



ROMA
EDUCATION FUND
Invest | Educate | Engage



2018
ANNUAL REPORT



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Roma Education Fund (REF) 2018 Annual Report includes reporting for REF foundations, offices and activities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Kosovo*, Hungary, North Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

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REF REPRESENTATIVE OFFICES

Serbia
Montenegro

Chairman's Message

2018 has been a year highlighted by successes and challenges for Roma Education Fund (REF) and its operations.



Among the successes, the new **REF Strategic Framework 2021-2030** was adopted at the board meeting in Skopje, June, 2018, after two years of development and deliberation. The new strategy signals a new direction along three approaches: a) supporting individual beneficiaries and their path to good learning outcomes, transition into labor market and public/political leadership, b) working with and sensitizing education systems through advocating for the needs and interests of Roma and c) making REF a specialized organization which is recognized as a resource center for mobilizing the human potential of Roma.

Education leading towards employment is a new area for REF's efforts, and one that is seen by the Roma community, governments and donors as a final measure of effectiveness of REF interventions. At the same time, REF and the board are fully aware of the difficulties of overcoming prejudices and discrimination in schooling and entering the labor market.

Hence, the REF Strategic Framework makes *resilience* a key word for both parents and children – resilience for demanding quality education and achieving their academic and professional aspirations.

REF is already going in this direction. REF signed a historic agreement in Brussels in 2018 with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) called the "**EU Regional Action for Roma: Increased Education Opportunities for Roma Students and Youth in Western Balkans and Turkey.**" The three-year project is being implemented in seven countries and aims at reducing the gap between Roma and non-Roma in the participation in quality schooling, improving Roma students' transition from education towards employment and promoting desegregation and durable systemic change within education systems in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

The focus on employability underpins two additional projects. "**Shaping Academic and Employment Skills for Young Roma**" (**SHAPYR**), a four-year project started in 2018 and funded by VELUX Foundations, aims to increase the number of Roma youth and young adults gaining qualifications and graduating from vocational secondary education in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. In Serbia, "**Improved Education and**

Integration Opportunities for Roma, Employment Empowerment of Young Roma, and Reintegration of Returnees” grants secondary school scholarships and facilitates the transition of Roma youth into the labor market, with the support of Germany’s Development Bank (KfW). Among the **challenges** for REF in 2018 was the **less friendly political atmosphere** towards civil society in Europe, including declining institutional attention on social inclusion of Roma. Eventually, the **fire** in the building of Roma Education Fund Headquarters in Budapest (REF HQ) in November triggered additional operational and administrative delays for which the staff in REF HQ can only be praised for their solidarity and effectiveness in carrying out all activities regardless of the circumstances.

REF has continued the process of **reorganizing its structures and functions**. Following the board’s decision, REF is registering two new entities in Serbia and North Macedonia in 2019, and the Montenegro branch office will be closed. At the REF network level, internal operations were strengthened through cooperation agreements between the Swiss Foundation and REF entities, revision and adoption of the REF Network Operational Manual and protection of REF’s logo in the EU.

An essential part of strengthening REF’s operational efficiencies has been the review of **REF finances**, including the adoption of principles, safeguard mechanisms and an organizational culture to ensure more effective management. This is being undertaken with rising requests for REF’s services and model solutions and well-illustrated by projects which were won by all REF entities in 2018. However, all successfully awarded projects also come with **co-financing demands** – including pre-financing or non-eligible costs to be covered by REF – which require thorough discussions, including with donors, on how to deal with these financial demands in the long run.

With the new REF Strategic Framework 2021-2030 and the restructuring of the organization, **REF will be entering a new phase in its history**. It is a challenge but, indeed, also an opportunity for the organization and staff. With a new outlook and better defined objectives underpinning REF’s operations, it is my strong belief that REF will contribute even more meaningfully to closing the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma.

Thank you for your continued support,

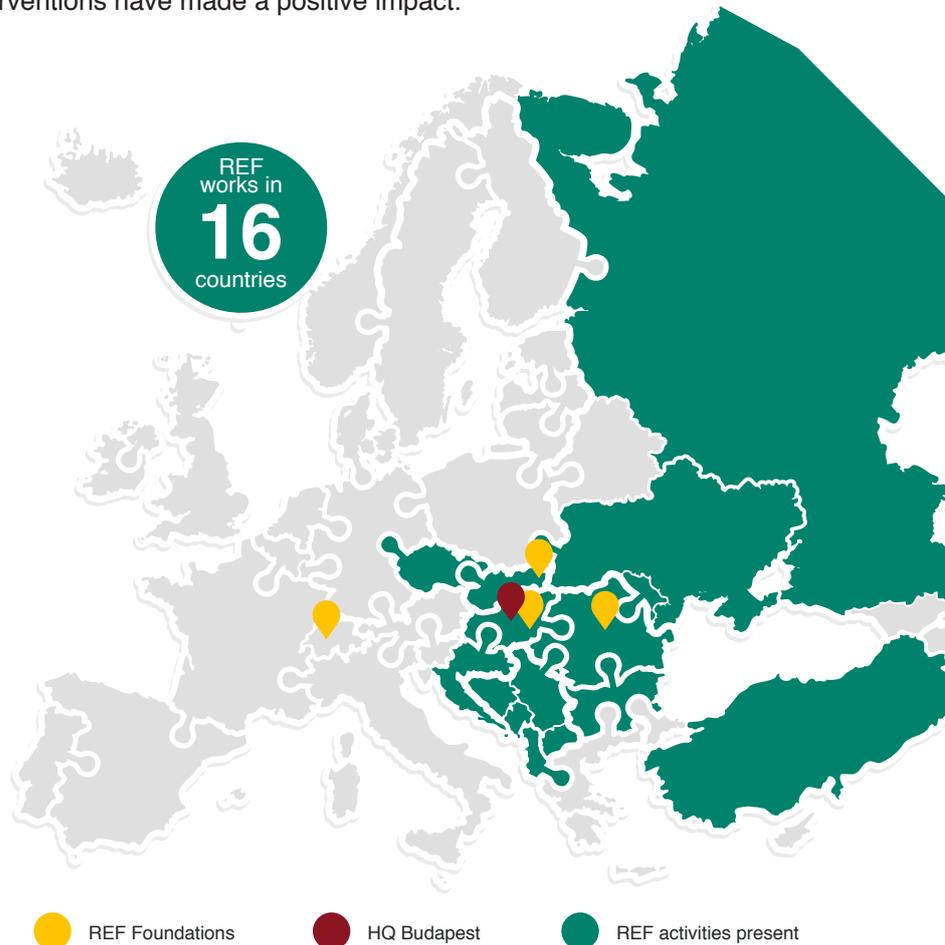


Andrzej Mirga
Chair

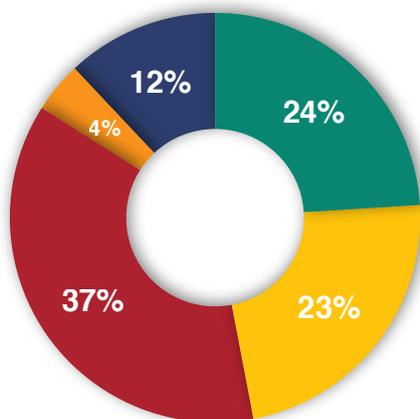
2018 at a Glance

Based on in-house evidence and analytics, Roma Education Fund's 2018 Annual Report pairs a general overview with in-depth reporting about program and project activities in 16 countries. It brings to attention the key achievements and events by visualizing aggregated data and highlighting the stories and experiences of individuals for whom REF's education interventions have made a positive impact.

Model (Grant program)	Number of projects in 2018	Funds committed in 2018 (EUR)
Early Childhood Education and Care	16	454,145
Primary Education	6	213,864
Secondary Education	5	331,822
Tertiary Education	n/a	1,847,487
Adult Education	1	24,122
RomaVersitas	6	378,292
Other (Project implementation)	13	3,295,179
TOTAL		6 544 911



SPENDING BY PROGRAM



- Grant Program
- Tertiary Scholarship Program
- Direct Project Implementation
- Capacity building, Policy Development and Communications
- Administrative Expenses

REF achieves its mission to close the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma through:

Grant program - REF provides grants to civil society and public institutions to implement education projects supporting early childhood education and care, primary and secondary education, tertiary level study and support centers, and adult education programs.

Tertiary education scholarship program - REF provides merit-based, competitive academic scholarships for Roma students pursuing Bachelor, Master or Doctorate degrees.

Direct project implementation - REF implements large-scale, multi-year and multi-country projects, funded in 2018 by European Union, German Development Bank - KfW and VELUX Foundations.

Influencing through capacity building, policy development and communications - REF promotes evidence-based models of good practice and advocates for innovative methodologies, curriculum reform and renewed policies targeting Roma students.

2018 at a Glance

REF support in 2018 ensured the smooth progression from one education level to another for our beneficiaries (definition: the individuals benefiting from our programs and activities).

HOW DO WE TRACK OUR IMPACT?

Attendance rate

Are students attending school regularly?

Retention rate

Are students finishing the school year and enrolling into the following school year?

Transition rate

Are students moving to the next grade or educational level?

Dropout rate

Are students dropping out before finishing the school year?

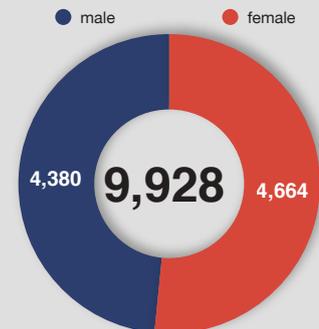
Graduation rate

Are students successfully completing the educational level?

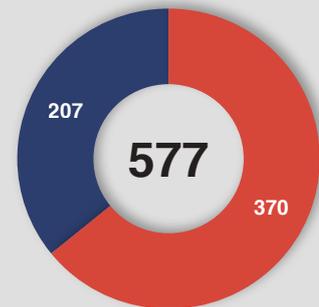
GPA (Grade Point Average)

Are students improving their grades?

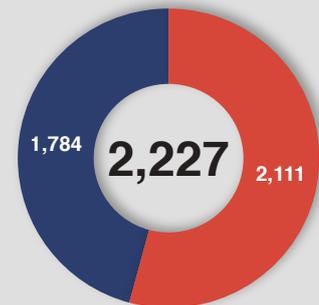
TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES (GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS)



TOTAL NUMBER OF MENTORS AND TUTORS

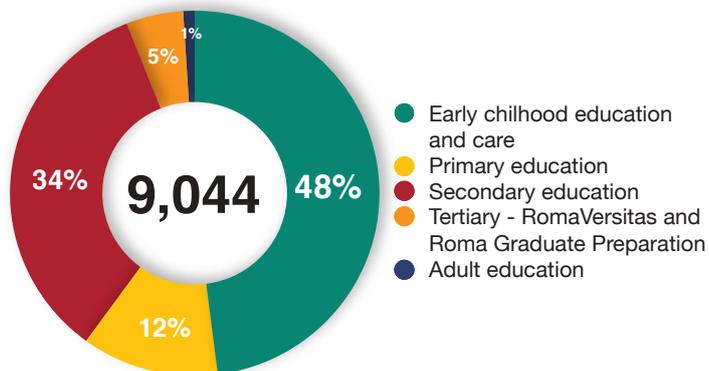


TOTAL NUMBER OF PARENTS



GRANTS PROGRAM 2018

distribution of beneficiaries per educational level



GRANTS PROGRAM 2017/18 SCHOOL YEAR

Countries	Number of projects
Albania	5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3
Bulgaria	3
Croatia	1
Czech Republic	3
Hungary	6
Kosovo	3
North Macedonia	3
Montenegro	1
Romania	1
Serbia	3
Slovakia	3
TOTAL	35

Educational Levels

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

Retention and transition rates are conventionally highest at the preschool level in comparison to other intervention levels. In 2018, **4,335 children (2,147 female / 2,188 male)** took part in REF-supported programs, with 70% transitioning to integrated primary schools and 30% to segregated schools.



2,823 parents participating in ECEC programs
(2,115 female / 708 male)



2,331 registered Toy Library members
(1,385 female / 946 male)



Dropout rate among preschool children

PRIMARY EDUCATION

1,106 children (506 female / 600 male) took part in REF-supported primary school activities designed to prevent early school leaving and improve graduation rates through tutoring and mentoring.

1%
Dropout rate

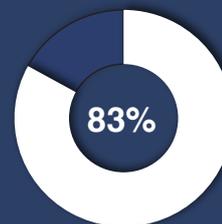
5.28%
Average GPA development after the project intervention



Transitions to the next grade



of all final year primary pupils transitioned to secondary school



Attendance rate

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Participants in REF's secondary education interventions may receive any combination of scholarships, mentoring or tutoring support, with the aim to improve academic performance and decrease early school leaving.



3,102 students in the secondary education scholarship programs
(1,741 female / 1,361 male)



Attendance rate



Retention rate

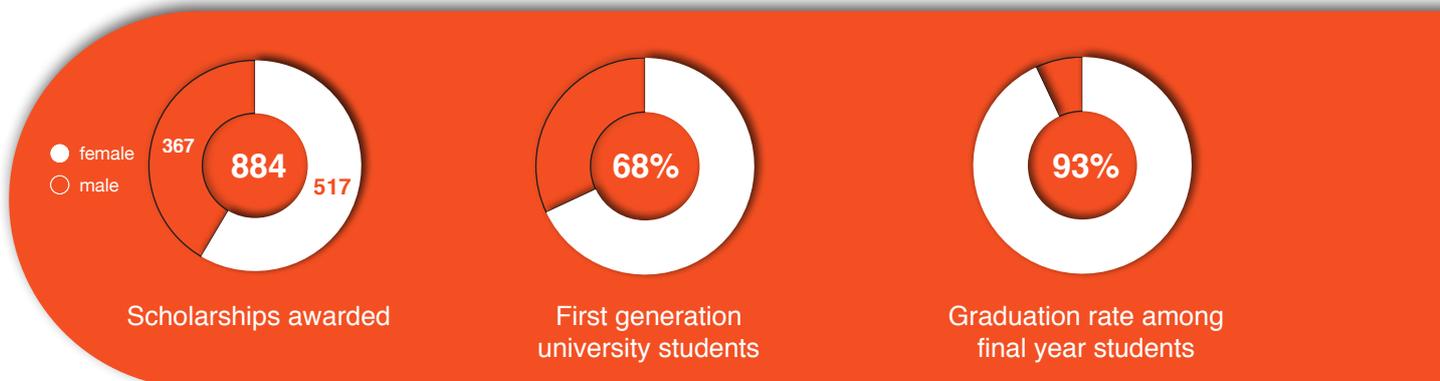


39% transitioned to the labor market

61% transitioned to university

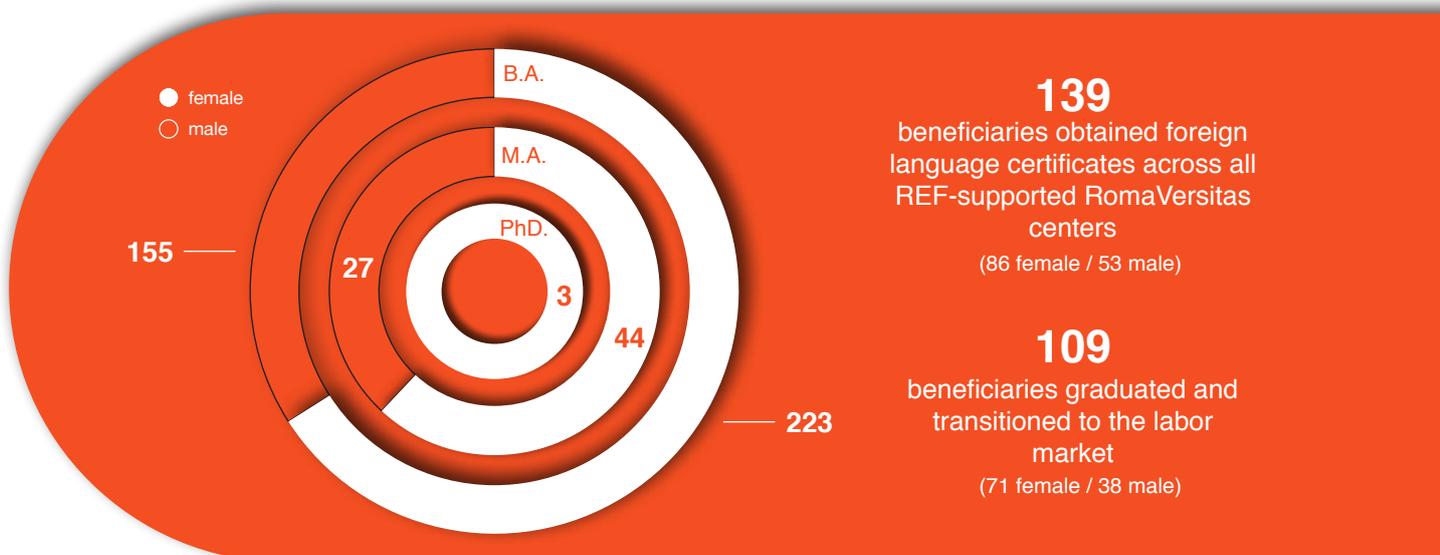
TERTIARY EDUCATION - SCHOLARSHIPS

The main goal of Roma Education Fund's Tertiary Scholarship Program is to contribute to the emergence of a critical mass of Roma graduates who will become professionals in their fields and to remain connected to the Roma community to support its further advancement. In the 2017-18 academic year, REF awarded scholarships to students from **14 countries** through four tertiary education scholarship schemes.



TERTIARY EDUCATION - GRANT PROJECTS

The RomaVersitas academic centers offer mentoring, tutoring and professional development training, while strengthening students' Roma identity and community participation. In 2018, RomaVersitas centers in Albania, Hungary, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Romania and Serbia worked with **425** students.



ADULT EDUCATION

Second Chance programs provide those with incomplete primary and/or secondary education with tutoring and financial support for completing formal education. In 2018, REF supported Adult Education programs in Albania.





Early Childhood Education and Care

In 2018, participants in early childhood education and care projects (ECEC) accounted for 48% of beneficiaries supported by REF's grant program projects. REF awarded grants to civil society organizations in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovakia with the aim to improve the school readiness and early childhood development outcomes of Roma children aged between zero to six.

ECEC PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY REF INTEGRATE SEVERAL KEY ACTIVITIES:

Increasing the access and participation in mainstream, non-segregated ECEC services by eliminating existing barriers.

Mobilizing Roma parents and community through participation in project activities and tailored home visits.

Enhancing parenting skills (mothers, in particular) through informal **literacy training** and **storytelling** sessions, establishment of **Toy Libraries**, and improving the interaction of parents with ECEC institutions.

Improving the quality of teaching and learning of Roma children in preschools by strengthening the capacity of teachers and caregivers and facilitating learning through Roma teacher assistants.

Working with tertiary education institutions and pedagogy students to influence changes in university curricula and adoption of practical models into student teaching.



children participated in REF-supported ECEC projects



children participated in Toy Library activities



registered Toy Library members



parents involved in project activities (e.g. ECEC clubs, home school community liaison)

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

The REF Montenegro representative office has been supporting ECEC activities in the Konik camp, including a popular Toy Library, since 2013. In summer 2018, residents from the camp volunteered to team up with REF and Trekking for Kids, Inc., an organization from Washington, USA, to clean a kindergarten yard and repaint a kindergarten fence.



The summer action also built two bus stops – one at the Konik camp in Podgorica and the other in the town of Berane. Children who participate in REF-supported early childhood programs enroll into integrated primary schools. The newly built bus stops provide the children a safe place for boarding and disembarking for their transport to and from school.



“ Now my Samed can speak the language being taught at primary school, thanks to the support we had during his time in preschool. ”

Selvije Mustafa



Selvije Mustafa and her son, Samed are supported by REF project, “Together for Equity in Early Childhood” project KO-022 in Plemetina village, Kosovo



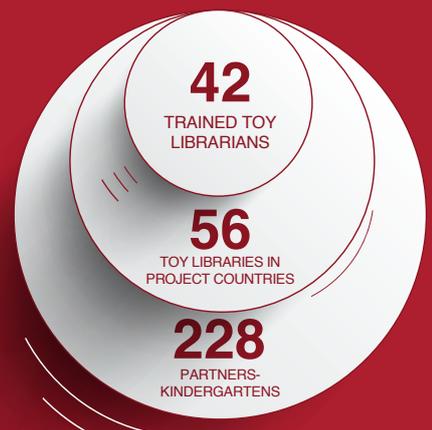
THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

A **Toy Library** is a community venue where children, their families and caregivers can meet to borrow toys, puzzles and books that are designed to support children’s early development and learning. The items may be borrowed and taken home, but can also be used on site.

Since 2011 REF has launched Toy Libraries in 40 Roma communities in 9 countries. Access to quality educational toys support the early stimulation and improve school readiness of children from disadvantaged communities. Toy Libraries also provide an opportunity for parents to strengthen their parenting skills and to understand the importance of play in the different stages of their children’s development.

“Anjeza and Fatmir are now in second and third grade, respectively, in primary school. During their early years, the children were not able to develop proper linguistic skills, as their parents are deaf. Living in poverty, with only their father working as a horse-cab transporter, the children had no toys in their home. Romani Baxt center is a second home for both children - a chance to develop their cognitive and social skills in the Toy Library and, now, to see their homework. The school principal and the teachers report that the children show good learning results and their knowledge is the same as the other children.”

TEACHER FROM ALBANIA





Primary Education

Primary education projects accounted for 12% of beneficiaries supported by REF's grant program in 2018. REF awarded grants to civil society organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary and Montenegro with the aim to improve access to primary education, prevent early school leaving (ESL) and facilitate the transition to secondary education.

PRIMARY EDUCATION PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED BY REF GRANTEES PROMOTE THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS:

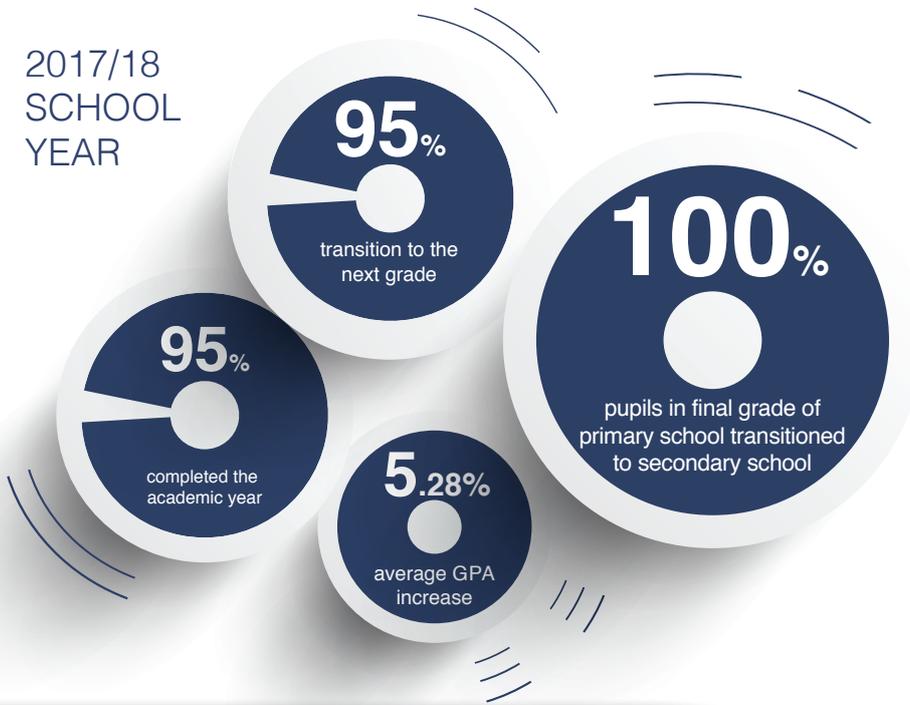
Access and enrollment – supporting Roma parents to make well-informed decisions aiming to prevent them from enrolling their children in segregated, low-quality schools or special schools.

Academic performance and retention – strengthening the link between parents and schools, providing tutoring and mentoring in order to decrease early school leaving.

Continuous monitoring of the child's progress – tracking students' academic progress, attendance rates and data about individual learners' needs.

Transition to secondary education level – identifying problems regarding ESL, reintegrating early school leavers, involving parents and key Roma community members (school mediators, teacher assistants, representatives on the parents' council and school board), providing tutoring and mentoring, and organizing visits to secondary schools.

2017/18
SCHOOL
YEAR



“I am deeply convinced that all Roma children want to get educated and finish primary school, secondary school and faculty. However, the majority of Roma students in primary and secondary education do not have adequate conditions for learning at home. They do not have a room of their own which is furnished with appropriate learning and IT equipment. ... REF has made a big difference in the education of Roma children. Thanks to REF's resources, inclusion of Roma children both in primary and secondary education is significantly higher and their school achievements in Tuzla Canton have improved.”

Fikret Vrtagic

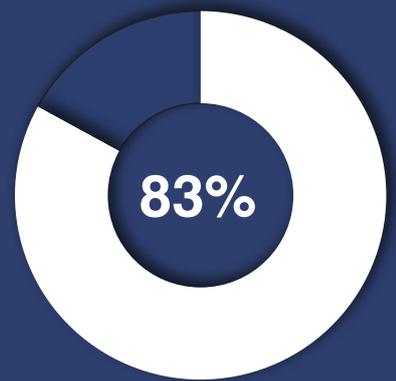
Head of Department of Education and Science, Ministry of Education and Science Tuzla Canton

SPOTLIGHT

Biljana Mursic and her family were living on the edge of poverty. Although her siblings did not have much success in school and finished only primary education, Biljana was different. She had the opportunity in third grade to move to a mainstream school where she was integrated with non-Roma pupils.

According to Biljana, her one year attending the integrated school was crucial for her educational development. During her time there she was able to increase her grades and gain more knowledge. When she returned home, she found out she was much more advanced than her classmates. In the fifth grade she asked to transfer into a non-Roma class, but her request was denied by school authorities stating that her educational achievements would be worse in a non-Roma class. Despite her setbacks, Biljana completed primary school and enrolled in secondary education with a focus on economics.

Growing up in a Roma settlement, Biljana saw many injustices which motivated her to join law enforcement. With the help of the Desa and Jerko Bakovic Foundation and REF, Biljana attended English language tutoring classes and is currently enrolled in the police academy in Zagreb. In her spare time she likes to practice martial arts.



Average attendance rate among Roma pupils in integrated primary schools





Secondary Education

34% of REF's grants program beneficiaries in 2018 participated in secondary education projects. REF awarded grants to civil society organizations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia.

The majority of secondary education beneficiaries participate in **REF's scholarship and mentoring program (SSMP)**, which operates in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovakia with their respective ministries of education.

The SSMP model is based on awarding **merit-based scholarships** to individual students, providing financial support and also increasing **community awareness** and **motivating Roma parents** on the importance of keeping their children in schools.

Another component is **monitoring progress**. Beneficiaries are required to submit quarterly reports on their academic progress and satisfaction of tutor and mentorship programs received in the project.

The **mentorship and tutoring** component is school-based and establishes a network of trained tutors and mentors who work with students on developing their academic performance, social and communication skills and self-confidence. Due to the success of school-based mentoring and tutoring, REF advocates to integrate these programs in the educational systems.

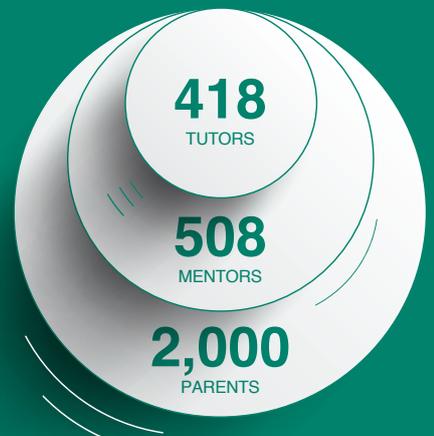
2017/18
SCHOOL
YEAR



“I think I could be very useful if my dental surgery is open to everyone - for a client who can afford a €500 intervention and a grandmother with a grandchild who cannot afford my services. I take it as my obligation and responsibility. Once they have reached me, they need me. People’s health is sacred and shouldn’t have a price.”

Emiliyan Mitkov
Oryahovo, Bulgaria
Secondary Scholarship and Mentoring Program
Currently studies Dental Medicine

WHO IS INVOLVED

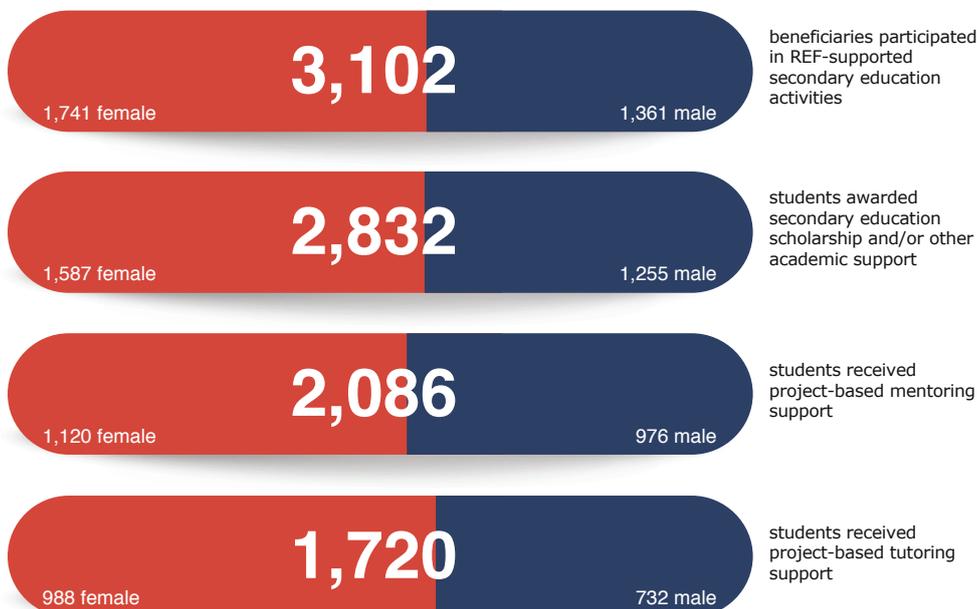


SPOTLIGHT

REF’s modest stipend and academic support made all the difference during my first year of secondary school when I was considering dropping out. My tutor assisted me both in school and at home, and gave me space to share my concerns. When my tutor and I were both stuck with a particular subject, my tutor asked for additional help from the Association of Roma “Euro Rom”. It really helped my academic performance in the subject where I had been falling behind. Seeing my progress, my parents encouraged my younger sister to also enroll in secondary school.

Kenan Suljic
Scholarship recipient, Secondary School for Mechanical Engineering Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

★ BEST RESULTS



GRUBB Roma Pop Band from Serbia



Tertiary Education Scholarship Program

REF offers four tertiary education: The Law and Humanities Program (LHP), Roma Health Scholarship Program (RvHSP), Roma International Scholarship Program (RISP) and Roma Memorial University Scholarship Program (RMUSP).

THE LAW AND HUMANITIES PROGRAM (LHP)

LHP has been co-financed by REF and by the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ) since 2007. REF implements the scholarship program in cooperation with national partners in **Moldova, Russia and Ukraine**.

The annual LHP student conference was held in summer 2018 in Chisinau, Moldova and brought together 50 participants for workshops related to professional development, community activism and Roma identity.

SPOTLIGHT

“As part of my work in the ‘Chirikli’ fund as a volunteer, I provided legal advice to Roma, especially for Roma women in the Roma settlements because these women and children are the most vulnerable. Also, in my region I performed short home courses for Roma children, helping them learn the basics of the school curriculum. I often acted as an intermediary between the local school administrations and the parents when it was necessary to solve pressing issues. Finally, I frequently help Roma youth to learn about the wonderful opportunities offered by Roma Education Fund. I am convinced that REF grows new intellectuals of Roma youth around the world.”

Olena Vaidalovych

Law and Humanities Program Scholar
MA in Human Rights and Law, Ukraine



2018/19 ACADEMIC YEAR

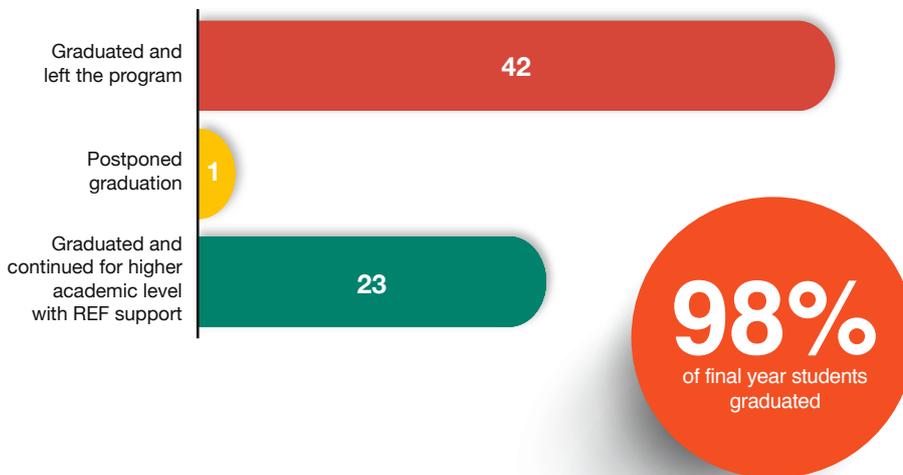
Application data



66%
of scholarships awarded to first generation university students

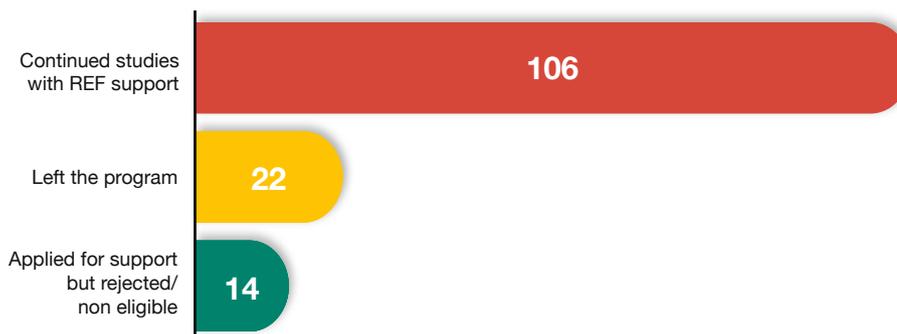
2017/18 ACADEMIC YEAR

Graduation data - Scholarship students in the final year of studies



2017/18 ACADEMIC YEAR

Renewal status - Scholarship students NOT in final year of studies



“I have participated in the Platform for Gender Equality of the UN Women Moldova. When you see people fighting to bring positive changes in their lives, when you see disadvantaged people trying to find their place in the society and when you know your own challenges and experiences, you don't have doubts about being involved in volunteering. You just go and do it as you know that there are people waiting for your support and help.”

Rada Padureanu
LHP scholar
Law Graduate, Moldova State University



Roman Cebotari, Phd student at Moldova State Institute of International Relations

ROMA HEALTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (RHSP)

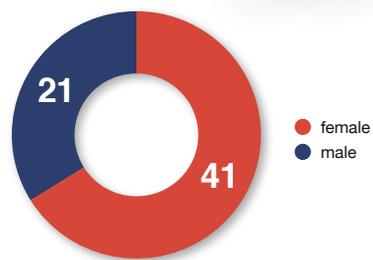
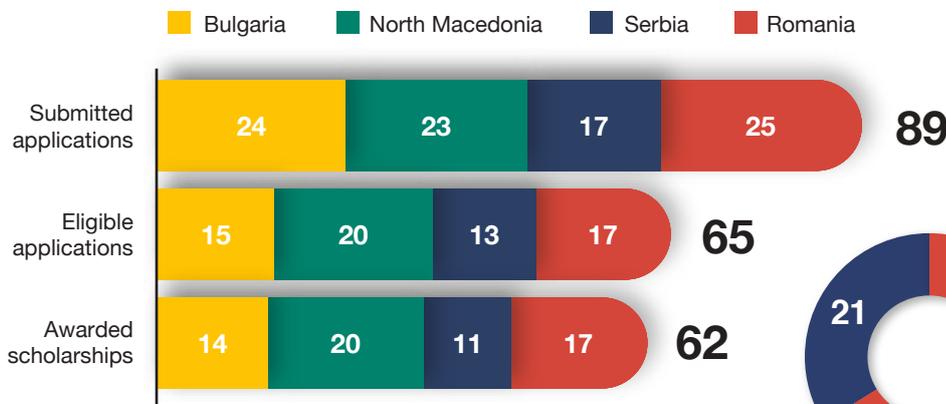
The aim of **RHSP** is to provide support for medical studies through scholarships, mentorship and advocacy training, for Roma students in four countries: **Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia.** By investing into a generation of Roma medical professionals and health care providers, the program aims to tackle and dismantle negative stereotypes and attitudes. Furthermore, the RHSP initiative aims to help increase the accessibility of health services to Roma, and boost their trust in health care systems.

Beside the financial support for pursuing medical studies, the RHSP scheme encourages its beneficiaries and graduates to enhance their academic and professional development by participating in extra-curricular activities and by building academic and professional networks outside their universities. RHSP scheme also promotes the philosophy of community participation of its ongoing beneficiaries and program graduates, by designing and implementing community small-scale projects.



2018/19 ACADEMIC YEAR

Application data



2017/18 ACADEMIC YEAR



graduation rate of final year students
(15 out of 15 students)



graduated general medicine

Other specializations included:
biotechnology, dentistry,
radiology and speech and
language therapy.



SPOTLIGHT

Ever since I was little I dreamt about becoming a doctor, but at that time, and even in high school, that seemed like a far away prospect, and others in my community were barely making it through primary school. I found out about this scholarship opportunity, which meant a lot to me because I couldn't have afforded medical studies otherwise ... Young ambitious Roma should be given a chance if they want to become medical professionals, if they want to change the current situation in Roma communities because I myself know that, were it not for RHSP, I wouldn't be where I am now.

Natalija Mitrovic
RHSP Beneficiary, Class of 2019
Novi Sad, Serbia

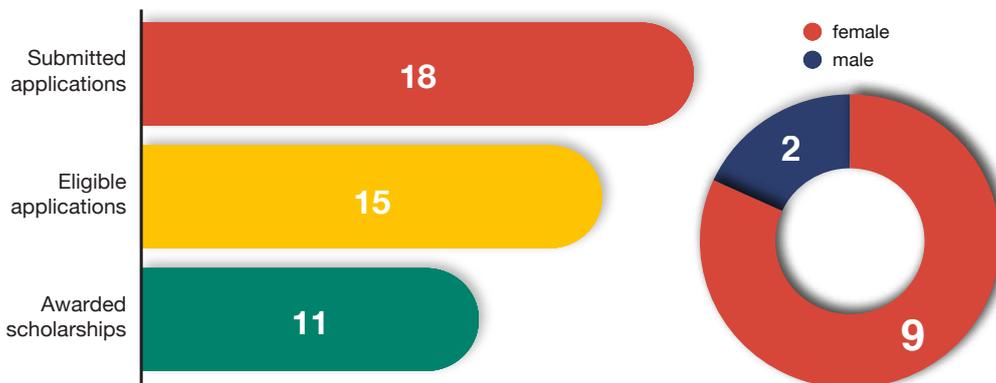


Mijana Vujcic RISP, Serbia

ROMA INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR PROGRAM (RISP)

RISP students receive financial support to **study outside their home countries** in Master or Doctoral programs.

Scholarship support in 2018 ranged from €1,500 to €8,000.



11 scholarships were awarded to students studying in the Czech Republic, Hungary, France, Slovenia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

More than half (6 out of 11) are first generation university students.

2017/2018 ACADEMIC YEAR



“I think it would be good if more people of our community chose to study chemistry and, in particular, polymers, as this is a promising science. Polymers play an important role in modern technology development. They are in modern medical and computer products, transport, sensory and agricultural facilities. Polymers replace parts of the human body: breasts, knee and hip, dentures, and others. We are all surrounded by plastic. Polymer production has begun to enter the country and in a few years there will be a strong demand for such specialists.”

Filis Boteva
RMUSP Scholar
PhD student
University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy Sofia, Bulgaria
Coordinator of volunteers at the Youth Foundation "Arete"



Sandor Kovacs, RMUSP, Hungary

ROMA MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (RMUSP)

RMUSP is REF's largest tertiary scholarship scheme designed to facilitate Roma youth's access to tertiary education and to enable larger numbers of Roma to enter the labor market as mainstream professionals. Students receive €800 support for the academic year to cover basic study and living expenses, as well as up to €1,200 to cover tuition fees, if applicable. As of 2016, additional evaluation scores are awarded to applicants studying pedagogy, natural sciences, law, medical studies, IT or engineering, in

order to incentivize Roma students pursuing fields of studies that are either in high demand on the labor market or that serve the development of Roma communities.

In 2017 REF also introduced another new element in the scholarship application form: volunteer activities which have positively affected the Roma community now increase an applicant's evaluation scores.



SPOTLIGHT

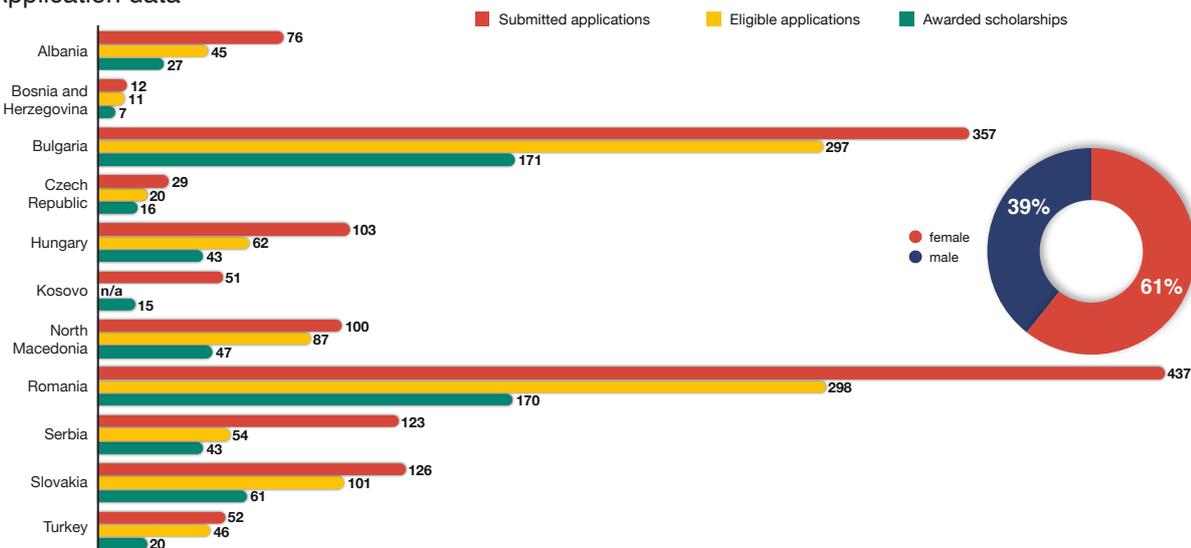
"In the hospital where I work, I cooperate with specialists in performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation to newborns and to adults. The feeling after performing a successful resuscitation cannot be described with words: in such moments one realizes the fragility of human life, how important it is to care about one's health, and it also has an incredible effect on how I answer the question whether I have chosen the right school for my vocation. And now, it is clear to me, my answer is yes. As a student of Nursing I am also interested in the health of my community and have been volunteering for two years at the community center Farebný svet (the Colored World Community Center) near where I live. The community center brings local Roma people together. Three times a year I give them lectures on various areas of health and healthcare such as first aid, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and among others, I organize motivational discussions with young Roma to motivate them to study further."

Mikulas Lakatos

BA studies in General Nursing, Faculty of Nursing and Professional Health Studies, Slovak Medical University of Bratislava, RMUSP Scholar Slovakia

2018/2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

Application data



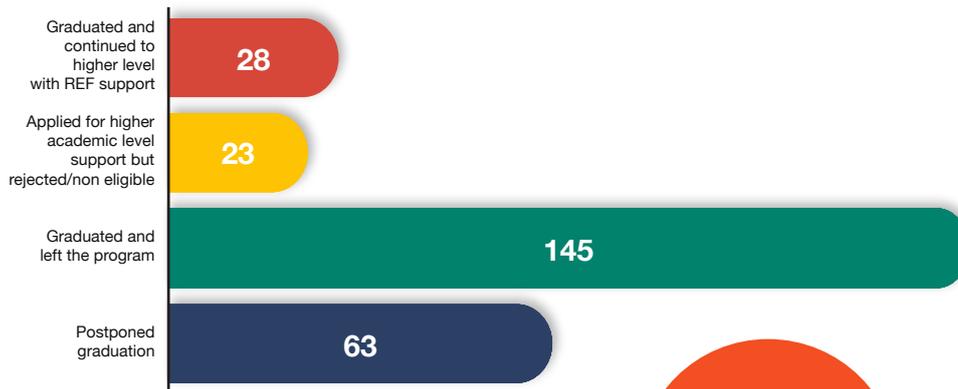
"I think it is sad that I hardly know any Roma medical students at my university. There are only about four people who openly identify as Roma. This is my concern, as I am convinced that we could motivate each other. I meet a lot of people at the university with negative opinions about Roma, and when I tell them I am a Gypsy girl and I work just as hard as them, or even harder, to make a better living for myself, they become visibly shaken in their beliefs, in their judgements. And although they probably would never tell, I am convinced they reconsider their misjudgement and revise their wrong thoughts. And that is a good start"

Vivien Navcsura, Student of Medical Studies, University of Pecs, RMUSP Scholar Hungary



2017/18 ACADEMIC YEAR

Graduation data - Scholarship students in their final year of studies

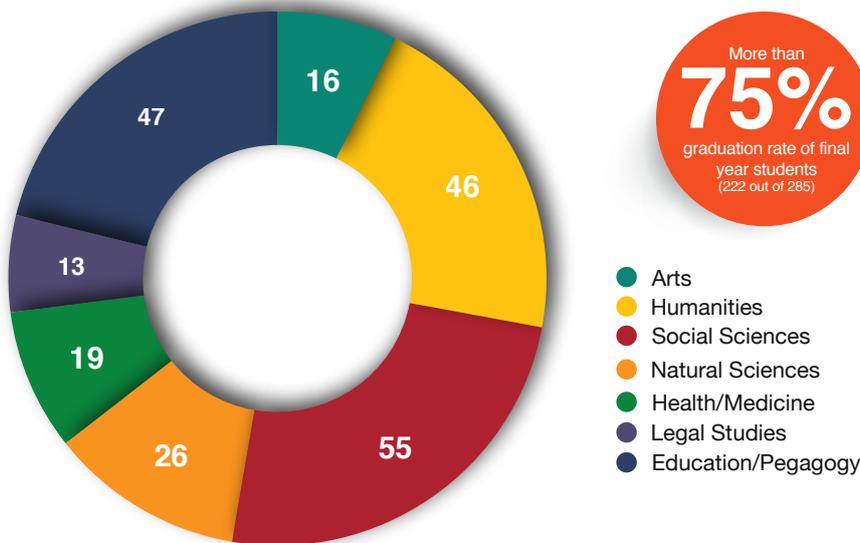


83%

of scholarships awarded to first generation university students

2017/18 ACADEMIC YEAR

Graduates' fields of study



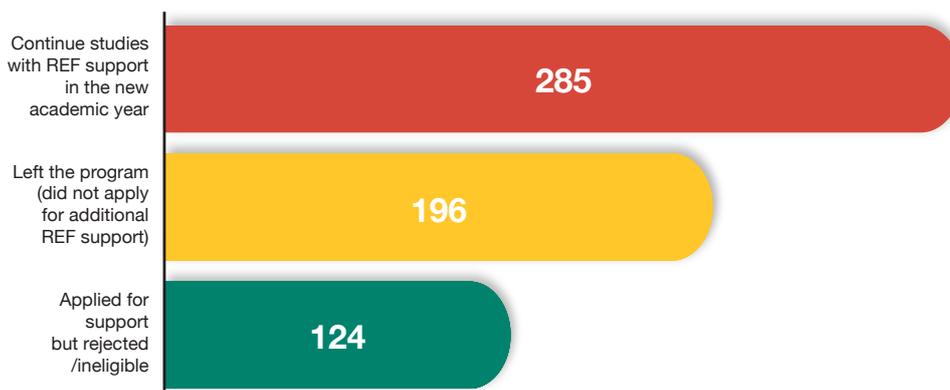
More than **75%**

graduation rate of final year students (222 out of 285)

- Arts
- Humanities
- Social Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Health/Medicine
- Legal Studies
- Education/Pedagogy

2017/18 ACADEMIC YEAR

Renewal status - Scholarship students NOT in final year of studies



“I volunteer a lot as a tutor or mentor, and I present or supply information to help people prepare to get accepted to university – and then continue mentoring them once they got in. I participate in commemorations, in protests, in the Roma Pride Day, and I advocate too. I always considered it of great importance to be available to others who need my help, may it be for a professional matter or even just a nice word of support. Sometimes all we need is one kind sentence to get enormous motivation, a new drive for life.”

Gaspar Sandor
RMUSP Scholar, Hungary



“We are usually portrayed as victims, as ‘worry-ers’, instead of what we truly are – warriors! When I am asked about the weaknesses and strengths of Roma, without hesitation I say that the ability to adapt and survive is their strongest suit, and the lack of awareness of their huge potential is one of the weaknesses in our communities. I grew up in the largest Roma municipality in my country, Shuto Orizari (Shutka), where you could often hear people say that ‘a bird does not make a spring’ whenever someone tries to make changes in their community. This doesn’t necessarily reflect apathy in our community, but rather the lack of belief that an individual among us could make changes for us. Leaving my country could be seen as a way of improving my human capital (education, career, etc.), but we should never forget where we come from and why we started this journey in the first place. Some of us prefer working at the international level because that broadens their perspective. Others believe that international pressure will push governments more effectively. I guess I belong to each of these groups.”

Tefik Mahmut, North Macedonia
MSc in Migration Studies, University of Oxford



Tertiary Education RomaVersitas

RomaVersitas is an **academic services and support program for Roma** university students.

The concept is built around expanding access, improving graduation levels and strengthening identity of Roma students in tertiary education. More specifically, RomaVersitas aims to improve the retention, performance and graduation levels of Roma students by providing them with academic **tutoring, mentoring, strengthening of their Roma identity and pride** and opportunities for **community participation**.

The RomaVersitas model serves as a bridge for young Roma scholars towards employment and active community participation by providing **tailored needs-based training** for professional development, digital literacy, and English and foreign languages.

This component is done with accredited language school and contracted IT companies, where students' progress is closely monitored.

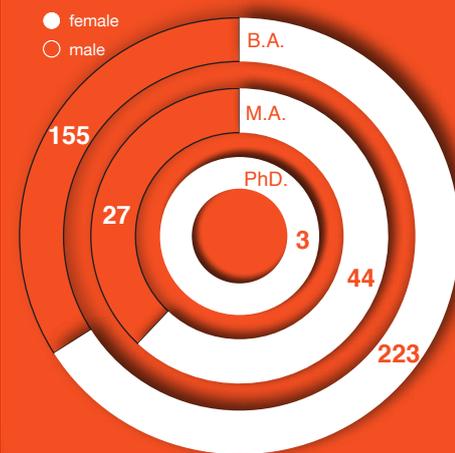
RomaVersitas is proud of **building-up a network of active Roma intellectuals in the Roma student community** by aiming at strengthening the identity and preservation of Roma language, customs, culture and history.

The first RomaVersitas Foundation was registered in Hungary in 2001, with the aim to provide essential soft skills for Roma students. Since then, more than 2,500 students have benefited directly from the services of the RomaVersitas network.

There are six RomaVersitas projects ongoing in 2018, out of which five are implemented by RomaVersitas organizations in Albania, Hungary, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia and one is implemented by REF Romania.



ROMAVERSITAS BENEFICIARIES' EDUCATION LEVELS:



SPOTLIGHT

“Before I actually started thinking about studying Politics, I finished fashion school and my plan was to work in the fashion world. But, one day I was having a discussion with my father about the hard life of the Roma people, and I felt very sad and a bit selfish about choosing a career as an artist while my people are suffering and starving. That day I told my dad that I want to make big changes. He supported the idea but told me that he wouldn't be able financially to support me because he had already paid a lot for my fashion education. Then I found about REF. And now not even one moment do I regret my choice to be part of the political system and political processes, and to be connected to the political academic elite.”

Rufat Demirov
Skopje, North Macedonia
Volunteering for RomaVersitas and a RMUSP scholar

ROMA GRADUATE PREPARATORY PROGRAM

The Roma Graduate Preparation Program (RGPP) is an intensive ten-month program that prepares promising Roma to compete for places in English-language Master's degree programs at CEU and other renowned universities, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. RGPP is funded by REF, the Open Society Foundations, Roma Initiatives Office, THE VELUX Foundations and the Sigrid Rausing Trust.



2018 HIGHLIGHTS



Romaversitas Hungary received the Silver Rose award in the European Parliament for their work in the field of informal education in the category: Building Learning Societies Award. The Silver Rose is supported by the S&D Group, the Party of European Socialists (PES) and Euractiv. (29th January 2019, Brussels).

After the fire devastated the REF headquarters Budapest office in November 2018, **RomaVersitas North Macedonia** initiated the campaign “Let's support those who supported us” through fundraising small donations as a way to show responsibility and appreciation for the support received by the students from REF during their studies. A total of 48 RomaVersitas students and alumni raised 27.385 denars (EUR 445). Thank you to all the students, as well as the organizers, Muhamed Ajvaz, Elson Iljaz, Alen Umer, Sibel Bajram, Rufat Demirov, Semran Sulejman, Josif Rashidovski, Denis Arsenovski, Huria Mu-kaipovska, Ervin Mamuti, Idriz Durmish.



Adult Education

Second Chance Programs for Adult Functional Literacy and Formal School Completion - In 2018, participants in adult education projects accounted for 1% of beneficiaries supported by REF's grant program projects. The second chance project was implemented in Albania.

REF's adult education and training model aims to raise education attainment levels of Roma young adults who have not completed primary and/or secondary education. This model also aims to improve the literacy and social communication skills of illiterate and semi-literate Roma parents (mainly mothers) of preschool and school-age children and enhance their involvement in their children's education.

Formal adult education for primary and secondary education includes assessing the needs of adult primary/secondary education among the targeted young Roma adults; outreaching for and enrollment of project participants; identifying, recruiting and (if necessary) training of adult primary/secondary education tutors.

Furthermore, portfolios are developed and maintained on an individual basis for each direct beneficiary,

including information on the minimum number of exams to be taken and other academic criteria requested by the school/project, as well as attendance and performance data.

Non-formal literacy and social communication skills trainings for Roma parents (mainly mothers) of preschool-age and school-age children includes:

Phase 1: reading skills training, including parent-child storytelling reading sessions, where Roma parents read to their children and the facilitator helps them discuss the early childhood education and care issues raised in the books. Children's story books are provided to the target parents for home reading and portfolios are kept and updated on the beneficiaries' attendance, learning progress and other relevant information.

Phase 2: writing skills training, including keeping writing portfolios and monitoring their progress, in combination with their reading skills

Phase 3: training in various school subjects and social communication skills, aims to further develop the parents' education and make them better prepared to assist their children with their homework and feel more self-aware and confident in advocating for their children's education.



SPOTLIGHT

Katarina Dimce has been teaching mathematics in Tirana for 26 years. She joined a REF-supported project, implemented by the Roma Woman Rights Centre, to help Roma adults achieve their basic qualifications. Working as a tutor at the Lidhja e Prizrenit school, Katarina has assisted Roma adults to complete the nine years of compulsory education that are required for even basic official employment. “I congratulate the Roma students for the initiative they have taken to get back to school after several years of not attending. This is the first and most important step. Compulsory education – nine years in Albania – is undeniably important, as it plays a crucial role in preparing students for further education and life in general. I noticed that the number of girls attending school has increased, and some of them are accompanied by their parents who are also interested in their daughters' education.

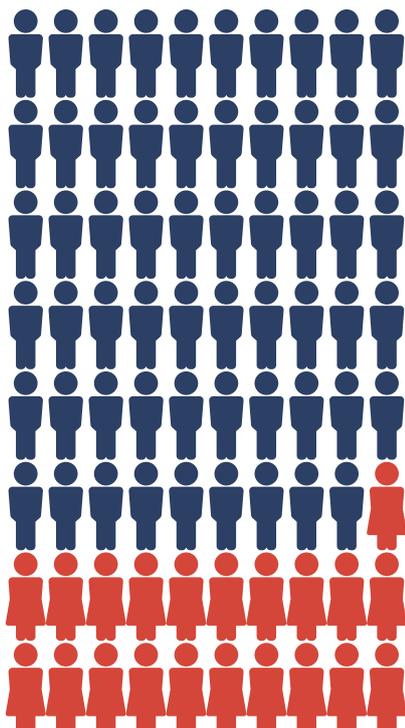
“I finished primary school and I tried to continue to secondary, but I got married and quickly had two children... Sometimes I regret it a bit, but mostly I am satisfied. I work in the public utility company and I can provide for my family. If I didn't finish primary school thanks to the Second Chance program, I wouldn't have this job and who knows what would happen with my family.”

Muhamed Berisa
Second Chance Program
Participant in Montenegro

2017/2018
SCHOOL YEAR



Average attendance rate at the Second Chance adult education programs



76 adult-beneficiaries involved in Second Chance Secondary Education Program in Albania

17 beneficiaries are female and **59** beneficiaries are male

13 graduated with a secondary education diploma in the academic year 2017/18 (3 female and 10 male)

ISSUES AFFECTING ADULT ED LEARNERS' ATTENDANCE RATE:

CHILDCARE

HEALTH CARE

EMPLOYMENT

TRANSPORTATION



Shaping Academic and Employment Skills for Young Roma

OBJECTIVES:

In recent years many countries in Central and South Eastern Europe have recognized the increasing demand for Vocational Education and Training (VET). With this trend in mind, this project aims to increase the number of Roma gaining qualifications and graduating from vocational secondary education. By equipping Roma young people and families with skills, knowledge and self-confidence, and through cooperation with vocational schools and employers, REF's objective is to pave the way for larger numbers of Roma to successfully transition into the labor market.

The project will run for four academic years, through 2022. The first group of students were recruited and selected for the 2018-19 academic year. In subsequent years their progress will be monitored and Roma young adults and families will also be incorporated into the project.

PROJECT BREAKDOWN

Budget:

€ 2 million

Duration:

2018

2022

Target Countries:

HUNGARY

ROMANIA

SLOVAKIA

This project is supported by

THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS

VILLUM FONDEN × VELUX FONDEN

TARGET GROUP



Roma youth (14-18) will be supported to enroll in targeted vocational schools. They will be provided a mentor and a tailored tutoring program which will work towards improving their confidence and school grades. In addition they will be provided soft skill trainings in order to facilitate their graduation and competitiveness in the labor market



Roma young adults (18-28) will be supported to enroll in second chance programs and VET schools.



VET schools, providers, and training companies will be engaged to receive Roma students, sharing the responsibility of providing theoretical and practical training. In addition, networks will be established between employers and current beneficiaries to facilitate smoother transition into labor markets.

Promotional and recruiting posters were utilized in order to attract participants and raise awareness

ROMA EDUCATION FUND
Invest | Educate | Engage

What we provide:

- ✓ scholarships
- ✓ financial support for school materials
- ✓ academic support – mentoring and tutoring
- ✓ soft skills training
- ✓ job search support

Where to apply and find information:
REF webpage
www.romaeducationfund.org
REFFacebook page

When to apply:
1st to 21st of September 2018.

For more information please contact
Mr. Olah Csaba,
csolah@romaeducationfund.org

This project is co-funded by
THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS
VELUX FONDATIONEN

ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS IN 2018

	Slovakia	Romania	Hungary
Number of Students	50	50	50
Number of Schools	37	1	27
Subjects and Specialization	medical assistant, stewardess, masseur, pedagogical assistant, business realtor, studies	auto mechanics, agriculture, bartending, electronics	economics, chemist technician, engineering, law enforcement, graphic designer, IT



Pedagogy Scholarship Program in Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia

OBJECTIVES:

Increase the number of Roma nursery and kindergarten teachers in Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.

Contribute to the employment of Roma teachers in nurseries and kindergartens.

Increase the kindergarten attendance of Roma children and equip them with solid skills and knowledge to successfully transit to primary education.

This project is supported by
THE VELUX FOUNDATION
 VILLUM FONDEN × VELUX FONDEN

PROJECT BREAKDOWN

Budget:

Velux Foundations
 €1,139,000

REF
 €1,273,751

€2,412,751

Duration:

2014

2023

Target Countries:



TARGET GROUP



180

Roma female secondary students received financial support through scholarships, and academic support through mentorship.

ACTIVITIES IN 2018



Recruitment and selection of new beneficiaries for 2018-19



Engagement of mentors to provide academic support and guidance



Continuous tracking of students' progress and school achievement and mentors' performance



Summer camps in Slovakia and Romania focusing on career guidance and enhancing Roma identity

TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES

School year	Czech Republic	Slovakia	Romania	Hungary	TOTAL
2014/15	6	9	0	5	20
2015/16	8	30	0	8	46
2016/17	8	41	36	15	100
2017/18	7	49	96	18	170
TOTAL	7 students from all years	49 students from all years	96 students from all years	26 students from all years	178 students from all countries since start of the project

RESULTS FOR 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR



94%

completed the school year



50%

decrease of absences in the second half of school year

100%

successful completion of the final year Matura exam that is needed to continue to university



100%

retention rate - no dropouts from the school or program

Near perfect school attendance under

1%

of absences

33%

graduates continued pedagogical studies at university

3%

have reported employment in kindergartens



0%

dropout rate, compared to 14.7% in 2016-17

100%

completion and transition rate- compared to 85% in 2016-17

5

graduated program beneficiaries have obtained permanent positions as educators and teachers in disadvantaged communities



Improved Education and Integration Opportunities for Roma in Serbia, Employment Empowerment of Young Roma, and Reintegration of Returnees

OBJECTIVES:

This project aims to expand the opportunities for integration of Roma into the educational system, increase the graduation rate of Roma students from secondary schools, enable access to the labor market and improve the employability of young Roma. In addition, the project is focused on designing mechanisms and policies for successful integration of Roma children returnees into the educational system in Serbia.

This project is supported by



PROJECT BREAKDOWN

Component One

Secondary Scholarship and Mentorship Program

Component Two

Strengthening professional skills of REF scholars and other beneficiaries

Component Three

Educational reintegration of young Roma returnees

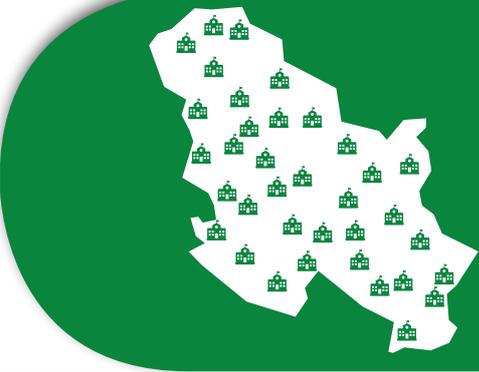
RECIPE
for increasing the graduation rate of Roma secondary school students

INGREDIENTS ✓ scholarships
✓ mentoring support

METHOD
Recruit and select Roma secondary school students with 2.5-3.5 GPAs (on a 5 point scale). Research shows a higher dropout risk for this group of students.

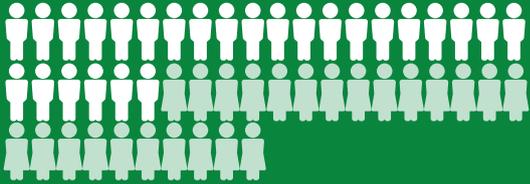
COMPONENT ONE
Secondary Scholarship and Mentorship Program

Scholarships provide much needed support for school supplies and materials. Mentors are teachers in the secondary schools that Roma students attend, and their role is to provide daily support to students of Roma ethnicity, based on a successful mentoring model which has been developed by REF's branch office in Serbia and which includes accredited trainings for mentors in order to ensure quality effects. In the long term, these two types of support, scholarships and mentoring, contribute to sustainability and provide basic conditions for the successful completion of secondary school as well as Roma students' employability after secondary education.



144 vocational schools included in the project located in
74 Serbian municipalities
174 mentors were involved under the project, of which **33 male** and **141 female**

500 vocational school student- beneficiaries included in the project, of which **259 male** and **241 female**, who received scholarships, tutoring and mentoring support



SPOTLIGHT

Davor Vujicic from Jagodina, attended Electro Technical and Construction School Nikola Tesla, where he specialized in IT. One of his interests is graphic design, and he likes to create logos, commercial content and animations. He is proud of his most recent achievement, winning second place with his team at a National Entrepreneurship Competition.

Kristijan Dimic from Kraljevo, attended Mechanical Engineering school 14. October, graduating with with 4.54/5.0 GPA. He resides in SOS children's villages with his two sisters. His hobbies are acting, promotion of projects and folklore (national dance and culture).



COMPONENT TWO

Strengthening professional skills of REF scholars and other beneficiaries

The aim of this component is to promote employability and increase the competitiveness of young Roma in the labor market. Through various vocational trainings, retraining, and internships in public and private sector, young Roma improve their skills and work towards successfully overcoming barriers of social exclusion through employment.

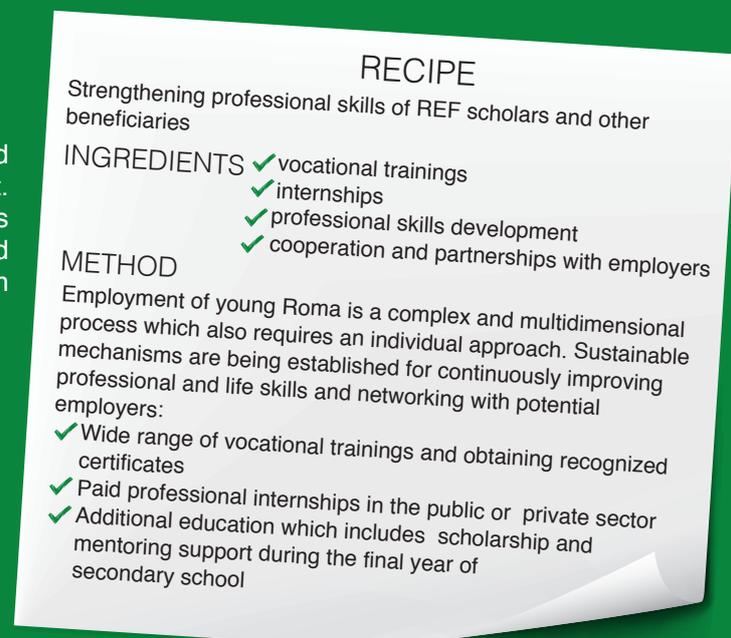
145 beneficiaries finished vocational training

152 beneficiaries on internships

30 beneficiaries completed German language courses

32 beneficiaries completed English language courses

97 beneficiaries employed upon benefiting from project services (vocational training, internships, courses).



“My confidence increased during internship because I had the opportunity to go to hearings on my own. I got to love my profession even more, because I had a lawyer who was mentoring me in applying the theory in practice. Moreover, the most important thing is that I acquired the condition for taking the bar exam, which all law students are striving for, that would be very hard for me to achieve without the support of REF.”

Jelena Krivokapić
REF Internship Beneficiary

“I learned about REF through the Association of Roma Intellectuals in Vladičin Han, because they were visiting Roma settlements trying to meet all returnee families. Since I was registered as a returnee, I expected great help in obtaining personal documents and enrolling children to school. And they did help me a lot. Children regularly went to the classrooms of the Association, where they had additional Serbian language classes, wrote their homework and interacted with other children. They also received school books and school supplies so that I did not have to give a single dinar to buy all of that and even after each workshop they got snacks, something to eat.”

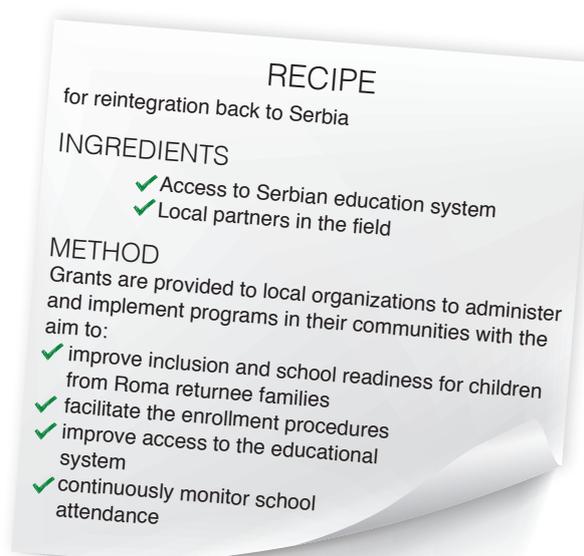
Goran Barjamović
From the village Prekodolce, close to Vladičin Han where he lives with his wife and two children who attend primary school.

COMPONENT THREE

Educational reintegration of young Roma returnees

NGO partners provide children and families with school-based support, collection of documentation, relevant information about the education system, and continuously work to improve the understanding and usage of the Serbian language by providing classes of Serbian language classes and other school subject lessons.

Within this component, long-term cooperation has been established with all relevant institutions and international organizations working in this area, in order to create preconditions for the systemic reintegration of returnees.



145 families from **5** municipalities in Southern Serbia

241 children involved in the project received Serbian language classes, tutoring, socialization workshops and school materials



Innovation in Education

REF Romania is introducing new pedagogical strategies that make education qualitative, based on learning needs and adapted to contemporary developments.

FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CENTER REGION

The project aims at reducing and preventing early school dropout and promoting inclusive education in disadvantaged communities

COMPETENCE, INNOVATION AND PROFESSIONALISM IN EDUCATION

The project aims to improve the skills of teaching staff, including school principals, in order to promote quality educational services in disadvantaged communities where approximately 80% of the pupils are Roma. A minimum of 300 preschool, primary and secondary school teachers from 10 schools are participating in continuous professional training and innovative teaching and mentoring activities to motivate qualified teachers to stay in the schools within the project.

We train teachers for the society of the future and to support the dreams and aspirations of the children!



TARGET GROUP



820
Children



200
Adults



260
Teachers

PROJECT BREAKDOWN

Budget:

€ 2,000,800,04

Duration:

2018

2021

Target Countries:



Mureș County,
7 schools

Training curricula:

- Inter-cultural approaches to education
- Creating partnerships between schools and parents
- Equal chances in education
- Non-formal education
- Learning techniques for teachers
- Management skills for school principals
- Monitoring early school leaving
- Outdoor learning techniques
- History and traditions of Roma

PROJECT BREAKDOWN

Budget:

€ 1,433,330,78

Duration:

2018

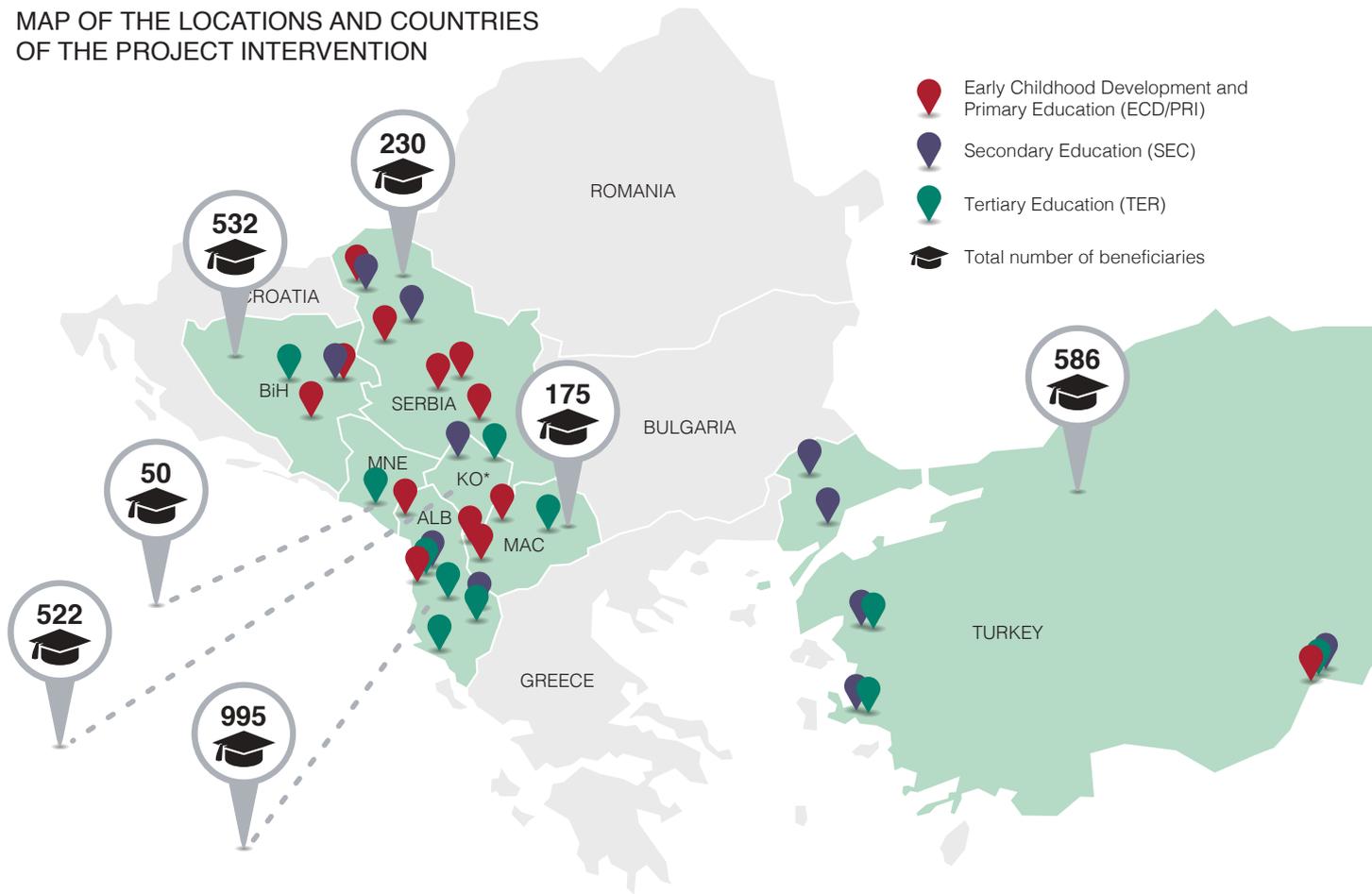
2020

Target Countries:



3 regions
10 schools

MAP OF THE LOCATIONS AND COUNTRIES OF THE PROJECT INTERVENTION



*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

EU Regional Action for Roma:

INCREASED EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMA STUDENTS AND YOUTH IN WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

OBJECTIVES

To reduce the gap between Roma and non-Roma in participation in quality schooling

To improve Roma students' transition from education towards employment

To promote desegregation and durable systemic change within education systems

PROJECT BREAKDOWN



Duration:



This project is supported by:



Funded by the EU



Implemented by

Activities in 2018:

13 Implementing Partners Organizations were awarded sub-grants to implement regional actions for boosting quality education and employability of Roma

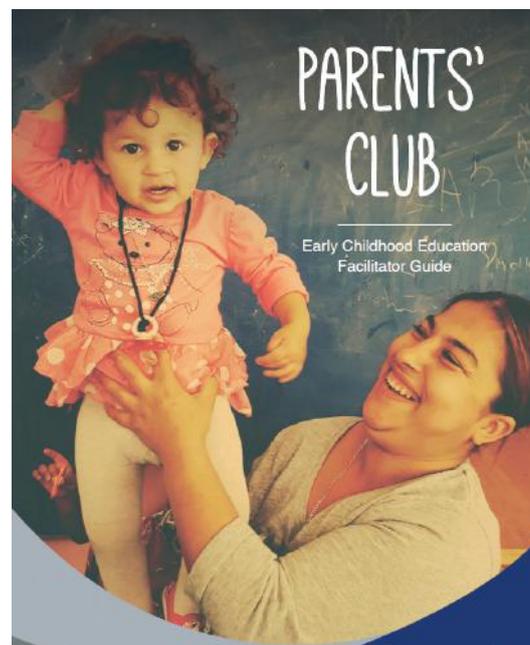
Country	Early Childhood Development and Primary Education (ECD/PRI)	Secondary Education (SEC)	Tertiary Education (TER)
	Implementing Partner Organizations & Locations	Implementing Partner Organizations & Locations	Implementing Partner Organizations & Locations
ALB	ARSIS -Social Organization for the support of Youth: Shkodra and Tirana	Romaversitas Albania : Tirana, Korca, Elbasan, and Fier	Romaversitas Albania : Tirana, Korca, Elbasan, and Fier
BiH	Centre for Roma Support " Romalen " Kakanj: Visoko Municipality	EuroRom Tuzla : Zenica-Doboj Canton	EuroRom Tuzla : Tuzla Canton
KOS	Kosovo Education Center : Prizren	Voice of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians : national coverage	Romaversitas Kosovo : national coverage
MKD	Roma Resource Center (RRC) : Shuto Orizari, Tetovo, Gostivar	Romaversitas North Macedonia : national coverage	Romaversitas North Macedonia : national coverage
MNE		Young Roma : national coverage	
SER	Educational-Cultural Community of Roma " Romanipen ": Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Krusevac, Obrenovac, and Novi Sad		Vojvodinian Roma Center for Democracy : national coverage Akdeniz Roman Demekleri Federasyonu
TUR	Akdeniz Roman Demekleri Federasyonu (Akromfed): Mersin Province	Akdeniz Roman Demekleri Federasyonu (Akromfed): Mersin, Balikesir, Tekirdag	(Akromfed): Mersin, Balikesir, Tekirdag, Edirne, and Ismir

26 introductory and advocacy meetings with highly-ranked officials from EU Delegations, Roma National Focal Points, ministries and other relevant international and local organizations and institutions

Regional training of trainers on parenting skills:

→ Parents' Handbook and Facilitator Guide created

→ 15 trainers successfully completed training with the aim to train early childhood development facilitators locally





Research

REF research activities deliver powerful evidence-based background to inform and guide its advocacy, scholarships, and grant-making activities.

In 2018, REF research focal points included:

Building **evidence needed for policy change** through external research and community engagement

Internal measurement and evaluation for building support for the adoption of REF models by governments and other NGOs

Using **evidence and community empowerment** to shape international, national, and local education policy

Shifting societal narratives about Roma education



SPOTLIGHT

“The Representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks”

Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia

Currently textbooks lack a presence of Roma, or Roma are represented through stereotypes and/or as victims. **Many textbooks contain a narrative which separates the Roma community from the national society, which cultivates ideologies in non-Roma students that perpetuate the exclusion of Roma.**

THE RESEARCH:

This project progresses a powerful counter narrative: “Roma communities are, and historically have been, ingrained members and citizens of European states who have contributed to European culture and society.”

This research analyzes the representation of Roma in school curricula and textbooks currently used in primary and secondary education systems, with the long-term goal of reform to improve the representation of Roma in European curricula, textbooks, and overall in the classroom.

→ **8 young Roma academics** were recruited as research fellows and had the opportunity to develop skills in textbook research methods and discourse analysis, as well as basic advocacy skills, through workshops and hands-on exercise.

→ **Over 500 textbooks** were researched by the fellows in 2018. For each country, the fellow wrote a report of the research findings, as well as a discourse analysis detailing how the textbooks represent Roma characteristics, role in society, voice, and contributions/recognition.

PUTTING RESEARCH INTO ACTION:

In November the research fellows gathered in Budapest to discuss their preliminary findings, further develop their discourse analysis skills, gain insight on advocacy for curricula and textbook reform, and to develop a collective advocacy strategy.

“Our vision is that textbooks empower educators and students to foster a diverse, just, and fair society”

Partners:

Georg Eckert Institute (GEI), the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Roma Education Fund (REF)

2018 RESEARCH
CONTRIBUTIONS
to be completed in 2019

REF-specific research

- Country Assessments
- Beneficiary Assessment
- Western Balkans Community Needs Assessment
- Pedagogy Scholarship Program Evaluation

In partnerships

- Roma Early Childhood Inclusion – Bulgaria and Hungary
- European Network Against Racism – book chapter
- Roma Civil Monitor project – partner to report on progress of National Roma Integration Strategies

STAY TUNED IN 2019

The textbook research report will be published in the summer of 2019, with promotion events and national and international advocacy actions to follow.





Advocacy

PATHWAYS TO POWER

REF uses the results of our activities to advocate for sustainable changes, with the aim to bring a fair and inclusive society and **educational equity** to Roma.

REF's advocacy activities in 2018 centered on:

- **Networking, coalition building**, gaining **political support**
- Increasing REF's impact in educational **policy shaping**
- Creating educational **platforms** for engagement and empowerment of Roma communities
- Increasing the **employability** of Roma graduates

REF provided **strategic feedback and recommendation packages** reported to EU level stakeholders in 2018:

- Roma Health Working Group
- ECD advocacy campaign consortium
- Education and Training 2020 and EU Post-2020 Roma Strategies

EU LEVEL ADVOCACY EVENTS IN 2018:



2018 ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS

ISSUE:

Slovakia - Roma segregation and misplacement to special schools; EU infringement procedure has been ongoing.

REF COALITION BUILDING AND POLICY BRIEFING WITH EU REPRESENTATIVES:

The coalition advocated for the elimination of ethnic based segregation by introducing a legally binding and comprehensive definition of segregation in the Slovak legal system, to effectively combat against the unjustified special schooling of Roma. Advocacy efforts are still ongoing as infringement procedure has not been completed.

ISSUE:

Bulgaria - On June 29, 2018, the 9th Peyo Yavorov Primary School in Blagoevgrad shared a post on its social media page stating, "We do not admit children of Roma ethnicity."

REF POLICY STATEMENT:

"REF warns to end school segregation and the exclusion of Roma students from mainstream schools...to provide policy proposals for direct action ...to ensure Roma pupils' access to integrated quality education, which serves as a basis for both social and economic integration, thereby benefiting all Bulgarian citizens."

ISSUE:

Czech Republic - Proposed changes to Decree 27/2016 Coll. on the right to inclusive education violates equal chances and opportunities to quality education of all including Roma.

REF POLICY STATEMENT:

"REF can share its knowledge accumulated across Central and Eastern Europe since 2005 ... in order to initiate a professional discourse about the educational segregation Roma are facing in Czech Republic, as well as to support the government in developing proper policies and practices against school segregation, including the prevention of misplacement of students to special schools."

REGIONAL LEVEL ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

December 2018:

"Innovative Approaches to Employment of Roma"

Roma Education Fund and the Regional Cooperation Council co-organized a high level conference, during which state officials and business sector representatives discussed recommendations for improving existing approaches and introduced innovative approaches for integrating quality education and transition to the labor market.



COUNTRY LEVEL ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

As part of the EU-funded Regional Action for Roma Education: Increased Education Opportunities for Roma Students and Roma Youth in Western Balkan and Turkey:

26 visits to high level political and policy stakeholders, civil and business sector representatives in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey to identify opportunities for shaping policies affecting educational and employment challenges.



Daniel Stanciu, HSP Alumnus and resident pediatric surgeon in Romania pictured with patient. The following is a still from REF produced film, „10 Years After

Communications, Visibility and Fundraising

Engaging our supporters ● Developing human capital ● Reinforcing the message of inclusiveness
Strengthening REF's reputation as a knowledgeable resource center

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

Original film Roma Health Scholarship Program (RHSP) – 10 Years After

2018 marked the 10th year anniversary of the Roma Health Scholarship Program (RHSP) implementation that has supported more than 500 Roma students in their pursuit of becoming medical professionals. Showcasing the impact of RHSP on the life trajectory of an individual, and the ripple effect on local Roma communities and the national healthcare system, this film is composed around four individual beneficiaries from Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Romania and Serbia. The film is also supplemented by three experts' interviews from the Roma Education Fund (the implementing partner) and the Open Society Foundations (the program donor) providing insight on the program's broader impact in the region and beyond.

The film features:

Daniel Stanciu – RHSP Alumnus
Pediatric surgeon, Calarasi County Hospital, Romania

Natalija Mitrovic – RHSP Student
University of Novi Sad Faculty of Medicine, Serbia

Salija Ljatif – RHSP Alumna
Director of the Geriatric Clinic in Skopje,
North Macedonia

Miroslav Angelov – RHSP Alumnus
Cardiologist, Sveta Anna University Hospital, Bulgaria

EVENT:

Law And Humanities Annual Student Conference in Chisinau, Moldova

Beneficiaries and alumni from the Law and Humanities Scholarship Program (LHP) gathered at the annual conference in July 2018. The two-day meetup featured keynote speeches on Roma identity and the importance of human rights; panel discussions on educational and cultural rights; presentations on visibility of Roma education; World Café presentations and team building sessions. The event was organized by the Roma Education Fund, Centrul National al Romilor, and the International Renaissance Foundation.



FUNDRAISING Focus on Montenegro:

Three Vans For Desegregation

Three vans worth €92,000 were donated to the primary schools “Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin” in Podgorica, “Mileva Lajović-Lalatović” in Nikšić and “Radomir Mitrović” in Berane by the Delegation of the European Union and the Roma Education Fund Branch Office in Montenegro, for transportation of children from Roma and Egyptian communities to desegregated schools.



EVENT:

Central European Initiative Know-How Exchange in Belgrade, Serbia

Government experts in education and civil society organizations from nine countries gathered in Belgrade in June 2018 to exchange professional intergovernmental know-how on the implementation of the large scale Secondary School Scholarship and Mentoring Program (SSMP) for Roma students, under the joint project of the Central European Initiative and the Roma Education Fund.



AWARD:

Golden Band Award for Everyday Hero, Hungary

The Roma Press Center (RPC) founded the Golden Band Prize to acknowledge everyday Roma heroes in Hungary – from bus drivers and bricklayers to teachers and scientists – hard working professionals who are respected members in their local communities and proud of their Roma ethnicity. Roma Education Fund supported the award ceremony on International Roma Day, April 2018.



ONLINE DONATIONS CAMPAIGN

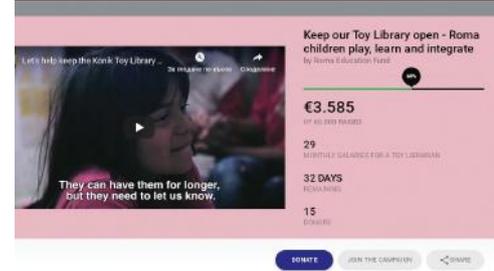
“Keep Our Toy Library Open – Roma children play, learn and integrate”

The 50-day crowdfunding campaign reached two-thirds of its target amount by relying heavily on social media and peer-to-peer fundraising, and by attracting individual and organizational donors.



PROMINENT INITIATIVES: Educated Romania

REF Romania team at the official launching of the Educated Romania program, with His Excellency Klaus Werner Iohannis, President of Romania and initiator of the educational strategic project.



*The screenshot is from the 32 days remaining of the campaign

Finance and Administration

ORGANIZATION OF ROMA EDUCATION FUND

The network of Roma Education Fund consists of five entities (REF Entities) that have been established as legally separate foundations in Switzerland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Serbia. The REF Entities cooperate based on a memorandum of understanding to achieve their shared primary objective to close the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma. Each REF Entity has a separate board with independent members for their decisions. REF Entities include:

- Roma Education Fund Switzerland, established in 2005
- Roma Education Fund Hungary, established in 2006
- Roma Education Fund Romania, established in 2009
- Roma Education Fund Slovakia, established in 2014
- Roma Education Fund Serbia, established January 30, 2019

Roma Education Fund Hungary opened branch offices in Serbia and in Montenegro, the figures of which are presented in the books of Roma Education Fund Hungary.

SUMMARY OF REF FINANCIALS

In 2018 REF provided €7.4 million to Roma organizations, Roma education-related projects and beneficiaries of REF educational programs. 73% (without provisions made for future implementation and co-funding) of the REF budget is spent on programs and beneficiaries in 16 countries.

SOURCES OF FUNDS AND SPENDING OF REF FOUNDATIONS IN 2018 IN EUR

DESCRIPTION	REF SWITZERLAND	REF HUNGARY	REF ROMANIA	REF SLOVAKIA	COMBINED
Opening foundation capital	477,010	764,958	(282,379)	(135,320)	824,269
Third party donor income	7,421,498	1,803,702	211,443	96,388	9,533,031
Other income	164,021	56,943	(65,347)	437	156,054
Total Sources	8,062,529	2,625,603	(136,283)	(38,495)	10,513,354
Transfers within REF network		1,648,321	703,638	240,700	2,592,659
TOTAL SOURCES WITH TRANSFERS	8,062,529	4,273,924	567,354	202,205	13,106,012
Grant program	1,763,230	35,905	0	157,812	1,956,947
Tertiary scholarship Program	1,615,934	187,631	34,285	9,637	1,847,487
Own educational projects	35,150	2,074,418	1,097,115	88,496	3,295,179
Capacity building, Policy Development and communications	158,438	207,825	0	0	366,263
Administrative expenses	153,526	839,819	0	13,744	1,007,089
Other expenses	168,875	11,081	78,932	0	258,888
Provision for future projects & co-funding	1,508,065	0	0	0	1,508,065
Accumulated capital	402,785	247,523	(642,173)	(67,484)	(59,350)
Total Spending	5,806,003	3,604,202	568,158	202,205	10,180,568
Transfers within REF network	2,256,526	296,702	0	0	2,553,228
TOTAL SPENDING WITH TRANSFERS	8,062,529	3,900,904	568,158	202,205	12,733,796

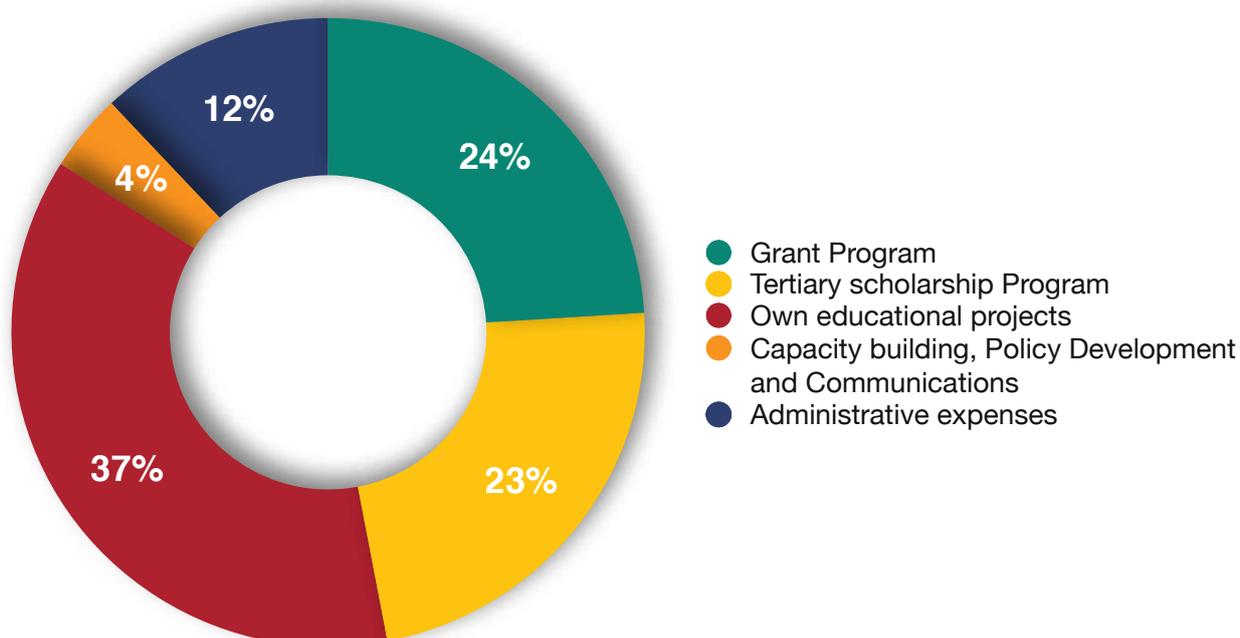
From total overall funding of €10 million, REF spent €1.9 million on grants contracted in its grant program and €1.8 million on tertiary scholarship programs for Roma students. Altogether REF spending under these two programs in 2018 is allocated to the main educational models of REF as follows:

COMMITMENTS OF REF FOUNDATIONS IN 2018 BY EDUCATION MODEL

Model (Grant program)	Number of projects in 2018	Funds committed in 2018 (EUR)
Early Childhood Education	16	454,145
Primary Education	6	213,864
Secondary Education	5	331,822
Tertiary Education	n/a	1,847,487
Adult Education	1	24,122
RomaVersitas	6	378,292
Other (Project implementation)	4	3,295,179
TOTAL		6,544,911

In 2018, REF developed and implemented 13 projects from funding provided, inter alia, by the European Commission, KfW, and VELUX FOUNDATIONS with a total spending of €3.3 million. A further €336,000 was spent on technical assistance, capacity building and advocacy. The total administrative expenses, €1.2 million, represent 12% of total spending.

SPENDING BY PROGRAM



Key Events in REF Network

REF network had foundations and branch offices in six countries in 2018.

REF SWITZERLAND (REF CH)

REF CH allocated €1.7 million for grants in the framework of the project support (grants) program and €1.6 million for the tertiary scholarship program. Besides program costs, up to €158,438 expenses of technical assistance, advocacy and capacity building.

In 2015, REF Switzerland provided a €570,000 recoverable grant for REF Romania to finance the full implementation of ESF projects; it is possible that REF Romania will not be able to repay the full amount of this recoverable grant, hence a provision of €100,000 was created last year and an additional €76,914 was created in 2018 to fully reflect this risk.

In 2017, REF management introduced a comprehensive risk management framework, reviewed and improved its donor reporting practices and key financial processes, and started strengthening and restructuring the operations and cooperation of REF Network entities. This initiative continued in 2018 to further strengthen REF operations and mitigate risk.

REF HUNGARY (REF HU)

Besides managing the core programs of REF and being the headquarters of the REF network, REF Hungary has been active in the implementation of a number of educational projects financed by various donors through its offices in Hungary, Serbia and Montenegro. These actions included:

Implementation of a KfW funded project to improve the education and integration opportunities for Roma in Serbia in the framework of a three-year project with a total budget of €2.4 million.

Continuing the implementation of the third phase of an ECEC project at Konik Camp, Montenegro in partnership with HELP.

Continuing the scholarship project for Roma students studying in pedagogy faculties in Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia funded by the VELUX Foundations and extended its geographical scope to Romania; second phase of the project was contracted with a total budget of €1.3 million for 5 years.

Started the implementation of DG NEAR funded project that aims to reduce the Roma/non-Roma gap in participation to and completion of quality education, improve Roma students' transition between education and employment, and promote durable systemic change and de-segregation within education systems in the Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey, with a total budget of €3.8 million for three years of implementation.

REF ROMANIA (REF RO)

In 2018, REF Romania successfully finished the implementation and archiving of all the EU financed projects through the POSDRU Operational Program (approximately €12 million, for a total target group of 19,206 pupils, parents and educators, in 397 schools), and started the implementation of the projects financed through the POCU Operational Program, under the new EU financial cycle. In the new projects REF Romania

introduced new innovative methodologies, like digitalization, child-oriented education models, Montessori teaching elements, and also partnered in an integrative project approach with Roma communities, that bore responsibility of the educational activities in the project.

In addition, as a follow up of the best practices of the EU funded projects, REF Romania participated as an active member of the Educated Romania program of the Romanian Presidency, the Roma Sounding Board of the World Bank and the Coalition for Education. REF Romania in 2018 signed the Romanian Diversity Charter, initiated by the British Council.

It was the third time REF Romania had the honor to give the educational prize in the Social Assistants' Gala at the Romanian Athenaeum. Another achievement of the year was becoming an active member of the Sustainability Embassy and a beneficiary of the Give a Click on Romania program of the Workshops without Frontiers.

The RomaVersitas program reached its end, with a fruitful partnership with the British Council, the National Democratic Institute and Amare Romentza Association, all of them participating in the program with different types of workshops and trainings.

Local partnerships were done with the eRomnija Association for Promoting Roma Women's Rights, the Roma National Center for Romani Culture - Romano Kher and the Giuvlipen Roma Theatre.

REF Romania continued to be active in the field of advocacy and lobbying for improvement and change of relevant policies in Romania.

REF SLOVAKIA (REF SK)

In 2018, REF Slovakia closed implementation of REF's secondary scholarship program and focused on implementation of the program Support of Roma Students at Secondary Pedagogical Schools and a new program Shaping Employment Skills for Young Roma, which started in the academic year 2018/2019. Both programs aim to improve school academic performance, attendance rate and graduation rate of Roma secondary school students, and both programs include an employment component, soft skills training, mentoring and tutoring support.

In December 2018, REF Slovakia launched three new projects supported by ESF and OP Human Resources, with the goal of providing of mentoring support to pupils in the last grades of primary schools and therefore helping pupils graduate and continue their studies at a higher educational level. Through the projects REF SK will provide mentoring to 180 pupils in three Self-Governing Regions in Slovakia.

REF SK was able to rent and fully equip premises for future RomaVersitas Slovakia and organize activities for Roma students. REF Slovakia continues to be active in the field of advocacy and inclusive education and works on strengthening the visibility of its activities at local and international levels.

DONATIONS RECEIVED BY REF ENTITIES IN EUR, 2014-2018

DONORS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
RECEIVED BY REF SWITZERLAND						
Bill Cook Foundation				4,673		4,673
DFID United Kingdom	50,000	50,000				100,000
EPTISA Regional Office for Southeast Europe				4,275	2,880	7,155
ERSTE Group AG	500,000					500,000
EVZ - Erinnerung	221,000	234,000	262,000	260,000	260,000	1,237,000
HH Management		181,159				181,159
Individuals		5	197	752	335	1,289
Mirabaud wedding donations	35,466					35,466
Mirabaud Pierre		1,000				1,000
Morgan Stanley	197					197
Network of European Foundation		119,600				119,600
Norwegian Family	21,342					21,342
Porticus		100,000	90,000			190,000
SIDA Sweden		542,160	503,894	1,018,256	488,020	2,552,330
Soros-Bolton wedding	13,345					13,345
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	350,000	832,618	850,000	850,000	850,000	3,732,618
Open Society Institute	2,094,538	4,492,342	4,916,294	4,506,490	5,813,501	21,823,165
Ostrava Municipality	6,200	6,200	7,200			19,600
The Velux Foundations		1,034				1,034
UNICEF	57,458					57,458
US Embassy, Slovakia		1,677				1,677
WB Community Fund	5,776	11,838	11,544	7,114	6,762	43,034
World Bank IBRD	291,925			-21,840		270,085
World Vision		4,565				4,565
Total received by REF Switzerland	3,647,247	6,578,198	6,641,129	6,629,721	7,421,498	30,917,793

DONORS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
RECEIVED BY REF HUNGARY						
American House Family						0
Bernard Van Leer Foundation	68,111					68,111
CFCD North Macedonia			81,821	152,670	31,318	265,809
CEI Fund EBRD				25,740	19,487	45,227
European Commission					328,033	328,033
HELP HILFE	283,934	118,769	75,721	312,558	100,343	891,325
KfW			799,461	406,183	1,169,423	2,375,067
Bureau of Education Montenegro			8,418			8,418
Ministry for Human and Minorities Montenegro	76,242		79,657	80,240	35,428	271,567
Ministry of Finance in North Macedonia						0
Ministry of Slovak Republic	5,955	54,045				60,000
OSCE	46,313	86,438	59,581	46,463		238,795
REF Romania (ESF/EEA projects)	44,709	27,399	3,727			75,835
The Velux Foundations	92,435	245,861		397,662	114,209	850,167
Research Executive Agency		40,622				40,622
Other donors, Individuals	26,401	7,118	9,632	1,484	5,462	50,097
Total received by REF Hungary	644,100	580,252	1,118,018	1,423,000	1,803,702	3,765,370
RECEIVED BY REF ROMANIA						
ADECO - ECD Ready Set Go				17,109		17,109
European Voluntary Service for All				3,159		3,159
Romanian Management Authority - as partner				(133,382)	139,714	6,332
Romanian Management Authority - as lead entity	1,050,075	3,052,751	1,659,208			5,762,034
Norway Grants			1,030,186	643,380		1,673,566
Other donors, Individuals			2,858	6,168	171	9,197
Total received by REF Romania	1,050,075	3,052,751	2,692,252	536,433	139,885	7,331,511

DONORS	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
RECEIVED BY REF SLOVAKIA						
Ministry of Interior, Slovakia			12,000	20,000	96,388	128,388
Total received by REF Slovakia	0	0	12,000	20,000	96,388	128,388
TOTAL DONATIONS RECEIVED	5,341,422	10,211,201	10,463,399	8,609,154	9,461,473	34,625,176

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

1 BOOKKEEPING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The business and reporting period of REF Entities are defined annually, starting on January 1 and ending December 31.

REF entities maintain a double-entry/bookkeeping which is maintained in local currency. Audits are conducted by PwC Switzerland for REF Switzerland, by Moore Stephens Hezicomp Ltd. for REF Hungary, Finans Audit Services Srl for REF Romania and BDR, spol. s r.o for REF Slovakia.

Financial statements are prepared according to REF Accounting Policy (including the statement of income and expenditure, the balance sheet and the notes), presented in EUR (additionally in local currency where necessary), issued in English (including the audit reports) and published on REF website.

2 MAIN ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES

The books of the REF Entities are maintained in local currency as legally required, with the exception of REF Switzerland where the books are maintained in EUR since its functional currency is EUR. Most of the financial transactions of REF Entities are denominated in Euro (EUR). For better comparability, financial statements in the annual report are presented in EUR.

Donation income is recognized at nominal value when received and presented on a cash basis, while promised donation income is not recorded for prudence reasons.

The program and grant expenses paid are recognized at nominal value. Already known costs are accrued. Grants awarded by the Project Support (Grant) and Tertiary Scholarship Programs are presented on total contractual value in the year they are awarded. Other program related expenses are recognized in the period to which they are related.

Administrative expenses include cost of operations, purchases, cost of contractors, salaries of administrative staff and their travel expenditures not directly related to the programs.

Administrative expenses are recognized at nominal value, as already known costs are accrued. In case of projects implemented in partnerships where REF is the main project implementer responsible for reporting the entire cost of the project to the donor, all expenses related to partners are presented as REF expenditure in the financial statement.

Tangible and intangible assets are carried at their costs less depreciation and any accumulated impairment loss. The useful life of property rights, intellectual products, the qualification and classification of fixed assets are determined according to the applicable national rules by each REF entity. The depreciable amount of a depreciable asset is allocated on a systematic basis using straight line method to each accounting period during the useful life of the asset. The fixed assets above a certain value, defined by the applicable national rule of each REF entity, is accounted as depreciation in lump sum when put in use. REF Entities have to apply extraordinary depreciation by devaluation when the asset's usability is permanently reduced, or if it has become redundant and/or damaged. The foundations do not use the revaluation model of assets.

Receivables are recorded at nominal value unless any accumulated impairment loss.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURES 2018 AND 2017

	REF SWITZERLAND		REF HUNGARY		REF ROMANIA		REF SLOVAKIA	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR
INCOME								
Donations received from third parties	7,421,498	6,629,721	1,803,702	1,423,000	211,443	536,433	96,388	20,000
Donations received from REF Switzerland	0	0	1,648,321	2,223,958	462,886	615,485	180,200	74,232
Donations received from REF Hungary	0	0	0	0	240,752	206,111	60,500	52,820
Project Support and other Program Refund	163,949	75,163	0	0	-65,554	0	0	0
Other income	0	0	17,156	1,368	0	0	437	1,427
Total Income	7,585,447	6,704,884	3,469,179	3,648,326	849,526	1,358,029	337,525	148,479

		REF SWITZERLAND		REF HUNGARY		REF ROMANIA		REF SLOVAKIA	
		2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2018
EXPENDITURE									
Project Support Program (Grants)	1	-1,763,230	-1,603,775	-35,905	0	0	-175,267	-157,812	-68,340
Tertiary Scholarship Program	2	-1,615,934	-1,831,880	-187,631	-139,741	-34,285	-38,697	-9,637	-9,168
Communications	3	-23,460	-59,493	-72,349	-311,133	0	0	0	0
Policy development and capacity building	4	-134,978	-186,050	-135,476	-313,841	0	0	0	0
A Good Start and complimentary projects	5	0	0	0	-136	0	0	0	0
REF Romania - ESF projects	6	0	0	0	0	-352,922	-16,672	0	0

		REF SWITZERLAND		REF HUNGARY		REF ROMANIA		REF SLOVAKIA	
		2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2018
REF Romania - Ready, Set, Go	7	0	0	0	-2,887	-12,450	-1,499,335	0	0
REF Romania and its partners capacity building	8	0	0	0	-262	-404,629	-299,912	0	0
Konik Camp project in Montenegro	9	0	0	-308,896	-301,749	0	0	0	0
Velux project	10	0	0	-149,294	-72,741	-327,114	-146,853	-64,432	-68,079
HEIM - EC Reseach Executive Agency	11	0	0	0	-14,316	0	0	0	0
IPA North Macedonia - Fostering Social Inclusion	12	0	0	-11,317	-307,476	0	0	00	0
KfW - Improved education and integration, Serbia	13	-35,150	-59,187	-1,132,424	-537,583	0	0	0	0
CEI Fund project	14	0	0	-34,925	-39,866	0	0	0	0
Ministry of Interior, Slovakia	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	-24,064	-18,486
DG NEAR- Increased education opportunities for Roma students in Western Balkans and Turkey	16	0	0	-437,562	0	0	0	0	0
Provision for future projects and co-funding		-1,508,065	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grants to Roma Education Fund, Hungary		-1,648,179	-1,738,010	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grants to Roma Education Fund, Slovakia		-146,867	-74,232	-60,068	-53,179	0	0	0	0
Grants to Roma Education Fund, Romania		-461,480	-615,485	-236,634	-206,847	0	0	0	0
Total Programs and Grants		-7,337,343	-6,168,112	-2,802,481	-2,301,757	-1,131,400	-2,176,736	-255,945	-164,073

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURES 2018 AND 2017 -
CONTINUED

	REF SWITZERLAND		REF HUNGARY		REF ROMANIA		REF SLOVAKIA	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2018
Administrative expenses	-153,526	-178,379	-839,819	-976,160	0	0	-13,744	0
Provisions to cover risks in loans and receivables	-76,914	-100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net operating results	17,664	258,393	-173,121	370,409	-281,874	-818,707	67,836	-15,594
Interest Income	72	207	97	292	26	0	0	0
Interest cost	-20,625	-22,881	-58	-64	0	0	0	0
Gain on Foreign Exchange	0	23,594	39,690	2,470	182	8,705	0	0
Losses on foreign exchange	-71,336	-223,199	-11,023	-15,738	-10,224	-34,601	0	0
Write/off 2017 balances	0	0	0	0	-68,708	0	0	0
Net financial results	-91,889	-222,279	28,706	-13,040	-78,724	-25,896	0	0
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME	-74,225	36,114	-144,415	357,369	-360,598	-844,603	67,836	-15,594

BALANCE SHEET OF DECEMBER 31, 2018 AND 2017

	REF SWITZERLAND		REF HUNGARY		REF ROMANIA		REF SLOVAKIA	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR
Cash at banks	3,912,435	2,485,938	1,898,765	892,165	404,807	156,223	91,647	23,810
Receivables	0	0	39,911	57,816	136,796	224,626	689,157	159,671
Loan to REF Entities	607,991	662,476	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other current assets	56	6,731	116,721	70,349	0	0	1,750	4,750
Total current assets	4,520,482	3,155,145	2,055,397	1,020,330	541,602	380,849	782,554	188,231
Recoverable Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accrued income	0	0	0	0	0	0	337,515	0
Intangible assets	0	0	163	293	0	0	0	0
Tangible assets	0	0	24,477	32,666	3,227	5,294	0	0
Total long term assets	0	0	24,640	32,959	3,227	5,294	337,515	0
TOTAL ASSETS	4,520,482	3,155,145	2,080,037	1,053,289	544,829	386,143	1,120,069	188,231

	REF SWITZERLAND		REF HUNGARY		REF ROMANIA		REF SLOVAKIA	
	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017
	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR
Liabilities	0	0	108,265	157,048	77,797	58,980	25,250	19,006
Accrued expenses	37,450	47,936	1,724,249	76,798	0	0	1,162,303	180,755
Provisions for projects granted	1,964,191	1,893,472	0	0	0	0	0	114,440
Provisions for future projects	1,508,065	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts payable to partners	0	0	0	0	1,804	1,806	0	0
Loan from CoEB	0	0	0	0	1,107,401	0	0	0
Loans from REF Switzerland	0	0	0	54,485	0	607,991	0	0
Funds unused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,350
Other short-term liabilities to related parties (OSF)	0	205,650	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other provision	607,991	531,077	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total liabilities and provisions	4,117,697	2,678,135	1,832,514	288,331	1,187,002	668,777	1,187,553	323,551
Foundation capital as of January 1	477,010	440,896	764,958	415,857	-282,379	579,368	-135,320	-119,726
Restatement of Foundation capital		0	-371,832	0	0	-19,740	0	0
Excess of expenditure over income	-74,225	36,114	-144,415	357,369	-360,598	-844,603	67,836	-15,594
Year-end translation difference		0	-1,188	-8,268	804	2,341	0	0
Foundation capital as of December 31	402,785	477,010	247,523	764,958	-642,173	-282,634	-67,484	-135,320
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL	4,520,482	3,155,145	2,080,037	1,053,289	544,829	386,143	1,120,069	188,231

Notes on Financial Statements

1 PROJECT SUPPORT (GRANT) PROGRAM

In the framework of the Project Support Program, REF Entities provide grants to a consortia of civil society and public institutions to implement education reform projects at all education levels.

2 TERTIARY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The target of this Program is to provide scholarships for tertiary level Roma students. The Program consists of four schemes:

- Roma Memorial University Scholarship Program (RMUSP).
- Law and Humanities Program (LHP)
- Roma Health Scholarship Program (RHSP)
- Roma International Scholar Program (RISP)

3 COMMUNICATION

REF's Communications promotes the exchange of knowledge and experiences, and communicating information on policies and programs that support Roma inclusion in education systems and represents one of the major pillars of REF's activities through conferences, workshops, publications and social media.

4 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The target of this project is to support studies, technical assistance, strategy development, and learning activities to strengthen dialogue with governments and civil society on education reform and Roma inclusion.

5 A GOOD START AND COMPLEMENTARY PROJECTS

The target of this project is to ensure that Roma and other poor and excluded children have access to quality Early Childhood Education and Care services in Hungary, North Macedonia, Romania and Slovakia. The project was completed in 2015.

6 REF ROMANIA - ESF PROJECTS

6.1 ESF POCU 105682 – Competence, Innovation and Professionalism in Education

The main objective of the project is to contribute to the improvement of the competencies of both school personnel and school managers in order to promote quality education, effective and child-oriented learning, inclusive education for 300 persons involved in 10 vulnerable kindergartens/schools of the project.

6.2 ESF POCU 106443 – Formal and Non-formal Education for Sustainable Development in the Center Region

The project aims to reduce early school leaving through promoting inclusive education and through engaging in offering integrated learning methods for all education strata (early childhood education and care, preschool, primary, secondary and adult education) in the ten communities in Romania

6.3 ESF POCU 113400 – Together for a Better Life

The objective of the project is to lower the risk of poverty and social exclusion for 620 people living in a marginalized area where there is a large Roma population in the village Varasti, Giurgiu County, by realizing and implementing measures intended for local development, centered on a multi-sectoral approach and investments in infrastructure and human capital for development.

7 REF ROMANIA - READY, SET, GO PROJECT

The project is targeting early childhood development outcomes for some 1,400 Roma children residing in six of Romania's most disadvantaged counties with the highest absolute number and highest share of Roma population of preschool age. The project is supported by a grant from Norway through the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, in the framework of the RO 25 Poverty Alleviation Programme in Romania. The project was completed in 2017.

8 REF ROMANIA AND ITS PARTNERS' CAPACITY BUILDING

This project provides capacity building and financial support for REF Romania and its partners for those activities, which are necessary for project implementation but not covered by ESF.

9 KONIK CAMP PROJECT IN MONTENEGRO

This is an assistance program for the integration and return of displaced persons and residents of Konik Camp in which REF implements the educational component through provision of early childhood development programs. Phase 2 of the project was completed in 2017. REF has signed a partnership and funding agreement with Help - Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe to participate in the continuation of the project.

10 VELUX PROJECTS

10.1 Pedagogy scholarship program in Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia

This project supports the increase of the number of female kindergarten teachers of Roma origin in the regions of Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia with high numbers of Roma residents. The program will run until approximately the end of 2022. Second phase started in 2018 with the implementation period of five years.

10.2 Shaping Employment Skills for Young Roma

The program aims to increase the number of Roma graduating from at least vocational secondary education and successfully transitioning into the labor market, fully self-confident and equipped with soft-technical skills. REF facilitates Roma youth and young adults' access to Vocational Training Schools in Hungary, Slovakia and Romania.

11 HEIM – EC RESEARCH EXECUTIVE AGENCY

This is a research/innovation project with focus on how principles of equity and inclusion can be applied to internationalization strategies and programs in higher education and on developing research and innovation capacity in this field, implemented in a partnership between three universities (Sussex, Umeå and Seville) and REF. The project was completed in 2017.

12 IPA NORTH MACEDONIA – FOSTERING SOCIAL INCLUSION

This project is implemented at five locations in North Macedonia together with two implementation partners, with the aim to increase the long-term employability of marginalized Roma communities through adult education and training, literacy programs, and increased access to early childhood education and care. The project is financed the Ministry of Finance of North Macedonia as contracting authority through IPA – Human Resource Development budget in the framework of external actions of the European Union. The project ended in 2017.

13 KfW – IMPROVED EDUCATION AND INTEGRATION SERBIA

In the framework of the project (Phase 1), KfW supports REF to improve access to education and employment opportunities for Roma in the Republic of Serbia. This project is composed of three components: (1) the promotion of secondary school education for Roma youth, (2) the promotion of employability of graduates of the REF secondary school program and (3) the promotion of the re-integration of migrants returning to Serbia from Germany.

14 CEI FUND PROJECT

The project aims to strengthen the capacities of the relevant Ministries in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia which are currently partnering with the Roma Education Fund (REF) on the project management of the secondary scholarship and mentorship program in these countries.

15 MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OF SLOVAKIA

The main goal of the projects is to provide mentoring support to Roma pupils in the last grades of primary school and to support them to achieve good results, successfully graduate and to continue their studies at secondary schools with Maturita (receiving Maturita degree enables continuation at tertiary level).

16 DG NEAR – INCREASED EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMA STUDENTS IN WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

The project aims to reduce the Roma/non-Roma gap in participation to and completion of quality education, to improve Roma students' transition between education and employment, and promote durable systemic change and de-segregation within education systems in the Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. The project is funded by European Union and co-funded by OSI.

List of Abbreviations

CEI	- Central European Initiative
CEU	- Central European University
CFO	- Chief Financial Officer
CoE	- Council of Europe
CSO	- Civil Society Organization
DG NEAR	- Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
EC	- European Commission
ECD	- Early childhood development
ECEC	- Early childhood education and care
ESL	- Early school leaving
EU	- European Union
EVZ	- Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future
F/M	- Female / Male
GEI	- Georg Eckert Institute
GPA	- Grade point average
KfW	- German Development Bank (in original - Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau)
LHP	- Law and Humanities Program
NGO	- Non-Governmental Organization
OSF RIO	- Roma Initiatives Office at the Open Society Foundations
PDF	- Professional Development Fund
REF HQ	- Roma Education Fund Headquarters
REF	- Roma Education Fund
RGPP	- Roma Graduate Preparatory Program
RHSP	- Roma Health Scholar Program
RISP	- Roma International Scholar Program
RMUSP	- Roma Memorial University Scholarship Program
RPC	- Roma Press Center
SEC	- Secondary education
SHAPYR	- “Shaping Academic and Employment Skills for Young Roma” project
SRT	- Sigrid Rausing Trust
SSMP	- Secondary School Scholarship and Mentoring Program
TER	- Tertiary education
VET	- Vocational Education and Training

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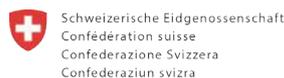
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2018 DONORS

YOUR SUPPORT MEANS THE WORLD TO US.

We are happy to have you in our community...
investing in, educating and engaging Roma
children, youth and families.

Central European Initiative
Council of Europe Development Bank
EEA Grants
European Commission
EVZ Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future”
Government of Montenegro, Ministry of Human and Minority Rights
Government of North Macedonia, Ministry of Finance
Government of Slovakia, Ministry of Interior
Help, Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe e.V.
KfW Development Bank
Ministry of Interior, Slovakia
Open Society Foundations
Romanian Ministry of European Funds
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
The VELUX FOUNDATIONS
The World Bank
World Bank Community Fund



REF NETWORK

GOVERNING BOARDS - 2018

REF SWITZERLAND FOUNDATION

Andrzej Mirga (Chair)
Kinga Göncz (Vice Chair)
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REF HUNGARY FOUNDATION

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REF ROMANIA FOUNDATION

William Lazarus Bila

REF SLOVAKIA FOUNDATION

William Lazarus Bila (Chair until April 14, 2018)
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