



UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ



GUVERNUL ROMÂNIEI  
MINISTERUL MUNCII, FAMILIEI ȘI  
PROTECȚIEI SOCIALE  
AMPOSDRU



Fondul Social European  
POS DRU 2007-2013



Instrumente Structurale  
2007-2013



MINISTERUL  
EDUCAȚIEI  
CERCETĂRII  
TINERETULUI  
ȘI SPORTULUI  
OIPOSDRU



**Romani CRISS;** Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports; “Sanse Egale” Association; Roma Alliance from Galati County; Rhoma Heart Ilo Rrom Association

**Strategic steps for  
improving Roma children’s  
access to education  
2009-2011**

## Background: Desegregation in Romania

- 2003: **Cehei School – Sanction for segregation** from the National Council for Combating Discrimination
- 2004: **Ministry of Education Notification** on banning segregation
- 2006: Memorandum by Ministry of Education, OSCE, Romani CRISS, NGOs: working group regarding the draft of Order on desegregation
- 2007: Ministry of Education issues **Order no. 1540 on banning segregation**
- Ministry of Education's PHARE projects including desegregation, but without clear results towards creation of desegregation models
- School year 2007-2008: Romani CRISS **monitors the enforcement of Order 1540** in schools
- 2009: start of the „**Strategic steps for improving Roma children's access to education**” project , in line with EC Communication from April 2010, which:
  - advice for **development of explicit desegregation policies, notably in education** and in housing and supported by the Structural Funds;
  - urge Member States to take action to ensure that interventions financed by Structural Funds promote equal opportunities and **tackle segregation**;

# About „Strategic steps for improving Roma children’s access to education” project

## **What do we do?**

- Models of desegregation: for segregation by classes, by buildings, by schools and residential segregation
- Intercultural education module and intercultural activities in schools and communities
- Recuperative education
- Involve community and authorities in the desegregation process and in children’s education, in general

## Selection criteria for communities and schools

- Segregated schools and classes in Roma communities living in disadvantaged **(sub)urban districts**, some close to **other ethnic minorities** ( especially Hungarians) and disadvantaged members of the majority
- Segregated schools and classes in Roma communities living in disadvantaged parts of **small cities/villages in rural regions** (Jilava, Ilfov)
- Residentially segregated schools, namely Roma communities in segregated **rural settlements isolated from majority cities/villages** (Budureasa, Bihor)
- Segregated schools and classes in Roma communities **affected by interethnic conflicts** (such as Hadareni)
- Roma communities with high risk of school drop out: e.g. **early marriages** phenomenon (Babadag, Tulcea)

## Results after 1 and ½ year of implementation

- 100 people: national conference of project initiation
- Document of **Joint priorities of Roma organizations** regarding Roma children education
- Ministry of Education to set up the Ministerial Commission for Roma within the Ministry of Education
- Database with information on 264 schools and Roma communities
- **20 signed partnerships** signed with county School Inspectorates from 4 regions (NW, SE, Center and Bucharest-Ilfov)
- **15 city halls which are partners**
- 6 training sessions for teachers: : **150 trained teachers**
- 1 training curricula for teachers in the field of interculturality, diversity, school desegregation, equality of chances and Roma history and culture
- **101 school local plans:** desegregation, intercultural education, recuperatory education

## Results after 1 and ½ year of implementation

- Minimum 8 activities implemented at level of each partner school (including ethnic mixing of segregated classes or forming of non-segregated 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes) – a total of approx. **800 activities**
- **768 teachers** contracted for the project
- **5000 children and parents involved in the activities**
- **100 raising awareness campaigns** on affirmative measures in education, enrolment in high school, “Second chance”, kindergarten, on interculturality and segregation
- Over 5000 informed Roma children and parents; **180 recommendations for enrolment to high-school and university**
- **60 reading session** in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades;
- “School of all children” campaign: VIPs like Maia Morgenstern, Dan Bordeianu, Sorin Sandu or Radio Romania and BCR
- “Donate a book” received support from BCR, Embassies, Radio Romania, Oriflame, IBM – **over 6000 books and 2500 encyclopedias**
- **1 intercultural education module for middle school**

# **The following type of activities were carried out in each of the partner schools**

- School-community-Roma parents meetings: parents meetings, mothers' club, meetings with representatives of the local community
- Intercultural education classes
- Painting, poetry, theatre, skills, doll making, reading workshops (and other types) that imply team work, mutual acceptance, inter-relations.
- Screening of theme movies and "Grandparents' night"
- Contests, essays, albums on theme that reflect diversity
- Documenting the history of the city, community
- Celebration of all ethnicities
- Theme hikes
- Recuperative education
- Mixing the segregated classes
- Debates with representatives of minorities, public persons that talk to the students about the importance of cultural diversity, culture and history of minorities they belong to.

# Problems during implementation

**Risk of inefficiency of structural funds in Romania, caused by the unbalance between the relevance of activity quality and focus on purely bureaucratic aspects/ ticking off activities:** indicators checked only by beneficiary registration forms, Gantt calendar, visual identification elements and not also by results and impact of results

**E.g.:** Romani CRISS conference for launching the project and project launching projects :

- R CRISS – beforehand consultation, background paper; 2-day-meetings; working groups; joint statement of Roma NGOs; mass media coverage, delayed activity – risk of un-eligible activity;
- Second project- 10 participants at the launching, 2 h conference; 1 press release not reflected in the press – perfectly eligible activity

**E.g.:** For a recuperative education program, that lasts 6 months the indicators are the beneficiary identification forms and list of participants; for 1 day program with children in a school the indicators are the beneficiary identification forms and list of participants

This approach encourages the implementers to carry out short term, quick and inefficient activities;

The risk is for the amounts of money invested in **FSE not to have concrete results on medium and long term.**

The following statement should be taken into account - The Commission mentioned in the Communication April 2010 to increase its efforts to harness the full potential of these instruments.



## Problems during implementation

### **Target group:**

- Annex E (beneficiary identification form) – difficulties to collect data from children for activities implemented in schools, as the parents have to sign the consent form for filling in Annex E; reticence of some members of the community to sign these documents;
- Instruction 35 – proves for belonging to target group

### **Sanctions and obligations within the contract:**

- The delays caused by OI are not sanctioned
- The contractual obligations are applied only in the case of the implementer/ beneficiary
- OI functions more as a control body and less as a body that supports the implementer

## Conclusions - FSE Romania

### Commission Role regarding the FSE Program:

- Need for information on the sanctions that can be applied by the European institutions for big delays of reimbursements, approval of documents
- Besides the mobilization of structural funds objectives (including FSE), there is also the need for a **fund efficiency objective**
- **Local authorities involvement**

## Conclusions - FSE Romania

- As EC Communication advice in the April 2010 Communication of Roma, the low educational attainment, labour market barriers, segregation in housing and other areas, and poor health outcomes need to be addressed **simultaneously, using an integrated approach**
- The effectiveness of the ESF to be enhanced by stepping up the monitoring and evaluation of Roma projects and authorities contribution (local authorities at implementation; central authorities who manage the funds)
- Forum for exchanges – EC-civil society- government:
  - the European Network on Social Inclusion and Roma under the Structural Funds (EURoma)
  - regular consultations with the national NGOs- EC-Government