attending near by majority-population schools and shifting Roma children from special education programs into general education schools is expected to represent a net cost savings in the long term for the region's education systems. According to the country assessments, Roma comprise from 60 percent to as high as 90 percent of children currently enrolled in special education programs, and as many as 40-60 percent of Roma currently enrolled in school are enrolled in special needs programs. Because special needs programs are commonly 50-100 percent more expensive per student than general programs, the potential savings of integrating children into general programs is significant. Similarly, school desegregation is likely to allow governments to allocate teachers and school facilities more efficiently in terms of student-teacher ratios and class sizes.

However, the process of desegregating schools and mainstreaming Roma children from special schools to general programs will require targeted investments in teacher training, special materials and transport that will likely more than offset any recurrent cost savings in the initial years. A recent analysis of the cost of Roma education programs in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia<sup>45</sup> estimated the incremental cost requirements of integrating Roma into general schools at about 20 percent of overall recurrent spending, or about €75-90 per student per year. Using this cost norm and an estimate of about 600,000 Roma children who should be shifted from special needs to general programs, the overall costs of the transition would be in the range of €40-60 million, most of which would be required in the early years of the Decade. The cost of desegregating and integrating Roma children into mainstream schools is summaries by country in Table 4 below. Integrating Roma into general education schools and desegregating areas in which Roma are not attending near by majority population schools are also expected to be objectives of the demand side interventions described above.

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<sup>45</sup> Levin, 2001, The Costs and Effects of the Step-by-Step Roma Special Schools Initiative

**Table 4: The Cost of Integration**

No.	Country	Average cost per child (€) (estimated as 20 percent of per-capita funding)	Estimated number of Roma in 1-8 basic education (in '000)	Financial need for Roma integration within primary school (€ millions)	Total public expenditure on primary education (€ millions)
1	Romania	40	160	7.3	495
2	Czech Republic	85	65-75	5.4- 6.2	690
3	Serbia	75	90	6.5	156
4	Bulgaria	50	91	4.1	235
5	Slovak Republic	100	100	9.9	363
6	Hungary	100	150	14.8	683
7	Croatia	135	13	1.2	182
8	Macedonia	75	30-35	3.3 -2.7	90
9	Montenegro	75	14	1.1	95
	Total			53.7	2,989

Source: Country Assessment Reports and World Bank data

### ***Improving quality through provision of specialized teacher training and materials***

One of the Decade's goals is not only to enroll more Roma in schools, but to make sure that they are enrolled in schools that offer high quality programs. During the Decade, promoting quality for Roma is expected to focus on specialized training for teachers and the development and dissemination of specialized teaching materials. Many targeted teacher training and materials development programs have been developed for Roma and are now ongoing on a relatively small scale throughout the region, mostly supported by NGOs and bi-lateral donors. The additional funding required to expand these programs, and where necessary develop new programs, is included in the 20% of recurrent funding estimation made above for promotion of integration and desegregation programs, which also require a focus on teacher training and specialized teaching materials. It is also assumed that at least a small portion of the increased recurrent and investment funding proposed in the sections above devoted to increasing access will be made available to promote quality enhancing initiatives.

### ***Catch-up programs to improve adult functional literacy***

Adult literacy and other remedial or catch-up interventions can best be delivered through training contracts which reimburse the provider on the basis of a cost per trainee. NGOs, private sector training providers, or even schools and universities which offer after hours programs would be eligible to bid on training contracts. The per trainee cost could cover the costs of the training of trainers and of materials development, where necessary. Training contracts could also provide for course evaluation and be performance based e.g. make contract payments contingent on trainees meeting agreed course objectives. Using an average cost of €150 per trainee, which is based on regional experience with such programs, and a realistic goal of covering about 100,000 adults per year (programs would likely focus on the 15-20 year age group), a broad estimate of funding requirements for such programs would be about €15 million per year for the region.



### ***Job-training programs***

Job-training programs are commonly financed on a per trainee contract basis similar to the catch up programs discussed above. Although they are public institutions, national and local labor offices are normally allowed to bid on services, as well as NGOs, universities, secondary schools (in after hours programs), and private suppliers. As with the contracts discussed in the section above, all contracts should be performance based in terms of both meeting course objectives and job placement. Depending on the target group, emphasis could be given to on-the-job-training/wage subsidy programs in which employers are given financial incentives to hire and give basic training to potential Roma employees. Per student training costs for similar training programs in the region (not currently focused on Roma) are approximately €150 per trainee. Based on this estimate, and a broad objective of providing job training for 100,000 youth and adults in the region per year, job training costs for Roma could be expected to be around €25 million annually. In many of the Decade countries, similar programs are already ongoing and would require only additional financing and incentives to target their programs and services on Roma.

### **III. Aggregate Financing Needs for Closing the Gap**

Table 5 summarizes the estimated cost of providing the programs outlined above in the eight Decade countries. Funding needs are expected to be range between €20-200 million per year in the initial years of the Decade and increase to between €390-650 million annually by the end of the Decade. As explained above, less recurrent funding will be required in the early years of the Decade, as it will take time, not only to enroll those currently not enrolled in education, but for those Roma who are enrolled to achieve the qualifications necessary to advance to secondary and higher education. Targeted investments will also require time to reach scale. The ranges provided in the text above have been discounted somewhat to reflect the incremental growth of funding needs. These funding requirements should be viewed in the context of the approximately €2.6-3 billion currently spent annually on primary education in the eight countries and approximately €7.6 billion spent annually on all levels of education. It is expected that initially governments will meet approximately 40 percent of the overall costs of closing the gap, leaving a financing gap based on the calculations below of approximately €70-120 million per year in the early years of the Decade. By 2015, the expectation is that governments would be absorbing at least 90 percent of the costs of educating Roma, in which case external financing requirements would be reduced to about €40-65 million annually.

**Table 5: Extra Annual Cost of Closing Roma Education Gap by 2015 (€ million)<sup>46</sup>**

Closing the gap objective	Range of annual funding need at the beginning of the Decade	Range of annual funding need by the end of the Decade
Full basic education participation	45-60	140-200
Increasing the demand for basic education	15-25	45-90
Increasing access to pre-school education	30-50	60-115
Increasing access to secondary education	15-30	75-140
Increasing access to tertiary education	2-4	4-10
Integrating Roma children into general education programs	7-15	40-55
Improving education and training opportunities for youth and adults	2-6	12-15
Improving the employment skills of adults	4-10	14-25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120-200</b>	<b>390-650</b>

Simply providing these levels of additional financing, through the Roma Education Fund, or by other means, will be insufficient, however, if there is not significant policy change in the Decade countries. At present, as discussed in Part I, national educational policies contain significant barriers to Roma participation and performance, quite aside from financing requirements. To give just one example, the continued use of scholastic aptitude assessment at an early age in a linguistically and culturally biased way will continue to misclassify Roma children as appropriate for special schools. The analysis of Decade Action Plans in Part II shows that countries are moving at varying paces to make these essential complementary reforms. Success in closing the gap will depend equally on further expediting policy reforms, as well as making available the funding required to fund the programs and interventions outlined above.

<sup>46</sup> The funding needs presented in this table are the sum of the recurrent and investment funding outlined in the preceding text, as well as funding for various demand side interventions. The total amounts have been discounted somewhat to reflect a mid-point of some of the ranges given in the text.

## **Annex 1: Proposed Projects for the Roma Education Fund**

This annex summarizes the interventions proposed in the country assessment reports that could be supported by the Roma Education Fund in the future. The list is intended to provide some examples and ideas of what the REF could finance, it is not comprehensive, nor does it guarantee that specific projects would be financed. All projects financed by the REF will have to fit with the criteria and requirements agreed by the REF board. The country background papers were prepared by researchers in each of the Decade countries and included consultation with Roma experts and leaders, and other stakeholders.

### **A. Expanding Access to Preschool Programs**

- Pre-school programs involving mothers and children.
- Bilingual preschool education in areas where Roma language is spoken.
- Communications programs to increase awareness among Roma families on the importance of preschool education.
- NGO participation in preschool provision, including outreach in Roma settlements, traveling kindergartens, and organization of programs for children and their mothers in the settlements.
- Fee waivers to allow poor children to attend preschool.
- Development of outcome-oriented pre-school curriculum and methodology.
- Support for Roma assistant teachers in preschool groups.

### **B. Ensuring Full Participation in Compulsory Education**

- Support for low income households to allow children to attend school (e.g. school lunches, textbooks, school materials). Cash benefits for low income households to support school participation.
- Upgrading and expansion of school infrastructure where necessary, including building new schools and extensions to existing school buildings.
- Programs for Roma students who have not completed primary school or are illiterate.
- Scholarships or stipends for girls to attend 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade for using transportation, purchasing school materials and covering other out of pocket expenditures.
- Programs involving parents in schools. Setting up parents' associations.
- Tutoring programs for Roma students.
- Introducing Roma language classes in schools.
- Work with dropouts to encourage their return to school and completion.
- Programs to keep girls in school.

- Programs and outreach support for Roma IDPs/refugees (e.g. overcoming registration barriers, language).
- Programs for street children, educational support for young parents.
- Elective classes on Roma culture, traditions, folklore and history.
- Programs to develop acceptance and respect for children of all backgrounds and support cultural identity.
- Programs to strengthen the capacity of Roma NGOs to work in the field of education and to work with educational institutions.

**C. Increasing Access to Secondary and Higher Education**

- Scholarship programs for Roma secondary and post-secondary students, and encouragement of Roma participation in existing scholarship programs.
- Provision of food and transportation for students from poor backgrounds.
- Programs at the primary level to prepare students for secondary school qualifying exams, including tutoring programs.
- Experimentation with part-time programs to allow students to complete their studies.
- Introduction of an information campaign to increase Roma participation in secondary and postsecondary education.
- Establishment of a Roma studies department at the university level to train linguists, teachers, scientists, journalists, historians, folklorists, etc.
- Introduction of post-graduate studies in Roma subjects.
- Programs for health training and education of children in specific topics such as sex education and family planning; HIV/AIDS awareness; drug abuse prevention; etc.

**D. Extracurricular Activities**

- Extracurricular programs for Roma students (e.g. academic and other clubs, summer camps, journalism activities).
- Activities to promote Roma history and culture and the celebration of important events.
- Establishment of a second chance community center to work with school dropouts.
- Counseling and mentoring of Roma students through a youth-to-youth mentoring program.
- Courses for Roma families in literacy and civic education to promote parental involvement.

**E. Integration and Desegregation Programs**

- Programs to desegregate schools and classrooms in urban and rural areas. Including transportation, support for teachers, families, curriculum development.

- Support for NGOs implementing desegregation programs.
- Creation of a network of schools to share best practice in integration approaches.
- Development of new testing methodologies for school placement to replace biased assessments that misplace children into special schools.
- Revision of criteria for placement into special schools. Closing special schools and special classes within regular schools.
- Reintegration of students from special schools into mainstream schools. Transformation of special schools into mainstream schools.
- Analysis of the causes of school segregation.

**F. Teacher Training and Education Materials**

- Training programs (including “training of trainers”) to prepare teachers to work in multicultural environments and with ethnically diverse classes. Training in Roma language, history and culture to promote better understanding of Roma community values.
- Expansion of training and recruitment programs for Roma teachers.
- Child-centered teacher training to improve teaching at all levels.
- Anti-bias training to support school success for all students, including emphasis on strengthening individual and group identities and self-confidence, strengthening school relationships between families and communities, and promoting social justice.
- Training for school management in the process of integration in education, prevention of low attendance of Roma students, ensuring that Roma families have necessary documentation for school attendance, and to support teachers.
- Development of education programs encouraging self-respect, positive self-esteem, and tolerance.
- In-service and preparatory training programs for Roma teachers’ assistants, including general knowledge of child development and education, and specific topics.
- Incorporation of information about the role of teachers’ assistants into the curricula at all pedagogical faculties.
- Incorporation of Roma history and culture in school curricula and textbooks. Develop and publish Roma language and history textbooks.
- Development of inclusive education in schools through the dissemination of positive results from previous projects.
- Preparation of work programs and teaching manuals for teachers’ assistants and teaching personnel.
- Information campaigns to tackle discrimination and racism. Development of school materials on human rights issues.

**G. Adult Literacy and Job Training Programs**

- Lifelong learning programs for adults to return to school. Basic literacy courses.
- Health education programs, including special programs on women's health.
- Vocational training programs for school dropouts.
- Job placement programs.
- Projects aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills of Roma youth and adults.
- Training Roma women as tutors.
- Re-qualification courses, including English language, computer literacy and management.

#### **H. Information and Evaluation**

- Conducting in-depth surveys of Roma education needs. Sociological surveys of localities where Roma live, mapping their socio-economic and educational situation.
- Creation of a national institute to systematically research, monitor, evaluate and address issues of Roma education as well as educational policies and projects aimed at Roma. The institute should have branch offices in all regions with significant Roma populations in order to carry out long-term local field research.
- Introduction of a nationwide permanent system for educational data collection and monitoring related to Roma, based on co-operation with teacher's assistants.
- Creation of a forum for the exchange of good practices in the education of Roma children among the countries involved in the Decade. Establishment of a system for sharing innovative practices and to promote networks among schools to share approaches.
- Research on schools successful at integrating Roma and bridging the gap between Roma and majority children, in order to identify good practices.
- Monitoring and evaluation of Roma education programs.
- Compilation of a systematic overview of all existing research on Roma to identify knowledge gaps.
- Government pilots to monitor attendance and school performance of target groups.