



**ROMA**  
EDUCATION FUND  
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Cover Photo:  
Pedagogy Summer Camp, REF Romania



# 2019

## Annual Report

# ROMA EDUCATION FUND



# Chairman's Message

## Chairman's Message

Year in Review

Early Childhood Education and Care

Primary Education

Secondary Education

Tertiary Education

Adult Education

Pedagogy Scholarship Program

Shaping Academic and Employment Skills for Young Roma

Employment Empowerment of Young Roma

EU Regional Action for Roma

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## 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Andrzej Mirga (*Chair*)\*

Ciprian Necula (*Chair*)\*\*

Kinga Göncz (*Vice Chair*)

Gábor Ormosy (*Treasurer*)

Yvana Enzler

Timea Junghaus

Pierre Mirel

Sybille Suter

Mariam Sherman\*\*\*

William Lazarus Bila\*\*\*\*

\* until November 22, 2019

\*\* starting November 22, 2019

\*\*\* until March 5, 2019

\*\*\*\* until April 8, 2019

## MANAGEMENT

Nadir Redzeqi (*Executive Director*)

Azra Junuzović (*Deputy Director*)

Redjepali Chupi (*Network Coordinator*)

Andrea Dörömbözü (*CFO*)

Loránd Gyenge (*Deputy CFO*)

## REF FOUNDATIONS

Hungary (*Headquarters*)

North Macedonia

Romania

Serbia

Slovakia

Switzerland (*REF Network*)

## REF REPRESENTATIVE OFFICES

Montenegro

Serbia



Some time ago, Roma activist and politician Florin Manole asked me, “Do you know which Roma is ‘dangerous’ for our societies?” After taking some time to think of possible answers and avoid falling into the trap of a joke, I signaled to him to tell me. His answer was not a punch line but a political statement: “A Roma with a library card!” Later, in 2018, I heard Andrzej Mirga, then Chair of Roma Education Fund’s (REF) Governing Board, express a similar vision with a quote from Nelson Mandela: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Thinking about education as a “danger” to the status quo for Roma communities oppressed by racism and a “weapon” of positive change in the world was key in my decision to accept the responsibility of becoming the new Chair of REF’s Governing Board in November 2019. My experience in activism, the media, the Romanian government and international organizations, together with my educational experience as a student and teacher, has taught me that all this work has no social significance if it is not combined with self-esteem and a commitment to social justice and anti-racism. Unless we are part of a collective struggle and a collective power for building our way out, our individual success, even when we earn a university degree, has too little meaning for our communities and even less for societies in which racism is both part of the dominant culture and a feature of institutions.

I now have the enormous responsibility of building on the work of my predecessors with care and passion. At the same time, my responsibility is to shape the future of an organization that has been a driver of the education agenda in Europe, positively affecting tens of thousands of Roma parents and students at all levels of education. The organization lives and works in very different times and faces different challenges than when it was created in 2005. Most importantly, governments in Central and Eastern Europe are less open to Roma, and racism is more widespread and politically reinforced, while EU enlargement still gives hope and yet raises caution. This requires important organizational adaptation and a new strategy.

In 2019, REF continued to support scholarships for Roma students, give grants for advocacy, research and educational activities, directly implement projects, and advocate for Roma education at the local, national and European levels. It was also a year of celebration, with Roma Education Fund Romania celebrating 10 years of existence. A decade of activity has meant a significant impact on the education of 23,778 pupils and adults through 2,478,075 teaching hours delivered in 557 schools. This milestone was acknowledged by Romanian President Klaus Iohannis, who participated

in a celebration at one of the 11 kindergartens built with REF support during these years. I am also proud of the development of REF structures in Serbia and Slovakia that have become important actors in civil society and relevant partners for national and local authorities in improving access to education for Roma.

In 2020, “transition” will be a key word. We will intensify and complete the transition we started in 2019: the transition of our headquarters from Budapest to Belgrade, the leadership transition at the board and management levels, and the transition from the strategy of the last 15 years to a new one for post-2020. This transition period will have a great impact on how our organization works and the change we can contribute towards in the educational experiences of Roma students, their families and communities.

Just like Roma individuals, REF can only be successful and powerful if it is part of a collective. Our investments in educational experiences and educational results for Roma students and families can only be successful if they are part of larger efforts. That is why we are strengthening our alliances with other Roma, pro-Roma and educational organizations, institutions and movements.

2020 is not only a year of transition because of our own internal changes. All the social, political and economic contexts are changing as a response to the worldwide coronavirus crisis. Formal education systems are being affected in most European countries as physical contact is reduced to a minimum. Technological solutions have been provided in some countries, but this has not happened everywhere or for everyone. Roma communities have been greatly affected by the crisis because many live in extremely poor conditions due to historical marginalization, and access to online solutions is not always available to them. REF is prepared to adapt and react to the new context, to identify the best solution for Roma students at all levels and to contribute with our own resources to reducing the negative impact of the pandemic.

Finally, I do believe that Florin Manole and Nelson Mandela were right – a library card can be a dangerous weapon. However, Roma Education Fund, not only as a single institution but as part of a larger collective – together with many Roma with library cards, their parents, Roma and pro-Roma organizations, and supportive public officials – is more than a weapon. It is part of a kind of liberation army against oppression, inequality and injustice. I am ready to do my part, but I cannot do it alone without you. Are you ready to join us?

Thank you for your continued support,  
**Ciprian Necula**  
*Chair*



**6,754**  
beneficiaries

**2,568**  
preschool  
children

**881**  
primary  
school children

**2,029**  
secondary  
school students

**1,276**  
tertiary  
scholarship  
students

# 2019

## YEAR IN REVIEW

### 16 PROJECT COUNTRIES

**1,976**  
Roma parents



**265**  
municipalities



**200**  
volunteers



**603**  
in-service  
trained  
teachers



**628**  
mentors  
and  
tutors



**595**  
educational  
facilities



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# Early childhood education and care

LINK   
List of Active Grants

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## Expanding access to preschool education

2018/2019

1,716 children | 55% girls  
45% boys

90% attendance rate

27 preschool facilities | in 20 municipalities

8% dropout rate

102 volunteers | 67% female  
33% male



58 Toy Libraries

established by REF in  
10 countries

6 new Toy Libraries in  
2019



3,617 Roma children  
were involved  
in Toy Library activities  
throughout 2019

2,601 registered  
Toy Library  
members  
throughout 2019

“I think it is a positive change that there are more volunteers, preschool children, and even older students, who are more than happy to take part in playful and skill developmental activities. Through personal attention and one on one involvement the children are more motivated to do homework and are increasingly involved in learning together. I really believe that exercise games relieve stress during the day, stress at home, and the attention we give the children and personal conversations we have contribute towards a sense of balance.”

– Lajtai Kíra, Special Educator, Khetanipe

1  
model



Results



# Primary education projects

LINK   
List of Active Grants



## Preventing early school leaving in primary education

**50** schools ▶ **26** municipalities ▶ in **7** countries ▶ Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia

2018/2019

Spotlight:

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Results

**280** children  
48% female  
52% male

▶ **110** in integrated schools

▶ **170** in segregated schools

▼  
**35** children transferred to integrated classes as a result of REF intervention

**484** parents

**76** volunteers

**41** mentors

**38** tutors

**20** teachers trained

**91%** attendance rate

**9%** dropout rate

**100%** graduation rate of final year students



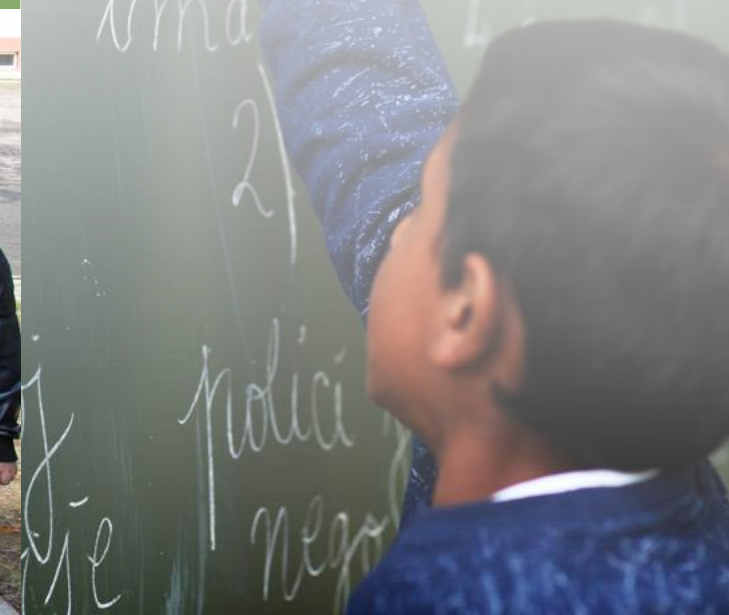
competition winners

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Denita Salkanović** won 2nd place in the **Cantonal Competition in German language** for primary and secondary schools

**Armin Baltić** won 1st place in the sport competition for primary schools to celebrate “Day of Army Bosnia and Herzegovina” in the category – **Cross-country running**

**Severđan Džinalić** won 1st place in the sport competition for primary schools in the City of Mostar in the category – **Long jump**





# Secondary education projects

LINK   
List of Active Grants

Expanding access to secondary education through scholarships, mentoring and tutoring

133 project schools ▶ in 32 municipalities ▶ in 3 countries

## Kosovo

601 students received scholarships  
316 female  
285 male

13% received mentoring support

100% graduation rate

17% of the graduates continued into a university or college

83% of the graduates transitioned to the labor market

39 tutors

475 students transferred to an integrated school/class as a result of REF projects

97.5% completed the academic year

2.5% dropout rate (compared to 7% regional average)

85% of students attend vocational secondary schools

15% of students attend academic secondary schools

## Hungary

34 students participated in mentoring and tutoring program

0% dropout

All students participated in soft skills training

40 peer mentors

## Bosnia and Herzegovina

85 students received scholarships

138 parents involved in project activities

36 mentors

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Results  
2018/2019





# Tertiary education projects

## Expanding access to higher education

Scholarship Program ▶ RomaVersitas Program ▶ Cooperation with Universities

### Scholarship Program

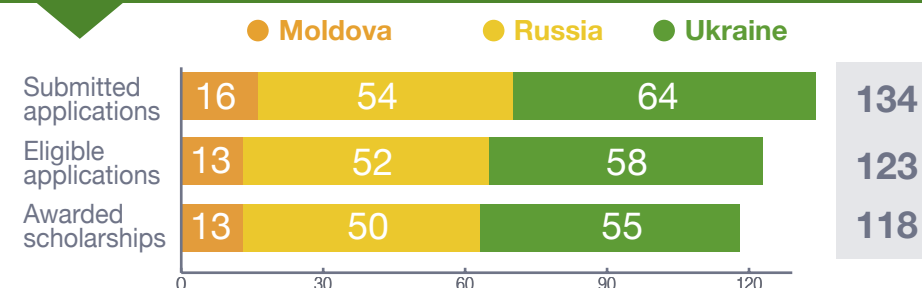
#### Law and Humanities Program (LHP)

LHP has been co-financed by REF and by the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ) since 2007 and will continue through 2021. REF implements the scholarship program in cooperation with national partners in Moldova, Russia and Ukraine.



LHP scholarship recipients at the annual LHP Conference in Budapest. June 2019

#### 2019/2020 ACADEMIC YEAR Application data\*



\*Applications accepted only for students requesting to renew their scholarships through graduation.

55% male



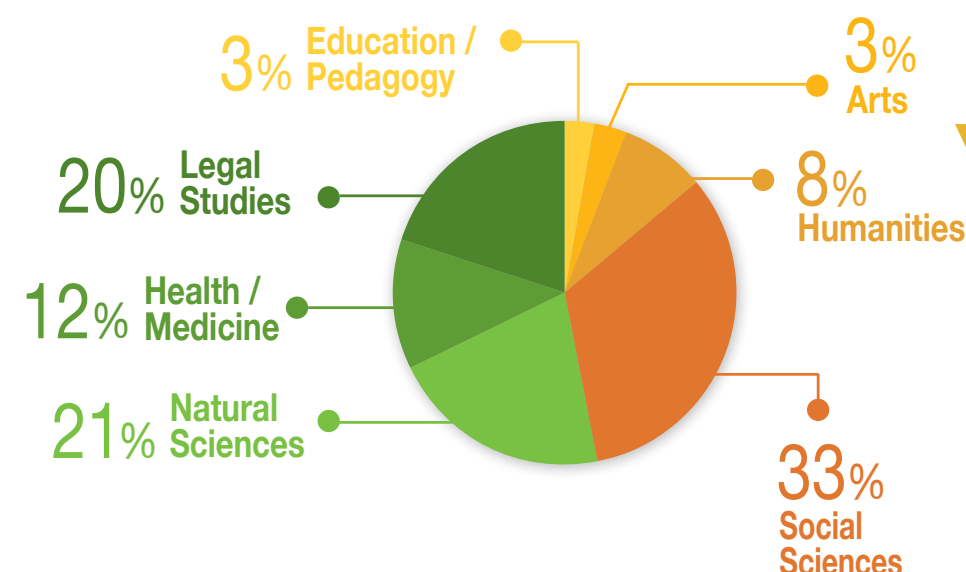
45% female

70% first generation university students

"In 2019, the LHP program gave me the opportunity to participate in the project "Roma Women in Politics", where I was trained in leadership skills. The combination of a leader and Roma future professional sounded like 'ridiculous nonsense' a couple of decades ago. Now this is reality."  
- Tatiana Cebotari, Moldova

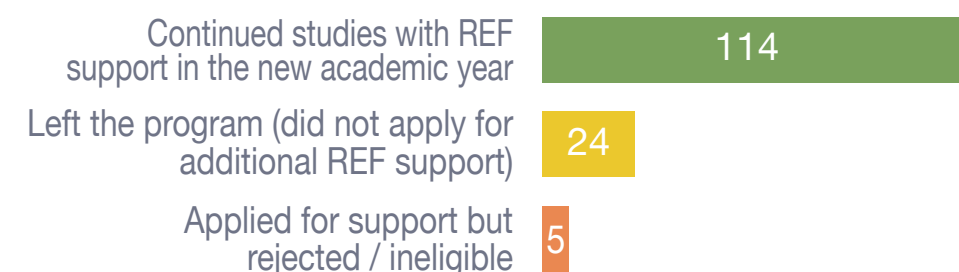


#### 2018/19 ACADEMIC YEAR Graduates' fields of study



97% graduation rate

#### Renewal status – Scholarship students NOT in final year of studies



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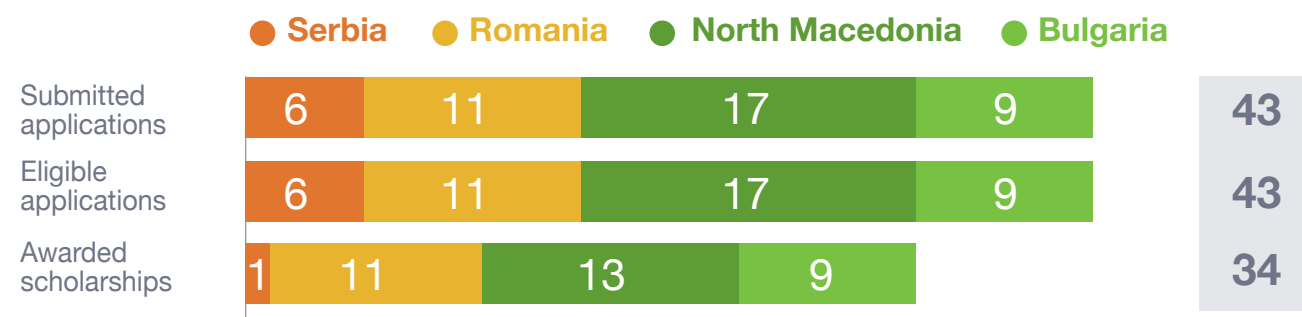




## Roma Health Scholarship Program (RHSP)

RHSP has been running since 2008 and will continue through 2022. 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.

### 2019/2020 ACADEMIC YEAR Application data\*



\*Applications accepted only for students requesting to renew their scholarships through graduation.



### 2018/2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

20 students graduated

9 postponed graduation

Specialties include general medicine, dentistry, surgery, internal medicine, nursing and health management

“The skills I gained during my volunteer engagement with the hate speech-hate crime project, I applied to my daily work in hospitals (Radiotherapy and Oncology Clinic). Unfortunately, I often come across hate speech by health professionals and non-Roma patients towards Roma patients. My presence as a Roma doctor has visibly changed the stereotypical attitude of the healthcare staff towards the Roma patients for the better”  
- Meri Jasharovska, North Macedonia



## Roma International Scholarship Program (RISP)

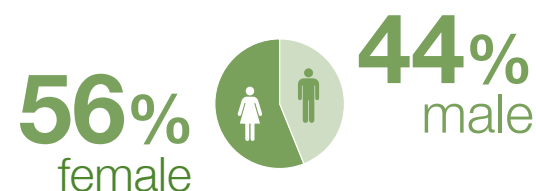
RISP students receive financial support to study outside their home countries in Master or Doctoral programs. Scholarship support for 2019/20 academic year ranged from €2,000 to €7,000.

### 2019/2020 ACADEMIC YEAR



destination countries:

Albania, Austria, Czechia, England, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Ukraine and USA



### 2018/2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

100% graduation rate

3 out of 3

final year students graduated in information technology and social sciences.



“My studies at a top university will help me be a better person and a better musician, and open the doors for success, representing the culture and breaking taboos.”  
- Redio Stoli, Albania  
(studying violin at Universitat Mozarteum, Salzburg, Austria)



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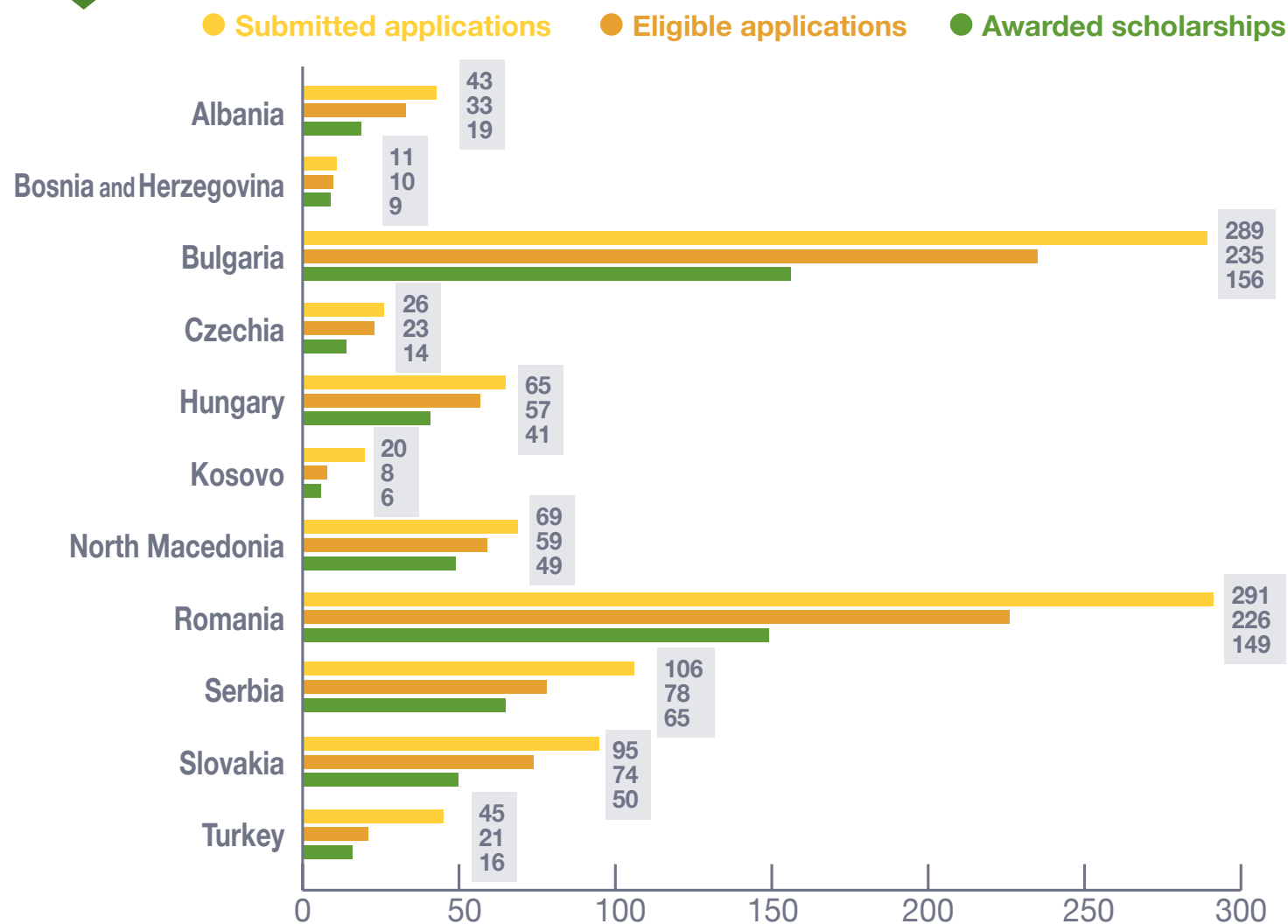
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# Roma Memorial University Scholarship Program (RMUSP)

RMUSP is REF's largest tertiary scholarship scheme designed to facilitate 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.

## 2019/2020 ACADEMIC YEAR Application data



**574** students received scholarships

**59%** female



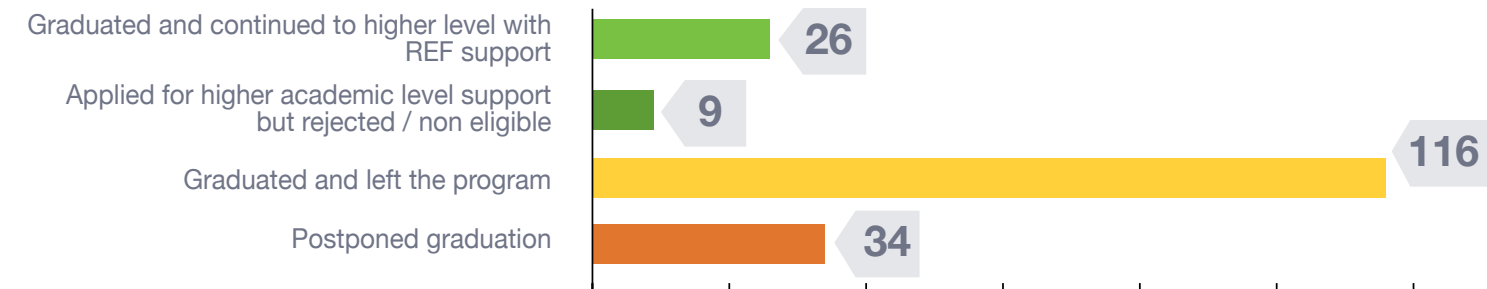
**41%** male

**82%** first generation university students

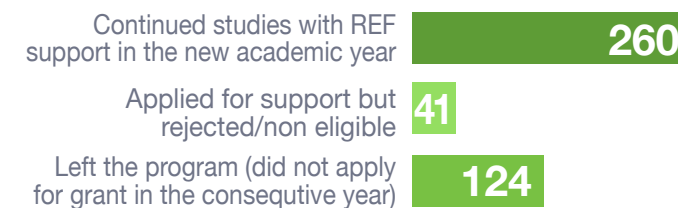
**100%** in Albania and Turkey

## 2018/2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

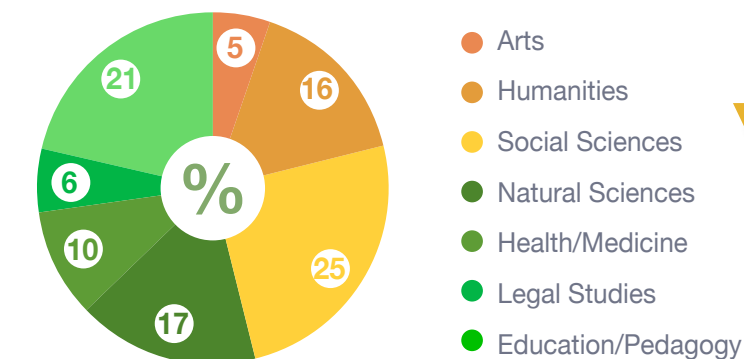
### Graduation data - Scholarship students in their final year of studies



### Renewal status – Scholarship students NOT in their final year of studies



### Graduates' fields of study



“In the future I see myself as a successful and proud Roma inspector who follows and applies the law. I will always strive for every Roma to have the right to be a normal citizen of the state in which he or she belongs. I also see myself as a leader who contributes and helps the Roma community. Because of the financial limitations of my family, receiving a scholarship is a basic prerequisite for continuing my education, but it is also a great personal motivation for me to continue pursuing my goals.”  
- Melisa Kariman North Macedonia



“After completing my PhD, my idea is to work at a place which not only promotes individual career goals but is a rewarding activity for society at large. I consider it vital to encourage well-being of people who suffer multiple disadvantages in both education and labor market”  
- Adam Virag, Hungary

“I want to touch the lives of Roma students and show that dreams can be realized.”  
- Erencan Çekiç, Turkey

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# RomaVersitas program

RomaVersitas is an academic services and support program for Roma university students, with the aim to improve the retention, performance and graduation levels of Roma students by providing them with academic tutoring, mentoring and strengthening of their Roma identity and pride. The RomaVersitas model also serves as a bridge for young Roma scholars towards employment and active community participation.

## 2018/2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

**242** students from **58** universities

**50%** female  
**50%** male

**67%** BA  
**31%** MA  
**2%** PhD

Roma **identity** and **pride**



students participating in:

- ▶ **124** Supporting Roma community initiatives
- ▶ **82** Romani studies course (language, history, identity)

Professional **development courses**



students participating in:

- ▶ **138** foreign language courses
- ▶ **64** IT courses
- ▶ **150** soft-skills / employability

**Mentoring and tutoring** support



- ▶ **132** students
- ▶ **89** tutors and mentors

“I didn't know what a CV is, what a cover letter is, or how to draft a project proposal. I needed help for developing my skills. Initially, I attended a training course on active citizenship. In a week, I was offered to attend an English language class which enriched my vocabulary. From a blank page my CV turned into 4 pages, full of trainings, certificates and work experience. Today I already offer my help to other students to draft their CVs and write professional emails.”

- Sabina Berisha, Kosovo

**5** RomaVersitas centers in 2019



Albania  
Hungary  
Kosovo  
North Macedonia  
Serbia

2015-2019

**2,196** students

**221** mentors

**601** tutors

**42%** male  
**58%** female



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# Cooperation with universities

## Central European University (CEU) Roma Graduate Preparation Program (RGPP)

aims to close the education gap between Roma individuals and the majority population in higher education through providing academic training in critical skill areas required to gain access and succeed in international graduate-level programs and improve future employment opportunities.

### 2018/2019 ACADEMIC YEAR

**13** students  
10 female  
3 male

participated in courses for English, digital literacy, Romani studies and received tutoring and mentoring support.

**100%** competed the program

► **9** out of 13 graduates (7 female / 2 male) continued their studies and enrolled in MA programs



“I am often told that I am unique, mainly in comparison with other Roma women. Usually, the sentences in this context end with either “and you are Roma?” or “...even though you are Roma?”. It saddens me when I am told that I am different from the rest of my community because the only difference is that I had the privilege and possibility to acquire education. I want that ‘privilege’ for all Roma.”  
- Sunita Memetovic, Sweden

## Oxford University’s Blavatnik School of Government

Between 2018/19 to 2024/25, the Roma Education Fund and the Blavatnik School of Government is funding one scholarship per academic year at the Oxford University’s Blavatnik School of Government. The scholarships will be available to Roma graduates who can demonstrate academic excellence, proven leadership and commitment to public service and who intend to return to the public sector in their countries of origin after completing their studies.



## Central European University (CEU) Roma in European Societies MA Programs (RES)

was launched in 2016 as a new interdisciplinary effort to improve the situation of Roma in all sectors at local, national, and regional levels through graduate and post-graduate education, advanced research, teaching, leadership development, professional training, and community outreach. This initiative is supported by a consortium of grant makers including The VELUX Foundations, Open Society Foundations’ Roma Initiatives Office, and Roma Education Fund.

**22** students  
9 female  
13 male  
**100%** graduation rate

**10** Roma students completed their MA

Most Popular Programs

Public Policy  
Economics  
Sociology  
Gender Studies



“One of the reasons I decided to continue my studies was to prove to my parents, and non-Roma people as well, that it is possible for a Roma girl from a disadvantaged background to study at an international university and achieve more than is expected from her. Roma Education Fund certainly has an important role in my academic successes and without its support I would not have been able to challenge the racial and gendered stereotypes.”

- Marina Csikos, Hungary

6 RGPP and 16 Roma MA students benefitted from internship opportunities lasting 2 to 12 months at local, national and international organizations: ERIAC, ERGO, Council of Europe, EU, REDI, Excellence Center in Europe, Compass Charity, National Bank of Slovakia, Church City Mission Oslo, Women’s Studies & Research Center, University of Novi Sad, OSF Berlin, Roma NGOs.



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# Adult education projects



## Second Chance Programs for Adult Functional Literacy and Formal School Completion

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. The majority of REF activities supporting adult education programs take place within our large-scale, multi-country projects, such as Shaping Academic and Employment Skills for Young Roma (SHAPYR) in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.

**In 2019, SHAPYR supported 47 young adults through scholarships, tuition fees, second chance education programs and employment trainings.**

My name is Barbara Balogh. I'm 27 years old and live in Kisvárda, Hungary with my 8 year-old daughter whom I'm raising alone. I have 2 professions: cook and hand and nail care. The latter was done with the support of the Roma Education Fund. I am currently working as a hand and nail care specialist and looking for opportunities for further improvements. The Roma Education Fund supported my professional studies financially and I had the opportunity to get to know people that I can learn from. I made it to London at a competition for hand and nail care specialists, called Nailympia London 2019. I'm happy and proud to have been chosen.



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# Pedagogy Scholarship Program

in Czechia, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia

This project aims to increase the number of female early childhood and kindergarten teachers of Roma origin in Czechia, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia in order to contribute to the employment of Roma in kindergartens and nurseries.

2014-2019



178

female secondary students supported through scholarships and mentoring support



140

mentors



135

participants in summer camps in Slovakia and Romania



77

students have graduated

## The program aims to:

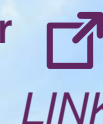
- ▶ increase Roma children's enrollment, attendance and success in kindergarten education
- ▶ increase Roma children's primary school readiness

## Summer Camp

"I believe that a child, regardless of his age, assimilates the information better if given the opportunity to learn through real events/real experience, instead of only memorizing and reproducing it. My goal for when I become a teacher is to focus on teacher-student interactions by making my classes more interactive and creating a closer and trustworthy relationship with my pupils."

- Anamaria Constantin (Grade 11)

Read more about Summer camp in Romania:



## REF Midterm Project Evaluation Results:

## Challenges for students

### ▶ Low participation of Roma in Pedagogy

### ▶ Low aspirations

Project outreach activities assisted in building students' and parents' aspirations in attending pedagogy schools and pursuing careers in early childhood education.

### ▶ Difficulties in school integration

The use of mentors was designed to assist students in their academic and social integration into the new school environment.

### ▶ Issues in open expression of Roma identity / discrimination

Mentors were central in beneficiaries establishing confidence in their open expression of their identity, as well working through experiences of prejudice.

### ▶ Difficult curriculum

Often as a result of lower quality primary schooling and socioeconomic disadvantage

### ▶ Social integration

Difficulties in adjusting to a new environment, establishing connections with peers and teachers, living in dorms, and being separated from family and community

### ▶ Issues in open expression of Roma identity / discrimination

Responses connected to difficulty in integrating with peers and teachers often describe experiences of discrimination:

"They have been often discriminated by their colleagues and even by the teachers. The reason for discrimination is related to the fact that they are Roma and that they are not equal to the majority."

"Her background was the biggest barrier. She is coming from a very social disadvantaged environment and this is why she didn't have enough self-confidence."

This project is co-funded by:

THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS  
VILLUM FONDEN > VELUX FONDEN



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# Shaping academic and employment skills for young Roma

This project is co-funded by:



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Shaping Academic and Employment Skills for Young Roma (SHAPYR) aims to increase the number of Roma gaining qualifications and graduating from vocational secondary education

## Soft Skills Training

Soft skills trainings were held in each country to equip young Roma students with skills and knowledge to boost self-confidence and contribute to their successful graduation and competitiveness in the labor market

The trainings we received were very useful, I really enjoyed that while we were learning, we were also playing and challenging one another, and having to complete tasks together as a team. I'm very happy to have joined this community, I'll never forget it, and I'm really excited to be able to attend the training sessions this year again.

- Erika Farkas (Grade 11)



## Results

2018/2019	2019/2020
150 secondary students 57% female 43% male	160 secondary students 55% female 45% male
13 young adults	
65 schools in Romania, Hungary and Slovakia	34 young adults
88% transition rate	
100% graduation rate	51 schools





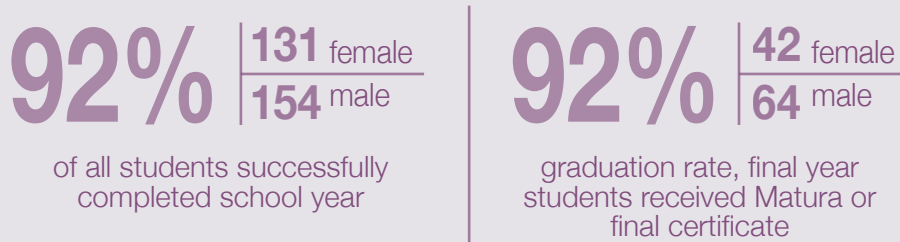
# Improved Education and Integration Opportunities for Roma in Serbia, Employment Empowerment of Young Roma and Reintegration of Returnees



## Education



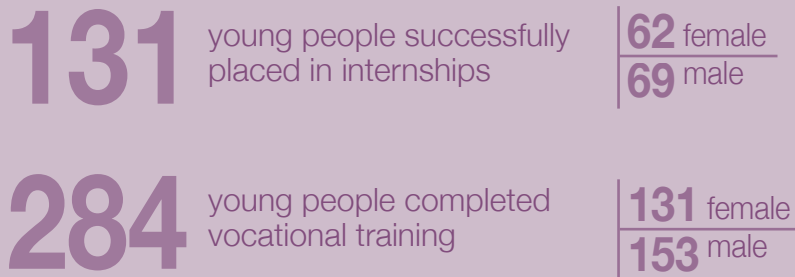
Scholarships and project-based mentoring  
for vocational education in school year 2018/2019



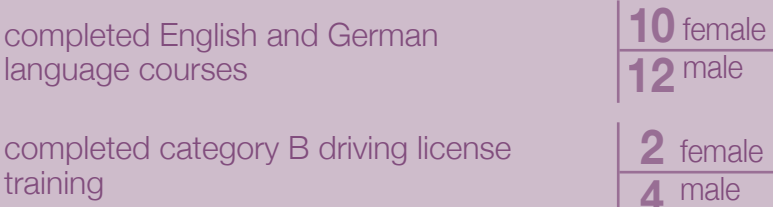
## Employment



Increased employability through specialized  
trainings in school year 2018/2019



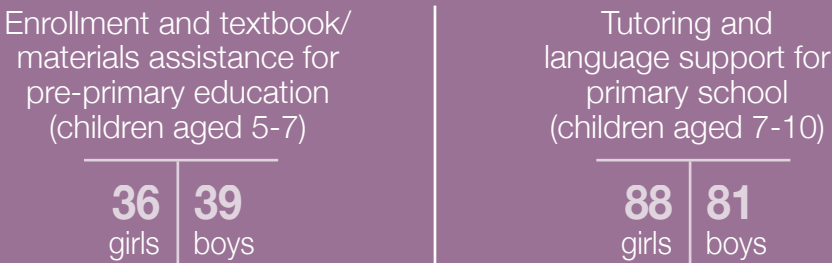
### Professional development



## Reintegration



Reintegration of Roma returnees  
in school year 2018/2019



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"I received support from REF Serbia during my internship practice at a law company. I see myself as a person who continuously makes progress in her profession and can provide free legal aid to Roma community, as I have done so far during my internship."

- Marija Banović Bogosavljević from Kruševac, 26 years old

This project is  
supported by:

KFW



"I was living in Germany for several years. When I returned to Serbia, I needed to find a job and provide for my family. I went to one of the workshops organized by REF where I wrote my first CV. Soon after that the REF Serbia team scheduled a job interview for me at the company Johnson Electric. The interview was a success. I am satisfied with this job. The most important thing is that I am now able to reside and work in my own city instead of going abroad."

- Dragoljub Barčić from Niš, 25 years old



# EU REGIONAL ACTION FOR ROMA:

Increasing Educational Opportunities for Roma in the Western Balkans and Turkey

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CLICK



EARLY CHILDHOOD  
DEVELOPMENT



PRIMARY  
EDUCATION



SECONDARY  
EDUCATION



TERTIARY  
EDUCATION



ADVOCACY

Project  
**Countries:** CLICK

Albania

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Kosovo\*

Montenegro

North Macedonia

Serbia

Turkey



Funded by  
the European Union

\* 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.



Early childhood development



in total  
**419** children  
were enrolled in kindergarten  
or preschool in school year 2018 / 2019

**113** new children  
were enrolled in kindergarten or preschool in  
school year 2019 / 2020



in total  
**22** local enumerators  
involved in IDELA assessment

**16** Roma facilitators  
**9** Roma mediators  
recruited

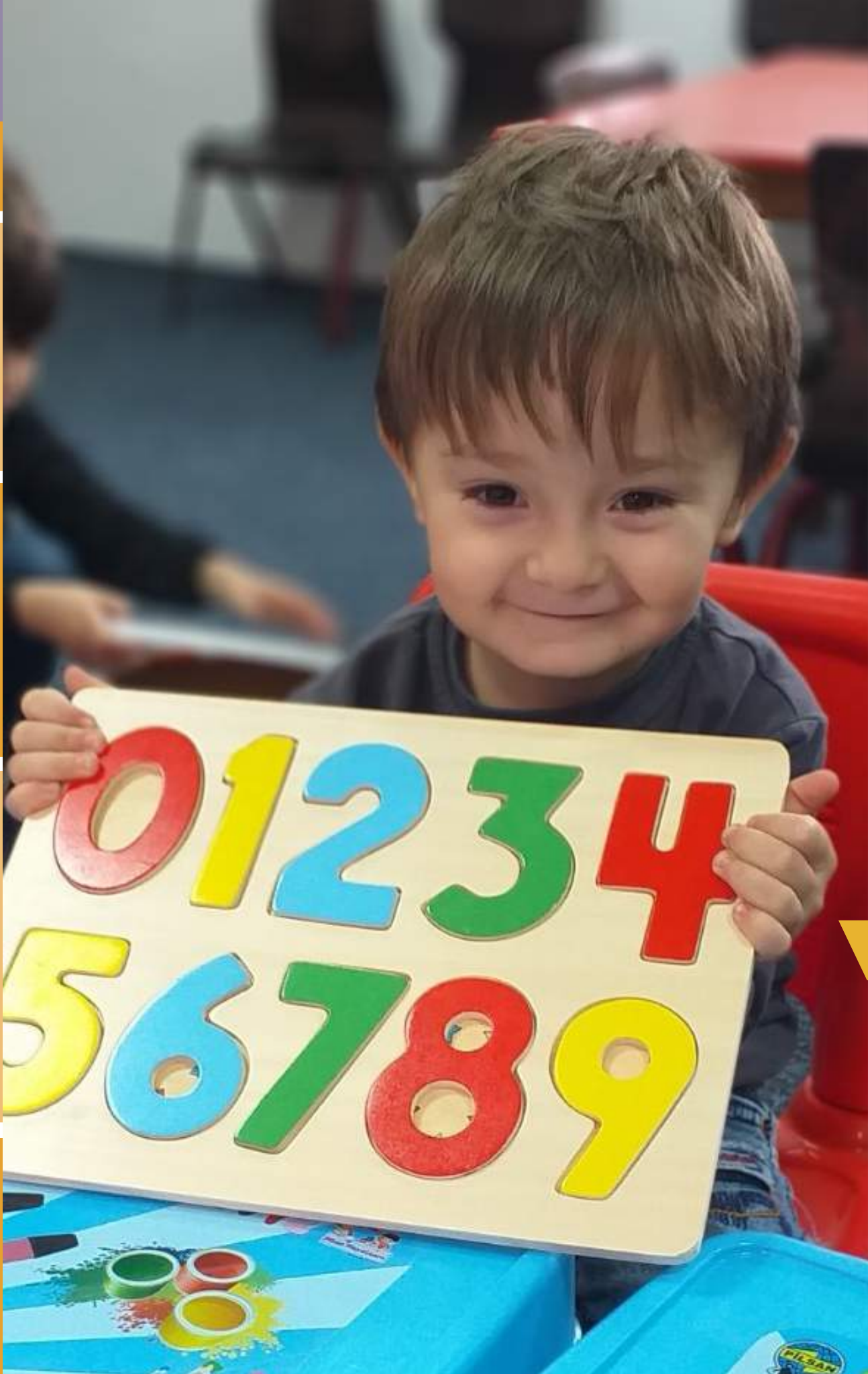


**6** new Toy Libraries  
established (in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Turkey)  
**2** renovated classrooms  
in Kosovo

**374** parents  
**27** parental clubs  
**10** ID cards issued to parents



**1,115** family (home) visits  
conducted by the school and project staff



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# Primary education

104

students

A total of 104 Roma primary school students receive after-school learning support.

6

schools in

5

target locations

29



Grade 1

65 children enrolled in Grade 1 of primary school in year 2019/2020

36



Grade 1

25



Grade 2

39 children enrolled in Grade 2 of primary school in year 2019/2020.

14



Grade 2

84

Roma families



193

household visits

5

Roma mediators contracted

5

Roma learning assistants contracted

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# Secondary education



198 female  
225 male beneficiaries

423 Roma young people were awarded secondary education scholarships in academic year 2018/2019

36 female and 36 male Roma young people were secured with **internship placements**



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# Tertiary education



45 female  
34 male  
**scholarships**

16 female  
19 male  
**internships**

79 Roma students were awarded tertiary education scholarships in academic year 2018/2019

35 Roma tertiary education students were secured with internship placements in private companies, national and international institutions in 2019





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## Employment

60<sup>young</sup> Roma employed

60 young Roma from the Western Balkans and Turkey were employed in public, corporate, international non-profit organizations thanks to the project facilitation.



## Cooperation

7 Memoranda with ministries

REF signed 7 Memoranda of Understanding with ministries, employment agencies, municipalities and international organizations in the Western Balkans and Turkey, pursuant to *REF Strategic Framework 2021–2030* on increasing educational performance and ensuring quality education for Roma children and youth.



## Structural changes to make a difference

Thanks to REF's policy effort in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the allocated maximum amount for an employer hiring a Roma university graduate has increased.

Following REF's policy event in Bosnia and Herzegovina in May 2019 and the ongoing discussion with the employment agencies in Zenica-Doboj Canton, the Federal Employment Service changed its Program for Co-financing Roma Employment in 2019.

Prior to REF's intervention, the Federal Employment Service had been allocating 6,000 BAM per person for Roma employment for a 12-month period. After REF's involvement, the Federal Employment Service increased the co-financing scheme:

employers are supported for hiring a Roma with a university degree, registered as unemployed, with the amount of 8,000 BAM per person for 12 months



# National Projects

## Slovakia: Mentoring and Tutoring Support for Young Roma

54 municipalities ► 68 integrated primary schools ► 57 mentors and tutors

### The mentoring and tutoring program aims to:

- help Roma pupils achieve the best possible learning outcomes in upper grades of primary education, as well as secondary school
- provide psycho-social support
- prevent early school leaving
- promote a smooth transition to secondary school

Mentoring and tutoring support includes assistance in social integration of the student within the school environment and facilitating cooperation between the school and family.

2019 / 2020

171 primary pupils | 44% male | 56% female | 100% transition rate | 34 students enrolled to secondary education

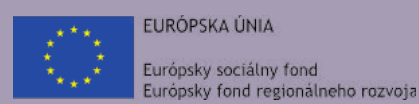
197 parents | 95% attendance rate

The Mentorship and Tutorship Program does not include secondary school scholarships. REF has started negotiations to urge funding for secondary school scholarships and has prepared a manual for the government on how to set up the scholarship program.

Supported by:



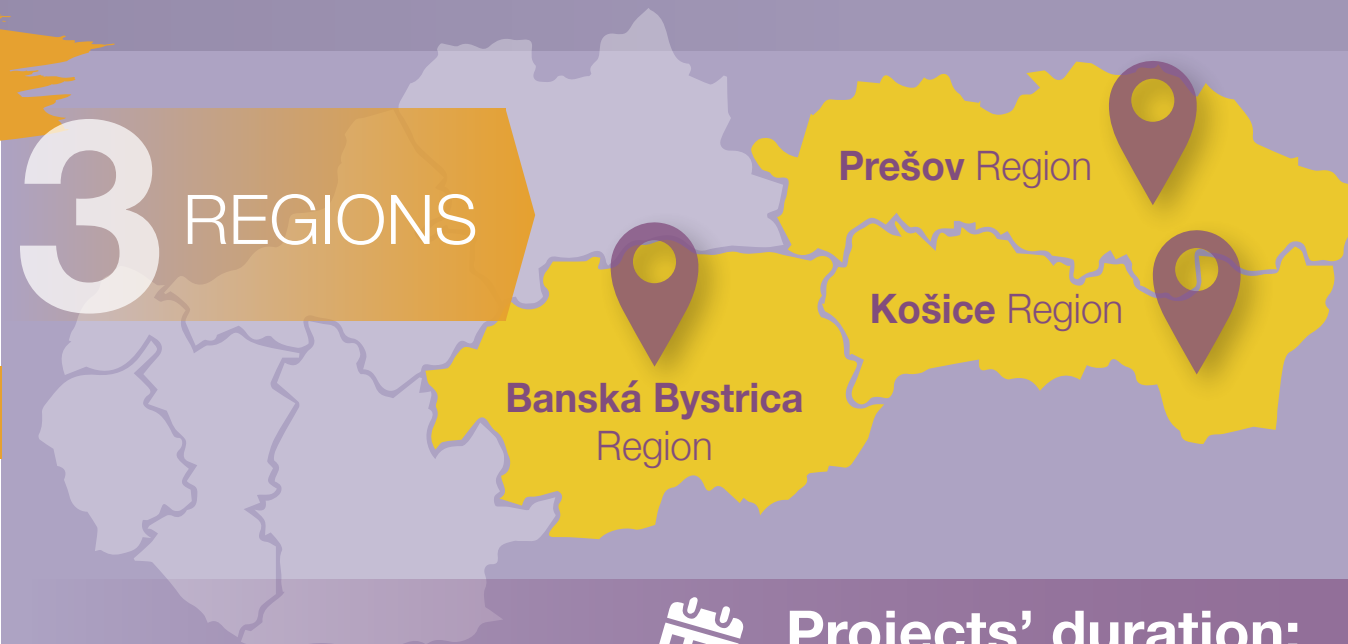
Financed by:



Implementing Authority:



3 REGIONS



Projects' duration:  
December 2018 – November 2021

### Meet some of our mentors



Ceriova Bronislava



Gyongyi Trifontiova



Miroslav Demeter



Rastislav Zubaj



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# Romania: Formal and Non-Formal Education for Sustainable Development in the Center Region



7 educational facilities ▶ 7 municipalities

770 children daily educational activities, including pedagogical assistance, tutoring, mentoring for children and parents

260 teachers training on interculturalism, including methodologies for inclusive schools and educational programs

123 parents intercultural and inclusion workshops for children and parents

## Early Childhood Education and Care (ages 0-6)

249 children | 51% boys  
49% girls

▶ 75 children ready for 1st grade were enrolled in mainstream primary schools in 2019/2020 school year (39 boys and 36 girls)

## Primary education - school-after-school

317 students | 47% male  
53% female

- ▶ received tutoring and/or mentoring support
- ▶ 100% transitioned to the next grade in 2019/2020
- ▶ 100% successful completion among students in final year of primary school

## Secondary education - intensive educational support

204 students | 47% male  
53% female

- ▶ received mentoring and/or tutoring support
- ▶ 100% transitioned to the next grade in 2019/2020
- ▶ 93% successful completion among students in final year of secondary school

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# Romania: Together for a Better Life

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37 children

- ▶ Weekly educational activities, pedagogical assistance, tutoring, mentoring for children and parenting
- ▶ Intercultural and inclusion workshops for children and parents
- ▶ Fighting stereotypes and bullying through art alongside National Center for Roma Culture-Roman Kher

## Early Childhood Education and Care

17 children

3 out of 3 children ready for 1st grade were enrolled in primary schools in 2019/2020 school year

Competence, Innovation, and Professionalism in Education

32,500 hours of teacher training

258 teachers

12 kindergartens and schools

## Primary education

10 children and their parents received mentoring and/or tutoring support

▶ 100% completion rate of primary education

## Secondary education

10 children and their parents received mentoring and/or tutoring support

▶ 100% transition rate to secondary education

- ▶ Soft skills development and leadership trainings
- ▶ Designing and implementation of prevention strategies for early school leaving
- ▶ Connecting teachers and exchanging educational ideas through social media
- ▶ Established support groups for Initiatives in Education



# Advocacy

Equal **chances**

Access to  
**quality education**

Opportunities for **social**  
and **economic mobility**

COMMUNITY

EMPOWERMENT

## Capacity building for REF grantees and partners

### ► Advocacy workshops for REF grantees and partners

14 NGOs from 8 countries - pathways to sustainable interventions

### ► Advocacy grants cross-country interventions

Building-up cross-country advocacy networks and regional knowledge exchange; gaining political and civic support for placing Roma educational challenges on political agendas



## Shaping national and European policies

### ► Roma Health Network Working Group

Positioning Roma health issues on EU level political agenda. REF brings the perspective of the interrelation of health and education, especially fighting against unlawful special schooling of Roma and misplacement to special education.

### ► European Campaign on Early Childhood Development

Advocating to the European Commission to allocate funds for ECD and bring policy changes. REF put together two case studies on desegregation and ECD Toy Library interventions for the campaign.

### ► Recommendation packages to the Ministry of Education in Bulgaria on the national program “Support to municipalities for implementation of activities for educational desegregation”

The recommendation package is based on REF’s desegregation model that has proven its impact in several European countries.

### ► European Regional Forum on Education, Language and the Human Rights of Minorities

Speech on EU member states’ policies, the needs of Roma education, and the potential for successful models that lead to more inclusive educational policies in EU member states.

### ► Post-2020 Roma Strategies

REF led the recommendations related to education for the proposal submitted to the European Commission.

## Networking and coalition building

### ► Roma Mayors advocacy meetings in Slovakia

Emphasizing the proven results of REF’s Toy Library models as an efficient tool for ensuring the entrance of children to quality mainstream primary schools, and detailed scenarios of how Roma mayors could have a lead on the nationwide policy introduction of Toy Libraries.

### ► Advocacy and employment meetings for the project Shaping Academic and Employment Skills for Young Roma (SHAPYR)

Visits with ministries, Chambers of Commerce, private employers and job centers to discuss increasing the number of Roma youth and young adults who graduate from vocational secondary education and successfully transition into the labor market.



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# Research

Research activities deliver powerful evidence-based background to inform and guide REF's advocacy, scholarships, and grant giving activities

## Publications



### Analytical Report

*Representation of Roma in European Curricula and Textbooks*

The report is a result of a joint project carried out between 2016 and 2019, focusing on national curricula and textbooks for history, civics and geography from 22 countries. A quantitative analysis, showing how often Roma are mentioned, and a qualitative overview on topics that engage with the ethnic minority were analyzed. REF hired and trained eight Roma research fellows to examine over 850 textbooks and evaluate their portrayal of Roma.

Joint project with The Council of Europe and Georg Eckert Institute



### Book Chapter

*Path to Higher Education: Combating Antigypsyism by Building Roma Students' Aspirations and Resilience*

Published in "Dimensions of Antigypsyism in Europe" European Network Against Racism, 2019. Book chapter co-authored by REF scholarship alumna, Simona Torotcoi, and REF Research Officer, Marko Pecak

### Roma Civil Monitor Synthesis Report

*Roma civil monitor pilot project:*

A synthesis of civil society's reports on the implementation of national Roma integration strategies in the European Union: Educational Chapter

## 2019 Highlights



Image credit CEU/Andras Dimeny



Image credit CEU/Andras Dimeny

## Outreach



### Presentation of the results, perspective for future educational policy, and counter distortion of the genocide of Roma

August 2019: International Conference "Is 'Auschwitz only Sleeping?' Sinti and Roma Narratives after the Holocaust" Krakow, Poland

December 2019: International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Plenary, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg

### Presentation of book chapter at "Critical Romani Studies Conference"

May 2019: Critical Romani Studies Conference, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary

### Presentation of synthesis report

September 2019: Central European University Facilitation of 3 workshops to build the capacities of the participating NGOs/authors on the topics of Antigypsyism in Public Policy, Universal vs Targets policies, and substance abuse.

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# Communication and Visibility

## COMMUNICATION GRANT

Photo and audio exhibit

When I grow up I would like to be a rich woman

Network newsletter



## Toy Library installation at ISSA conference 2019



On June 19 2019, Roma Education Fund took part in the annual ISSA Conference in Leiden, Netherlands



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67%  
increase in REF  
Facebook  
traffic



New REF  
website  
launched in  
2019  
64%  
increase of  
REF citations  
in international  
media



134%  
increase in  
Instagram  
followers



20  
new videos  
featured



# Finance and Administration



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## Organization of Roma Education Fund

The network of Roma Education Fund consists of six entities (REF Entities) that have been established as legally separate foundations. The REF Entities, each with a separate board, 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. 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 in 2019
- ▶ Roma Education Fund North Macedonia, established in 2019

Roma Education Fund Hungary opened branch offices in Serbia and in Montenegro in 2013, the figures of which are presented in the books of Roma Education Fund Hungary.

## Summary of REF financials

In 2019 REF received €9.6 million in third party donor income to implement Roma education projects. 91 % of the REF budget was spent on programs and on beneficiaries in 16 countries.\*

\*Roma Education Fund (REF) 2019 Annual Report includes reporting for REF foundations, offices and activities in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, 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.

## Sources of funds and spending of REF

DESCRIPTION	REF SWITZERLAND	REF HUNGARY	REF ROMANIA	REF SLOVAKIA	REF N. MACEDONIA	REF SERBIA
Opening foundation capital	402,785	1,830,140	(642,173)	(67,484)	0	0
Third party donor income	7,323,249	1,689,875	523,040	72,617	0	0
Other income	74,542	59,005	32,411	1,684	0	(240)
Total Sources	7,800,576	3,579,020	(86,722)	6,817	0	(240)
Transfers within REF network		1,777,593	845,405	348,723	10,000	97,702
Write off REF CH loan at REF Romania			572,111			
TOTAL SOURCES WITH TRANSFERS	7,800,576	5,356,613	1,330,793	355,539	10,000	97,462
Grant program	1,066,057	0	0	110,583	0	0
Release(-)/Bulding(+) of provisions for projects granted	(370,518)	0	0	0	0	0
Tertiary scholarhip Program	1,255,802	167,004	22,499	9,845	0	0
Communications	44,398	87,171	0	0	0	0
Own educational projects	0	3,585,390	1,604,417	289,516	0	53,778
Capacity building, Policy Development and communications	215,760	324,895	0	0	0	0
Administrative expenses	181,168	541,543	0	0	0	3,540
Other expenses	28,056	36,267	26,321	0	0	188
Provision for future projects & co-funding	1,517,549	0	0	0	0	0
Accumulated capital	1,481,395	54,195	(309,284)	(54,404)	10,000	39,956
Total Spending	5,419,667	4,796,464	1,343,952	355,540	10,000	97,462
Transfers within REF network	2,380,909	537,695	0	0	0	0
TOTAL SPENDING WITH TRANSFERS	7,800,576	5,334,159	1,343,952	355,540	10,000	97,462



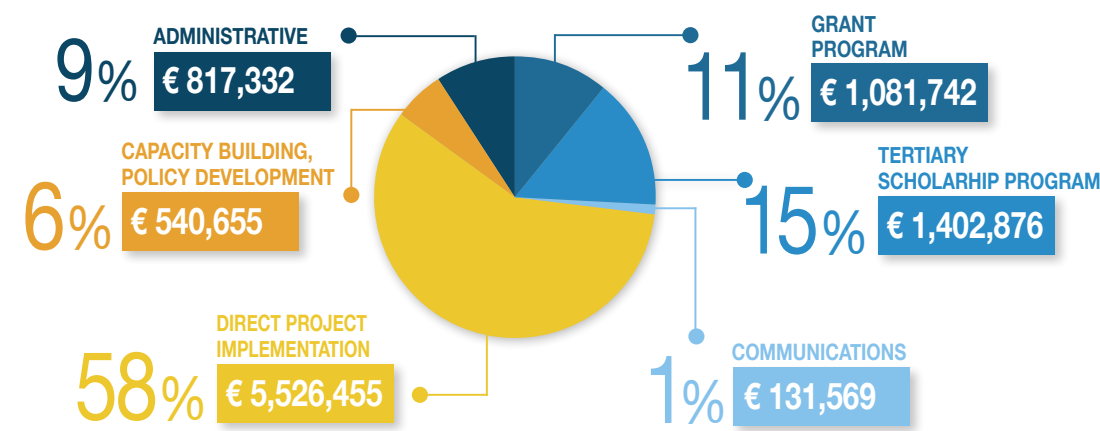
From total overall available sources of funding (Total Sources) of €11.3 million, REF spent €972,309 on grants contracted in its grant program and €1.4 million on tertiary scholarship programs for Roma students. REF spending under these two programs in 2019 was allocated to the main educational models of REF as follows:

### Commitments of REF foundations in 2019 by educational model

Model	Number of projects in 2019	Funds committed in 2019 (EUR)
Early Childhood Education	2	145,314
Primary Education	9	427,245
Secondary Education	1	159,750
Tertiary Education - RomaVersitas grants	3	240,000
Tertiary Education - Scholarship program	n.a	1,402,876
Adult Education	0	-
Direct Project implementation - All educational levels	4	5,526,455
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7,901,639</b>

In 2019, REF developed and implemented four projects from funding provided by the European Commission, KfW German Development Bank and VELUX Foundations with a total spending of €5.5 million. A further €540,655 was spent on capacity building and advocacy, and €131,569 on communications. The total administrative expenses, €817,332, represent 9% of total spending.

Spending by program:



### Key events in REF network

REF network had foundations and branch offices in seven countries in 2019. Key developments are summarized as follows:

#### REF Switzerland (REF CH)

REF CH allocated €1.06 million for the grant program and €1.25 million for the tertiary scholarship program. Besides program costs, up to €260,158 of advocacy, capacity building and communication expenses were allocated.

The operations of the headquarters of the REF Network in Budapest, Hungary, provided capacity building and core support to the operations of REF Romania and secured funding again for the various programs implemented by REF Slovakia, REF Montenegro and REF Serbia.

In 2015, REF Switzerland provided a recoverable grant for REF Romania to finance the full implementation of ESF projects. The grant was further distributed to project partners and it was not possible for REF Romania to repay the full amount of this recoverable grant. Over the past years, provisions were created to fully reflect this risk. Based on the decision of the REF Board, the total amount of €607,991 was written off in 2019 in the books of REF Romania and REF Switzerland against the provision created over the years.

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 through 2019 to further strengthen REF operations and mitigate risk.



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## 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 direct implementation of several 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, employment and integration opportunities for Roma in Serbia. The first phase of the project was closed in 2019 and the second phase started in the framework of a 32-month long project with a total budget of €4 million.
- ▶ The implementation of the third phase of an early childhood education project at Konik Camp, Montenegro in partnership with HELP was closed in 2019.
- ▶ The second phases of the VELUX Foundations scholarship project for Roma young women studying in pedagogy faculties in Czechia, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia was contracted in 2018 with a total budget of €1.3 million for 5 years.
- ▶ Continuing the implementation of the VELUX Foundations supported project started in 2018, which aims to increase the number of Roma graduating from at least vocational secondary education and successfully transitioning into the labor market in Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.
- ▶ Continuing the implementation of EC funded project, €3.8 million for 3 years of implementation, aiming to increase Roma students' participation in and completion of quality education, improve transition to employment, and promote durable systemic change and desegregation within education systems in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.

## REF Serbia (REF SER)

REF Serbia as an independent foundation was established in 2019. Based on the decision of the REF Board to move the HQ functions to Belgrade, REF management signed a ten year lease in 2019 and commenced renovations of the new premises in Belgrade. The move of the staff and assets is taking place gradually in 2020. Projects implemented by REF Hungary will be also moved to REF Serbia based on the agreements with the donors.

## REF Romania (REF RO)

For Roma Education Fund Romania, 2019 was a landmark year. In October, the foundation celebrated its 10th anniversary, and the special guest for this event was the President of Romania, His Excellency Klaus Iohannis. The foundation also kicked off new projects, such as Roma Leadership Summer Camp, and started new partnerships and cooperation with three companies: Asset Portfolio Servicing Romania, Ascendis Training Group and OTP Bank.

The foundation carried on its partnership with Educated Romania, a program initiated by the Romanian Presidency. REF Romania participated as a full member in Roma Sounding Board, a work group initiated by the World Bank, and came up with new plans aimed at increasing access to proper education for children belonging to disadvantaged communities, as part of the Coalition for Education. REF Romania was also active with the Romanian Diversity Charter, a project initiated by the British Council.

REF Romania also continued to implement three crucial projects financed through the POCU Operational Program, reaching almost 1,000 beneficiaries.

## REF Slovakia (REF SVK)

In 2019 REF Slovakia continued implementation of three projects supported by European Structural Funds, OP Human Resources launched in December 2018. The goal of the three projects is the provision of mentoring support to pupils in the final years of primary school with the aim to help them graduate and continue their studies at a higher level. REF Slovakia supports 60 mentors who provide mentoring to 180 pupils in three Self-Governing Regions in Slovakia.

In addition, REF Slovakia implements two projects supported by VELUX Foundations and REF, Shaping Employment Skills of Young Roma and the Pedagogy Scholarship Program, with REF Slovakia supporting students financially but also providing mentoring, tutoring and training sessions for the beneficiaries and mentors.

REF Slovakia has fully equipped premises for future RomaVersitas Slovakia and organizes activities for Roma students focused on strengthening their activism and leadership and gaining necessary skills for their future employment.

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Donations received by REF Entities in EUR, 2015-2019							 <div> <div>ROMA</div> <div>EDUCATION FUND</div> <div>Invest   Educate   Engage</div> </div>
DONORS	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total	
RECEIVED BY REF SWITZERLAND							Chairman’s Message
CEU					8,663	8,663	Year in Review
Bill Cook Foundation			4,673			4,673	Early Childhood Education and Care
DFID United Kingdom	50,000					50,000	Primary Education
EPTISA Regional Office for Southeast Europe			4,275	2,880		7,155	Secondary Education
EVZ - Erinnerung	234,000	262,000	260,000	260,000	336,700	1,352,700	Tertiary Education
HH Management	181,159					181,159	Adult Education
Individuals	5	197	752	335	4,021	5,310	Pedagogy Scholarship Program
Mirabaud Pierre	1,000					1,000	Shaping Academic and Employment Skills for Young Roma
Morgan Stanley						0	Employment Empowerment of Young Roma
Network of European Foundation	119,600					119,600	EU Regional Action for Roma
Porticus	100,000	90,000				190,000	National projects
SIDA Sweden	542,160	503,894	1,018,256	488,020	764,705	3,317,035	Advocacy
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	832,618	850,000	850,000	850,000	850,000	4,232,618	Research
Open Society Institute	4,492,342	4,916,294	4,506,490	5,813,501	5,345,709	25,074,336	Communication and Visibility
Ostrava Municipality	6,200	7,200				13,400	Finance and Administration
The Velux Foundations	1,034					1,034	
US Embassy, Slovakia	1,677					1,677	
WB Community Fund	11,838	11,544	7,114	6,762	13,451	50,709	
World Bank IBRD			(21,840)			(21,840)	
World Vision	4,565					4,565	
Total received by REF Switzerland	6,578,198	6,641,129	6,629,721	7,421,498	7,323,249	34,585,132	



Donations received by REF Entities in EUR, 2015-2019 <i>continued</i>						
DONORS	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
RECEIVED BY REF HUNGARY						
Bernard Van Leer Foundation						0
CFCD Macedonia		81,821	152,670	12,529		247,020
CEI Fund EBRD			25,740	1,189	19,310	46,239
European Commission				1,054,460		1,054,460
HELP HILFE	118,769	75,721	312,558	84,083	27,356	618,487
KfW1		799,461	406,183	1,519,924	1,494,397	4,219,965
Bureau of Education Montenegro		8,418				8,418
Ministry for Human and Minorities Montenegro		79,657	80,240	35,428		195,325
Ministry of Slovak Republic	54,045					54,045
OSCE	86,438	59,581	46,463			192,482
REF Romania (ESF/EEA projects)	27,399	3,727				31,126
The Velux Foundations	245,861		397,662	685,429	145,089	1,474,041
Research Executive Agency	40,622					40,622
Other donors, Individuals	7,118	9,632	1,484	6,402	3,723	28,359
Total received by REF Hungary	580,252	1,118,018	1,423,000	3,399,444	1,689,875	8,210,589
RECEIVED BY REF ROMANIA						
ADECO - ECD Ready Set Go			17,109		2	17,111
European Voluntary Service for All			3,159			3,159
Romanian Management Authority - as partner			(133,382)	139,714	513,719	520,051
Romanian Management Authority - as lead entity	3,052,751	1,659,208				4,711,959
Norway Grants		1,030,186	643,380			1,673,566
Other donors, Individuals		2,858	6,168	171	52	9,249
Total received by REF Romania	3,052,751	2,692,252	536,433	139,885	513,773	6,935,094
RECEIVED BY REF SLOVAKIA						
Ministry of Interior, Slovakia		12,000	20,000	96,388	72,617	201,005
Total received by REF Slovakia	0	12,000	20,000	96,388	72,617	201,005
TOTAL DONATIONS RECEIVED	10,211,201	10,463,399	8,609,154	11,057,215	9,599,514	49,940,483



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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 double-entry bookkeeping and is maintained in local currency. The audit is made 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, already known costs are accrued.

In case of projects implemented in partnerships and 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 less any accumulated impairment loss.



REF Entities: Statement of Expenditure over Income, 2019 and 2018

		REF SWITZERLAND		REF HUNGARY		REF ROMANIA		REF SLOVAKIA		REF N. MACEDONIA		REF SERBIA	
		2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018
INCOME													
Donations received from third parties		7,323,249	7,421,498	1,689,875	3,399,444	523,040	211,443	72,617	96,388				
Donations received from REF Switzerland				1,777,593	1,648,321	527,477	462,886	126,899	180,200	10,000		97,702	
Donations received from REF Hungary						317,928	240,752	221,824	60,500				
Project Support and other Program Refund		65,072	163,949	0		0	(65,554)						
Other income				19,912	17,156	534		1,684	437				
Write off REF CH loan						572,111							
Total Income		7,388,321	7,585,447	3,487,381	5,064,921	1,941,090	849,526	423,023	337,525	10,000	0	97,702	0
EXPENDITURE													
Project Support Program (Grants)	1	(1,066,057)	(1,763,230)	0	(35,905)			(110,583)	(157,812)				
Release (-) / Bulding (+) of provisions for projects granted	2	370,518		0									
Tertiary Scholarship Program	3	(1,255,802)	(1,615,934)	(167,004)	(187,631)	(22,499)	(34,285)	(9,845)	(9,637)				
Communications	4	(44,398)	(23,460)	(87,171)	(72,349)								
Policy development and capacity building	5	(215,760)	(134,978)	(324,895)	(135,476)								
A Good Start and complimentary projects	6												
REF Romania - ESF projects	7					(834,228)	(352,922)						
REF Romania-Erasmus ECRI - European Cooperation for Roma Inclusion	8					(308)							
REF Romania - VW - Misrecognizing Minorities in Europe	9					(14,422)							
REF Romania - Ready, Set, Go	10					(4)	(12,450)						
REF Romania and its partners capacity building	11					(516,088)	(404,629)						
Progress project in Slovakia	12												
Konik Camp project in Montenegro	13			(15,902)	(308,896)								
Toy Library	14			(6,097)									
Velux project	15			(218,393)	(149,294)	(239,367)	(327,114)	(168,646)	(64,432)				
Setup of new HQ in Belgrade	16											(53,778)	
OSCE-TARI project	17												
HEIM - EC Reseach Executive Agency	18												
IPA Macedonia - Fostering Social Inclusion	19			0	(11,317)								
KfW - Improved education and integration, Serbia	20	0	(35,150)	(1,788,074)	(1,132,424)								
CEI Fund project	21			0	(34,925)								
Ministry of interior of SR	22							(120,870)	(24,064)				
DG NEAR-Increased education opportunities for Roma students in Western Balkans and Turkey	23			(1,556,924)	(437,562)								
Release (-) / Bulding (+) for future projects and co-funding	24	(1,517,549)	(1,508,065)										
Grants to Roma Education Fund, Hungary		(1,650,544)	(1,648,179)										
Grants to Roma Education Fund, Slovakia		(115,734)	(146,867)	(220,917)	(60,068)								
Grants to Roma Education Fund, Serbia		(99,631)	0	0	0								
Grants to Roma Education Fund, North Macedonia		(10,000)											
Grants to Roma Education Fund, Romania		(505,000)	(461,480)	(316,778)	(236,634)								
Total Programs and Grants		(6,109,957)	(7,337,343)	(4,702,154)	(2,802,481)	(1,626,915)	(1,131,400)	(409,944)	(255,945)	0	0	(53,778)	0
Administrative expenses		(181,168)	(153,526)	(541,543)	(839,819)			0	(13,744)			(3,540)	
Provisions to cover risks in loans and receivables		0	(76,914)										
Net operating results		1,097,196	17,664	(1,756,316)	1,422,621	314,174	(281,874)	13,079	67,836	10,000		40,384	
Interest Income		5,201	72	95	97	0	26	0	0			(265)	
Interest cost		(20,922)	(20,625)	(1)	(58)								
Gain on Foreign Exchange		4,269		38,997	39,690	31,877	182					25	
Losses on foreign exchange		(7,134)	(71,336)	(36,266)	(11,023)	(26,321)	(10,224)					(188)	
Write/off 2017 balances						0	(68,708)						
Net financial results		(18,586)	(91,889)	2,825	28,706	5,556	(78,724)	0	0	0		(428)	
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME		1,078,610	(74,225)	(1,753,491)	1,451,327	319,730	(360,598)	13,079	67,836	10,000		39,956	

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REF Entities: Balance Sheet, December 31, 2019 and December 31, 2018												
	REF SWITZERLAND		REF HUNGARY		REF ROMANIA		REF SLOVAKIA		REF N. MACEDONIA		REF SERBIA	
	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018
	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR	EUR
Cash at banks	6,166,773	3,912,435	677,331	1,898,765	1,031,713	404,807	118,971	91,647	10,000		39,956	
Receivables	0	0	481	39,911	142,074	136,796	582,034	689,157			1,929	
Loan to REF Entities	0	607,991	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Other current assets	0	56	35,466	48,322	0	0	1,254	1,750				
Total current assets	6,166,773	4,520,482	713,278	1,986,998	1,173,787	541,602	702,259	782,554	10,000	0	41,885	0
Recoverable Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Long term loan to REF Romania							0	0				
Accrued income	0	0	0	0	0	0	275,204	337,515				
Intangible assets	0	0	277	163	0	0	0	0				
Tangible assets	0	0	20,391	24,477	15,090	3,227	0	0				
Total long term assets	0	0	20,668	24,640	15,090	3,227	275,204	337,515	0	0	0	0
TOTAL ASSETS	6,166,773	4,520,482	733,946	2,011,638	1,188,877	544,829	977,463	1,120,069	10,000	0	41,885	0
Liabilities	7,708	0	671,388	108,265	96,107	77,797	35,293	25,250			1,929	
Accrued expenses	44,663	37,450	8,363	73,234	0	0	949,799	1,162,303				
Provisions for projects granted	1,607,394	1,964,191	0	0	0	0	46,776	0				
Provisions for future projects	3,025,614	1,508,065	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Accounts payable to partners	0	0	0	0	1,761	1,804	0	0				
Loan from CoEB and REF Switzerland	0	0	0	0	1,400,293	1,107,401	0	0	0	0	0	0
Funds unused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other short-term liabilities to related parties (OSF)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other provision	0	607,991	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total liabilities and provisions	4,685,378	4,117,697	679,751	181,499	1,498,161	1,187,002	1,031,867	1,187,553	0	0	1,929	0
									0	0	0	0
Foundation capital as of January 1	402,785	477,010	1,830,140	390,750	-642,173	-282,379	-67,484	-135,320	0	0	0	0
Restatement of Foundation capital		0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Excess of expenditure over income	1,078,610	-74,225	-1,753,491	1,451,327	319,730	-360,598	13,079	67,836	10,000	0	39,956	0
							0	0	0	0	0	0
Year-end translation difference		0	-22,454	-11,937	13,159	804	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foundation capital as of December 31	1,481,395	402,785	54,195	1,830,140	-309,284	-642,173	-54,404	-67,484	10,000	0	39,956	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL	6,166,773	4,520,482	733,946	2,011,638	1,188,878	544,829	977,463	1,120,069	10,000	0	41,885	0
	0	-0	-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



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1. Project Support Program (Grants)

REF Entities provide grants to a consortia of civil society and public institutions to implement education reform projects at all education levels in the Decade of Roma Inclusion countries.

2. Release (-) / Building (+) of provisions for projects granted

Based on REF Accounting Policy over the current year the grant commitments are expensed in the full amount of the contracted grant. In order to secure the payments of the grant commitments REF is creating provisions. The provisions are released when the grant installments are transferred.

3. Tertiary Scholarships

The target of this project is to provide scholarships for tertiary level Roma students. The Program consists of five components:

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

4. 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 through conferences, workshops, and publications. This position contains the accumulated costs of this year.

5. 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. This position contains the accumulated costs of this year.

6. 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 North Macedonia, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia.

7. REF Romania - ESF projects

The objective of the project is the development of skills and abilities of Roma people to facilitate their entry into the labor market, reduce school dropout and ensure equal access to education. The project ran until December 2015. This position contains accumulated costs of the year.

8. REF Romania-Erasmus ECRI - European Cooperation for Roma Inclusion

The project aims to create innovative tools in the field of ROMS inclusion. These tools are built by and with people from ROMS communities. This project is aimed at people from Roma communities who wish to develop an economic, cultural, educational activity.

9. REF Romania - VW - Misrecognizing Minorities in Europe

The project aims to understand the experiences which give rise to the sense of misrecognition and more particularly, the role that surveillance plays in this. Research takes place in four countries where Muslim communities are targeted (Germany, United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands), and three countries (Hungary, Serbia and Romania) where Roma population is targeted.

10. REF Romania - Ready, Set, Go

The project targets 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 2009-2014, in the framework of the RO 25 Poverty Alleviation Program in Romania.



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### 11. REF Romania and its partners' capacity building

This project is to provide 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.

### 12. Progress project in Slovakia

The project aims at investing in early childhood by promoting innovation and social integration of Roma in Slovakia. REF has an advocacy role in order to share its experience and knowledge on early childhood development.

### 13. 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.

### 14. Toy Library

REF has created a Toy Library network, consisting of community spaces fully equipped with toys and an expert Toy Librarian. REF showcased one of its best practices in Early Childhood Education and Care at the 2019 ISSA – International Step by Step Association Conference.

### 15. Velux project

The project supports the increase of the number of female kindergarten teachers of Roma origin in Czechia, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia with high numbers of Roma residents. The program will run until approximately the end of 2022. In April 2018 REF started the project SHAPYR, supported also by Velux Foundations, which aims to increase the number of Roma graduating from at least vocational secondary education and successfully transitioning into the labor market.

### 16. Setup of new HQ in Belgrade

The Board of Roma Education Fund decided in 2019 that the organization headquarters will be moved to Belgrade. The preparation works and the transition is implemented until the end of 2020.

### 17. OSCE-TARI project

The objective is to decrease dropout rate among Roma secondary school students at risk of dropping out in three main regions of Serbia. The first phase of the program was completed by the end of 2015–16 academic year and continued from funding provided by KfW.

### 18. HEIM - EC Research Executive Agency

The 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. The project is implemented in a partnership between three universities (Sussex, Umeå and Seville) and REF.

### 19. IPA Macedonia-Fostering Social Inclusion

The project, Improving Roma Employment through Education and Training, 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.

### 20. KfW - Improved education and Integration Serbia

In the framework of the project, Improved Education and Integration Opportunities for Roma in Serbia 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: (i) the promotion of secondary school education for Roma youth, (ii) the promotion of employability of graduates of the REF secondary school program and (iii) the promotion of the re-integration of migrants returning to Serbia from Germany.

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21. CEI Project

The project, Professional intergovernmental knowhow exchange on the implementation of large scale Secondary School Scholarship and Mentoring Program for Roma Students, aims to strengthen the capacities of the relevant Ministries in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia which partner with REF on the project management of the secondary scholarship and mentorship program for Roma students in these countries.

22. Ministry of interior of Slovakia

The project aims to invest in early childhood by promoting innovation and social integration of Roma in Slovakia. REF has an advocacy role in order to share its experience and knowledge on early childhood development.

23. RARE (DG-Near)-Increased education opportunities for Roma students in Western Balkans and Turkey

The project, Increased Education Opportunities for Roma Students and Roma Youth in Western Balkans and Turkey, aims to increase Roma students’ participation in and completion of quality education, improve transition to employment, and promote durable systemic change and desegregation within education systems in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. The project is funded by European Union and co-funded by OSI.

24. Release (-) / Building (+) for future projects and co-funding

REF is creating provisions in order to secure the funds for future projects and co-funding of the own educational projects.

Grants to Roma Education Fund entities

Roma Education Fund Switzerland as the founder of REF entities is providing funds to:

- ▶ Roma Education Fund Hungary
- ▶ Roma Education Fund Romania
- ▶ Roma Education Fund Slovakia
- ▶ Roma Education Fund Serbia
- ▶ Roma Education Fund North Macedonia

The grant is entitled to cover core activities and operation costs. The funds are provided by the following donors:

- ▶ Swedish International Development Agency funds which cover core activities performed in the ODA countries.
- ▶ Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation which covers core activities performed in the Western Balkan region.
- ▶ Open Society Foundation which covers core activities in Central Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans.

Under core activities REF is including costs related to: Grant Program, Tertiary Scholarship Program, Direct project implementation, Capacity building, Policy Development, Communications, Administrative expenses and Other expenses related to REF public benefit activity. The costs covered by different donors are separated in the REF books in line with the generally accepted accounting rules. The base of the separation of the expenditures is determined by the requirement of the donor contracts. The salary costs covered by the core donors are separated through regular allocation on different donor codes. Foreign exchange gains/losses are disclosed as a separate item in the financial statement and they are disclosed in accordance with what is stipulated in generally accepted accounting principles.



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# 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

**RARE** – Regional Action for Roma

**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

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

Council of Europe Development Bank

European Commission

EVZ – Erinnerung Foundation “Remembrance, Responsibility and Future”

HELP HILFE

KfW Development Bank

Ministry of Interior, Slovakia

Open Society Institute

Romanian Management Authority (as partner)

Swedish International Development Agency

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

World Bank Community Connections Fund

CEI Cooperation Fund

The Velux Foundations





# REF NETWORK:

## GOVERNING BOARDS – 2019

### REF SWITZERLAND FOUNDATION

Andrzej Mirga (Chair until November 22, 2019)  
Ciprian Necula (Chair starting November 22, 2019)

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### REF SERBIA FOUNDATION

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### REF NORTH MACEDONIA FOUNDATION

Andrzej Mirga (Chair)

## REF FOUNDATIONS

### Hungary

Roma Education Fund  
Roma Oktatási Alap  
Budapest 1139, Váci Ut 99, 2nd floor  
Tel: +36-1-235-8030  
[info@romaeducationfund.org](mailto:info@romaeducationfund.org)  
[www.romaeducationfund.org](http://www.romaeducationfund.org)

### Serbia

Roma Education Fund  
Majke Jevrosime 51, 11 000. Belgrade  
[info@romaeducationfund.org](mailto:info@romaeducationfund.org)  
[www.romaeducationfund.org](http://www.romaeducationfund.org)

### Romania

Roma Education Fund Romania  
Fundăția Roma Education Fund Romania  
Str. Vaselor Nr.60 Sector 2  
021 255 Bucuresti  
Tel: +40 21 200 06 00  
[office@romaeducationfund.ro](mailto:office@romaeducationfund.ro)  
[www.romaeducationfund.ro](http://www.romaeducationfund.ro)

### Slovakia

Roma Education Fund Slovakia  
„Nadácia Rómsky vzdelávací fond  
– organizačná zložka zahraničnej nadácie  
Roma Education Fund – Roma Oktatási Alap“  
Levočská 4  
Prešov, 08001  
Tel: +421 51 7754114  
[refslovakia@romaeducationfund.org](mailto:refslovakia@romaeducationfund.org)

### North Macedonia





Roma Education Fund North Macedonia  
11th October St. 8  
Skopje 1000  
North Macedonia  
[refmacedonia@romaeducationfund.org](mailto:refmacedonia@romaeducationfund.org)

## REF REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE

### Serbia

Roma Education Fund Representative Office  
Fond za obrazovanje Roma  
Kneginje Ljubice 14  
11000 Belgrade  
Tel: +381 11 328 3306  
[refserbia@romaeducationfund.org](mailto:refserbia@romaeducationfund.org)

### Connect with us!

-  RomaEducationFund
-  @romaeducation
-  @roma\_education\_fund
-  romaoktatasialap

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This Report has been prepared by REF Communications team,  
Angela Alimi, Anastasia Jelasity, Svetlana D. Hristova.

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