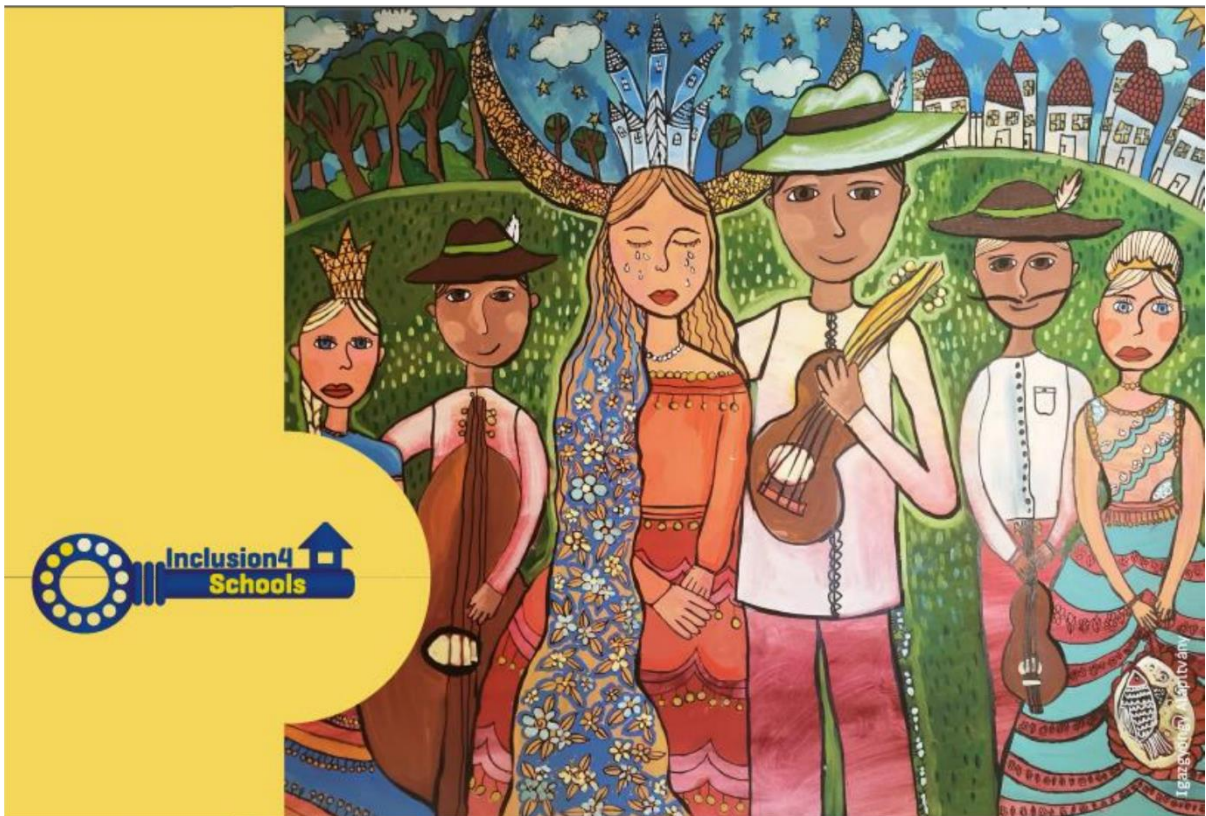


Inclusion4Schools

D3.4. Recommendations to educational managers of public education



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5	Oltalom Charity Society	Hungary
6	Albanian National Orphans Association	Albania

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D3.4 Preparing recommendations for school managers

Introduction

This document builds upon the ongoing objectives of the Inclusion4Schools project, focusing on the activities and outcomes of WP1 Task 2 and WP3 Tasks 1 and 3. These efforts were essential in identifying and implementing measures to address segregation and promote inclusivity within educational environments in Albania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Slovakia. By synthesizing prior analyses and practical interventions, this document aims to provide education managers with actionable recommendations grounded in context-specific insights.

The deliverables produced under these work packages have meticulously documented the challenges and opportunities within segregated educational contexts, offering data-driven findings and transformative conclusions. This document extends those insights, proposing targeted strategies for fostering inclusivity and equity in schools while addressing the broader need for sustainable educational practices. The recommendations aim to empower education managers in project countries and beyond, providing tools to advance systemic change and to cultivate inclusive and equitable learning environments at both local and international levels.

By reflecting on past activities and their outcomes, this document underscores the project's commitment to leveraging evidence-based practices to address educational disparities and to ensure that every child benefits from an equitable and inclusive system of education.

The community mapping model developed under WP3 enabled participating countries to more effectively identify and utilize physical, institutional, and human resources essential for fostering an inclusive educational environment. Furthermore, the community-building initiatives and Open School Classes provided a diverse array of local and global challenges, offering valuable insights into the issues that must be addressed to ensure broader, more effective participation in education for all stakeholders. These activities contributed significantly to shaping the strategies needed for long-term educational inclusion.

This document provides targeted recommendations for education managers based on the findings from the Inclusion4Schools project, specifically the activities under WP1 Task 2, WP3 Task 1, and WP3 Task 3. These work packages collectively aim to foster school-community partnerships, enhance collaboration with universities, and evaluate the impact of these efforts in segregated educational contexts

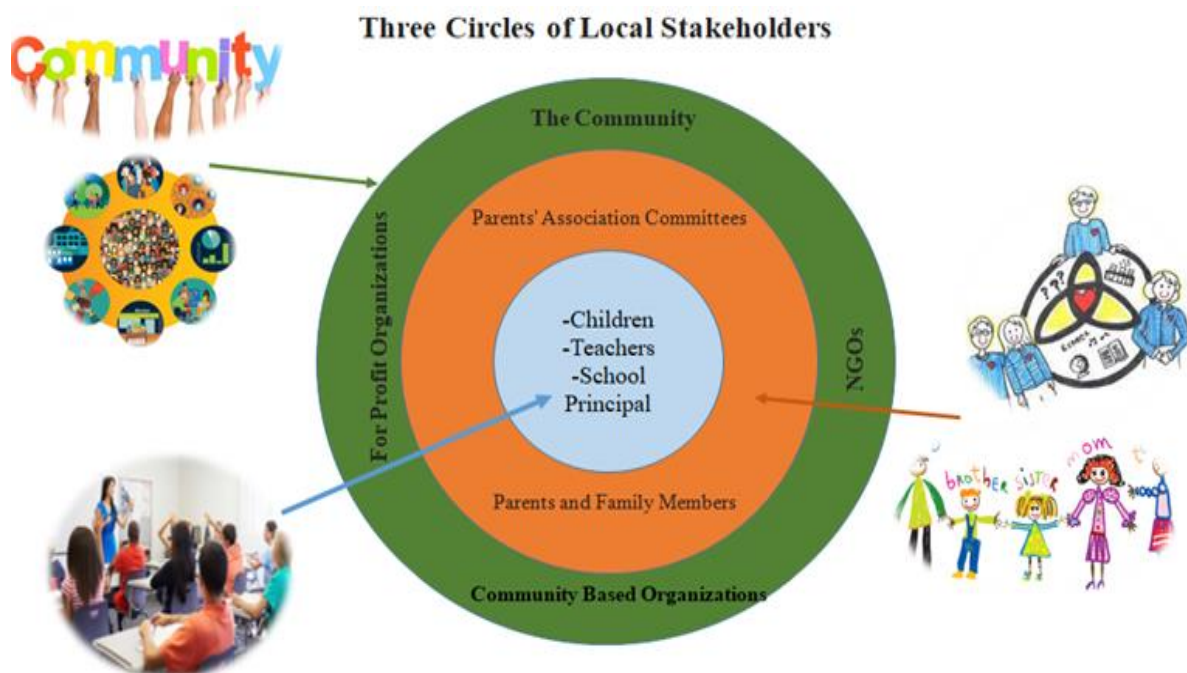


Fig. 1 Three circles of Local Stakeholders, Yossi Korazim and Ralitzia Sechkova

Inclusion4Schools Project Summary

The emerging European context is to a large extent characterized by widening and deepening inequalities, the crisis of democracy, and the disintegration of communities. It is especially the case in the Central-Eastern European semiperipheral, post-socialist context, where there is a growing tendency of rearticulating authoritarian, nationalist, neoconservative discourses, which are increasingly infiltrating the political landscape within and beyond Europe. This „retrotopia“ is conducive to the hegemonic production of an imaginary social homogeneity, which consequently stirs up reactionary xenophobia, fear, and hatred through the construction of external intruders (e.g. the migrant) and enemies within (e.g. the Roma). Such a milieu steeped in fear tears up old wounds and produces new divisions as well, hence the construction of new walls – symbolically, as well as physically. Since the leitmotif of this programme is primarily educational, the proposed action targets such (imaginary, symbolic, and real) walls of exclusion which are intended to segregate children (based on class, ethnicity, gender, etc.), which are meant to divide and alienate the local communities to which those children nonetheless belong, thus actively (re)producing inequalities. **In contrast to the power-relations of exclusion, the culture of silence, and the reproduction of unjust structures, the project aims to foster and promote pedagogical relations of inclusion, a culture of dialogue, and the transformation of unjust structures through education.** Running in parallel to the research and innovation actions the central objectives of the proposed action are

(1) to support and coordinate community schools (as being central to the constitution and maintenance of cohesive local communities) and their respective communities of practice, and

(2) to create a place and culture of sharing (knowledge, praxis, solidarity) between such communities by initiating and coordinating the convergence and synergies of local, regional and transnational communities.

The expected impact of the proposed project is to contribute to the European initiatives and interventions that aim at reversing inequalities. Adopting a mission-oriented, impact-focused approach to address the specific challenges of the call, synergies will be enhanced between the relevant stakeholders through coordinating and supporting the cooperation between teachers, researchers, local communities and other relevant stakeholders (such as policy-makers), to generate networks of policy development and to promote the policy uptake of the project.

Scheme of general recommendations at a glance

I4S Recommendations for education managers

<p>Promote Inclusive Education Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Teacher Training: • Develop Culturally Responsive Curricula: • Address Segregation: 	<p>Enhance Resource Allocation and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Equitable Distribution of Resources: • Improve School Facilities: 	<p>Strengthen School Leadership and Autonomy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase School Autonomy: • Develop Leadership Training Programs: 	<p>Foster Community and Parental Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Stronger School-Community Partnerships: • Increase Parental Involvement: 	<p>Address Dropout Rates and Early School Leaving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Targeted Intervention Programs: • Provide Social Support Services:
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Rationale of the document

Public education systems, particularly those serving disadvantaged communities, require effective and innovative management to meet the diverse needs of students. Educational managers play a crucial role in shaping the school environment, influencing both student outcomes and the overall success of educational institutions. The following are comprehensive recommendations aimed at educational managers in public education, focusing on improving leadership, fostering inclusivity, enhancing resource management, and driving long-term educational reforms.

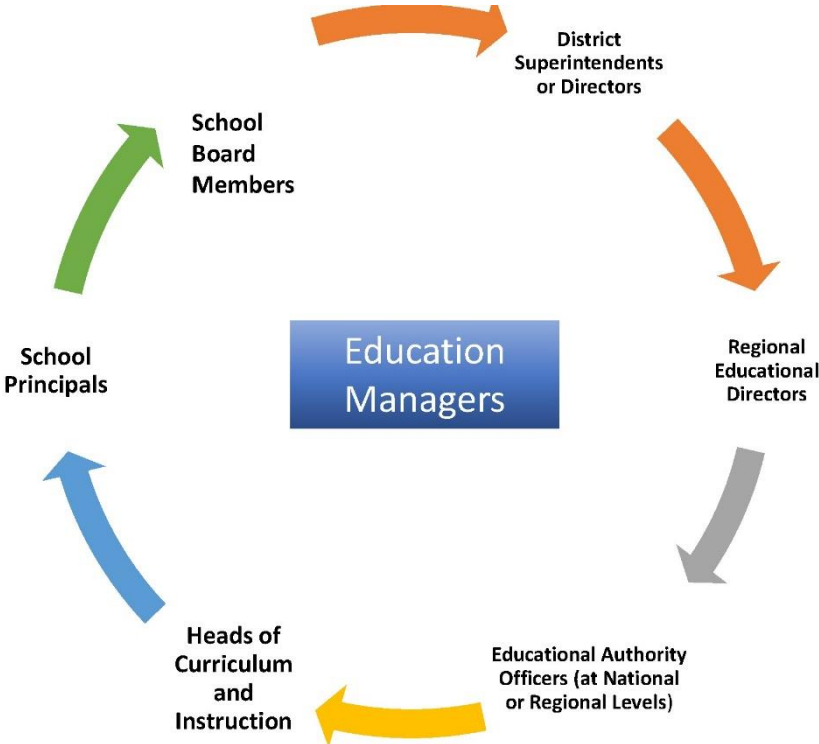
In regions facing socio-economic disparities, such as Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia, educational leaders are often tasked with managing schools that serve marginalized populations. These marginalized groups include ethnic minorities (e.g., Roma communities), economically disadvantaged families, and children with limited access to educational resources.

In such contexts, schools are not just institutions for learning; they also serve as community hubs that can either perpetuate existing inequalities or act as engines for positive social change. School managers must balance administrative duties with social responsibilities, ensuring their institutions offer inclusive, equitable, and high-quality education. This requires the implementation of innovative strategies that respond to the complex realities of students' lives and their wider communities.

Given the high rates of segregation and socio-economic challenges in these countries, the recommendations in this document aim to equip school managers with the knowledge and strategies necessary to foster inclusive school environments, improve engagement with parents and the community, and advocate for needed resources and systemic changes.

Inclusion4Schools' comprehensive **State of the Art Study D1.1** highlights the significant challenges faced by public education systems in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia, particularly in schools that serve disadvantaged and marginalized communities. The findings emphasize the critical need for educational managers to implement inclusive, equitable, and sustainable practices to enhance educational outcomes and promote social cohesion in these settings.

Identifying Education Managers in Public Education.



Educational managers in public education encompass a wide range of roles at different levels of the education system. From school principals who manage day-to-day operations to superintendents and directors who oversee entire districts, these managers are essential for ensuring that schools operate effectively, comply with educational policies, and meet the needs of their students. Each role plays a vital part in the broader

effort to improve public education and ensure that every student has access to quality learning opportunities.

Generally, roles that cover school / education management in the 4 partners countries are illustrated in the picture above.

Before entering into detailed description on the role each of these actors hold in their respective countries, there is a need to show some brief background information on the state of art in the 4 partner countries.

Background Information

a. Current school inequality in 4 countries with respect to segregation

Albania

In Albania, **educational inequality** is closely tied to socioeconomic factors and geographical disparities, particularly between urban and rural areas. Segregation is not as pronounced in terms of race or ethnicity, but rather in terms of access to quality education based on location and socioeconomic status. Schools in rural and disadvantaged regions face significant challenges, such as inadequate infrastructure, poorly trained teachers, and limited resources. These factors contribute to higher dropout rates and lower academic performance, particularly among marginalized communities, including the Roma and Egyptian populations.

Although the Albanian government has implemented **policies aimed at improving access to education**, such as the Law on Pre-University Education and initiatives to reduce dropout rates, the gap between urban and rural areas remains significant. The education system has made progress in integrating marginalized groups into schools, but **Roma and Egyptian children** continue to face discrimination and exclusion in some areas. These communities are often concentrated in low-income neighborhoods, leading to informal segregation, where they attend under-resourced schools with fewer educational opportunities.

Efforts have been made to address these disparities through initiatives focused on **inclusive education**, such as the "National Strategy for Development and Integration" and collaborations with international organizations like UNICEF. However, systemic inequalities persist, and the need for more targeted interventions to ensure equitable access to quality education remains a pressing issue.

Hungary

In Hungary, **school segregation** is a major issue, particularly for **Roma children**. Despite legal frameworks that prohibit discrimination in education, segregation persists due to several factors, including social prejudice, residential segregation, and policies that inadvertently reinforce separation. Many Roma children are placed in **special education classes** or segregated schools that offer a lower standard of education compared to mainstream institutions.

In some regions, local authorities have been accused of encouraging segregation by placing Roma students in **separate classes** within mainstream schools or directing them to schools that predominantly serve Roma communities. These schools often suffer from a lack of resources, poorly trained teachers, and inadequate facilities, further exacerbating educational inequalities.

National efforts to integrate Roma students into mainstream schools have been inconsistent, and while there are pilot projects and EU-funded initiatives aimed at promoting inclusion, the lack of political will and social resistance at the local level hampers significant progress. As a result, **Roma students** continue to face systemic barriers to quality education, which impacts their future opportunities in terms of employment and social mobility.

Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, school segregation is primarily an issue for the **Roma population**, who face widespread discrimination and exclusion in the education system. Many Roma children attend **segregated schools** in impoverished neighborhoods, where the quality of education is significantly lower than in schools serving the majority population. These schools often lack adequate facilities, qualified teachers, and educational materials, leading to poor educational outcomes for Roma students.

Despite efforts by the Bulgarian government and international organizations to address these issues through **inclusive education programs**, progress has been slow. Segregation is often reinforced by **residential segregation**, where Roma families are concentrated in ghettos or marginalized areas, leading to the isolation of Roma children in schools located within these communities. Additionally, **early dropout rates** are high among Roma students, particularly for girls, due to cultural factors and the need for children to contribute to family income.

EU-funded projects and advocacy from civil society groups have pushed for reforms, but the deep-seated social and economic inequalities faced by Roma communities continue to impede their access to quality education. Efforts to desegregate schools have been met with resistance from both the

majority population and local authorities, making it difficult to implement long-term solutions.

Slovakia

In Slovakia, **school segregation** is a pervasive problem, particularly affecting the **Roma minority**, who are one of the most marginalized groups in the country. Many Roma children are placed in **special schools** or segregated classes, often under the pretext that they have learning disabilities, even when no such diagnosis has been made. This practice, combined with **residential segregation**, leads to a high degree of separation between Roma and non-Roma students.

The Slovak government has faced criticism from international organizations, including the European Court of Human Rights, for failing to address the **systemic discrimination** that Roma children face in the education system. Efforts to desegregate schools have been limited, and in many cases, local authorities have been slow to implement inclusive policies. As a result, Roma students often receive a substandard education, which limits their opportunities for future employment and social mobility.

Despite some **EU-funded programs** aimed at improving the inclusion of Roma children in mainstream education, the situation remains dire, with high levels of **early school dropout** and low academic achievement among Roma students. The lack of political will to enforce desegregation policies, coupled with widespread social prejudice against the Roma community, has created a deeply entrenched system of inequality in Slovak schools.

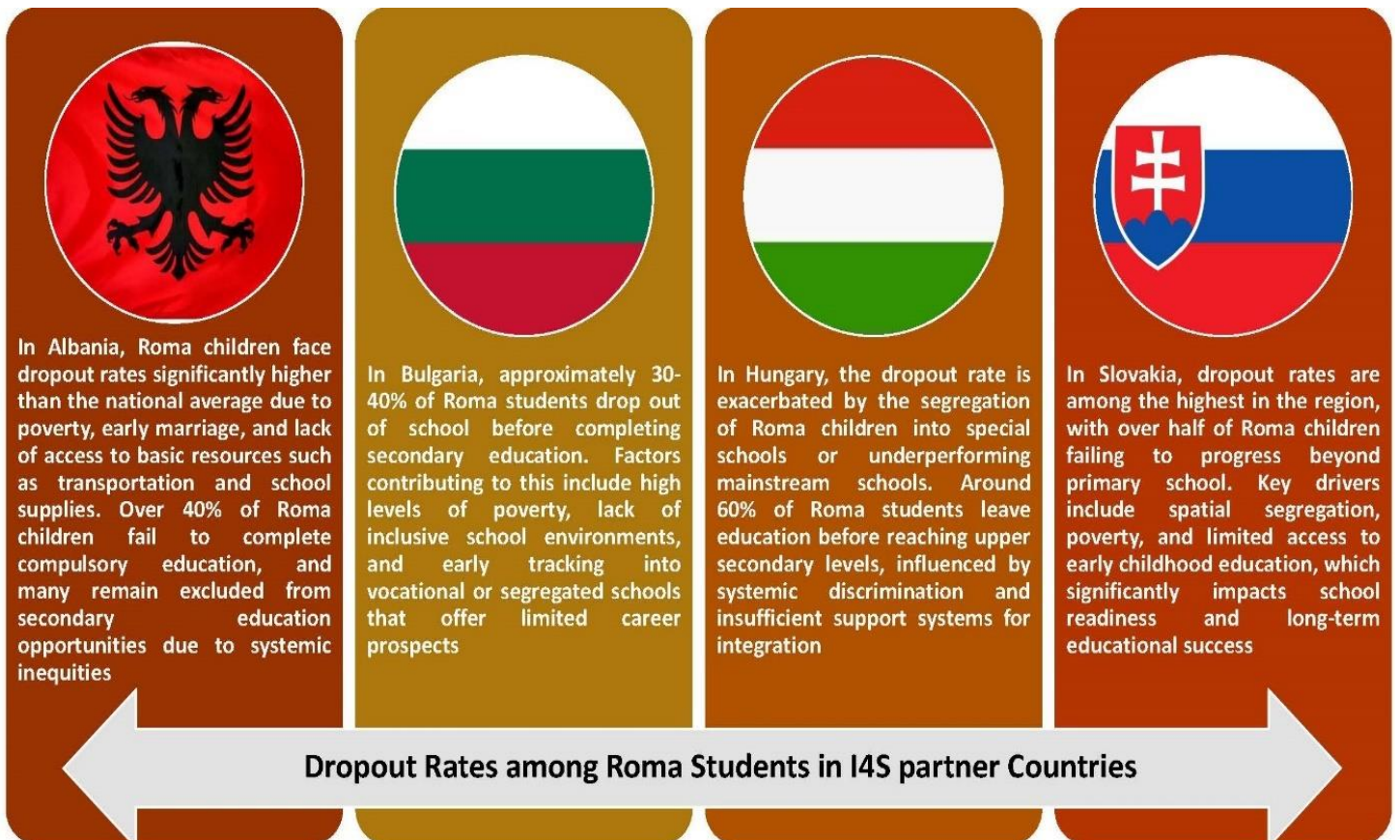
Shortcomings and needs identified in 4 countries

b. Shortcomings observed by project representatives during the meetings and interviews with partner schools and other actors.

During the meetings and interviews conducted with partner schools and other actors in Albania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Slovakia, several shortcomings were observed. These challenges present obstacles to achieving equitable and inclusive education for marginalized students, particularly Roma children and other disadvantaged groups. Below is an overview of the key shortcomings identified in each country. Across all four countries, the main shortcomings identified include **segregation, lack of teacher training, inadequate infrastructure, and high dropout rates** (see figure), among marginalized students, particularly Roma children. These challenges hinder progress toward achieving **inclusive and equitable**

education for all. Additionally, **prejudice and discrimination** remain significant barriers in many schools, requiring urgent attention and targeted interventions.

Dropout rates among Roma students in preuniversity education remain alarmingly high in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia, reflecting widespread challenges in access to quality education, socio-economic barriers, and systemic discrimination.



Albania

1. Lack of Teacher Training on Inclusive Education:

Despite efforts to integrate marginalized students, teachers often lack adequate training in **inclusive education** practices. Many teachers are unfamiliar with strategies to engage students from diverse socioeconomic and

ethnic backgrounds, such as the Roma and Egyptian communities. This results in **ineffective classroom management** and unequal educational outcomes.

2. **Inadequate Infrastructure and Learning Resources:**

Schools, particularly in **rural and underdeveloped areas**, face significant infrastructure challenges. Outdated or insufficient facilities, combined with a lack of **modern teaching materials**, limit students' learning experiences and teachers' ability to deliver effective lessons. Additionally, access to **digital resources** and technology remains limited, further exacerbating educational inequalities.

3. **High Dropout Rates among Vulnerable Students:**

Early school dropout is a persistent issue, particularly among Roma and Egyptian students. The lack of **social support mechanisms**, such as access to counselors and social workers, contributes to this problem. Schools are unable to sufficiently address the social and economic challenges that drive students to leave school early.

4. **Low Parental Involvement:**

Parental engagement in their children's education is limited, particularly among marginalized communities. Parents of vulnerable students often do not have the resources or understanding to effectively support their children's education. This lack of involvement impacts student attendance, motivation, and academic success.

Hungary

1. **Persistent Segregation of Roma Students:**

A major shortcoming observed in Hungary is the **ongoing segregation** of Roma students. Many Roma children are placed in **segregated classes** or schools, either formally or informally, where they receive a lower quality of education compared to their non-Roma peers. This practice, though illegal, is still prevalent in many regions.

2. **Prejudice and Discrimination:**

Discriminatory attitudes towards Roma students were frequently reported. **Prejudice from teachers and peers** hinders Roma students' academic success

and overall integration into the school environment. Schools often lack the necessary resources or training to address and combat these discriminatory behaviors effectively.

3. **Limited Support for Teachers Working with Roma Students:**

Teachers often express frustration over the lack of guidance and support toward working with Roma students, particularly those who may face **language barriers** or come from severely impoverished backgrounds. Schools do not provide sufficient **culturally sensitive training** or resources to help teachers address the specific needs of Roma students.

4. **Inadequate Monitoring and Enforcement of Desegregation Policies:**

While national policies prohibit school segregation, their implementation at the local level is often weak. Schools and local authorities are not held accountable for enforcing desegregation laws, allowing informal segregation practices to persist without consequence.

Bulgaria

1. **Segregation and Isolation of Roma Students:**

Similar to Hungary, **segregation of Roma students** is a significant problem in Bulgaria. Roma children are often isolated in **segregated schools** or classrooms where the quality of education is inferior, contributing to **social exclusion** and low academic achievement.

2. **Lack of Engagement with Roma Communities:**

Schools often struggle to engage with Roma communities effectively, resulting in a lack of trust between Roma families and educational institutions. The absence of **community outreach programs** exacerbates this divide, making it difficult to address the educational needs of Roma children.

3. **Teacher Shortages and Poorly Trained Staff:**

Many schools, especially those in Roma-majority areas, suffer from **teacher shortages** and poorly trained staff. Teachers are often unequipped to handle the challenges associated with working in marginalized communities, leading to **low-quality education** for Roma students.

4. **High Dropout Rates:**

Roma students face extremely high dropout rates, particularly among **girls**, due to a combination of **poverty, early marriage, and cultural factors**. Schools lack the necessary resources and programs to keep these students engaged in the education system.

Slovakia

1. Widespread Segregation of Roma Students:

In Slovakia, **segregation** of Roma students remains a deeply entrenched issue. Roma children are often placed in **special schools** or **segregated classrooms**, where they are given a substandard education compared to their non-Roma peers. This segregation is frequently justified under the pretense of learning disabilities, even when such diagnoses are not valid.

2. Lack of Support for Desegregation Efforts:

While some desegregation policies exist, there is a lack of support and **political will** to implement them effectively. Local authorities and schools often resist efforts to integrate Roma students into mainstream classrooms, further entrenching the divide between Roma and non-Roma children.

3. Cultural Barriers and Prejudice:

Cultural barriers and **prejudice** against the Roma population are pervasive in Slovak schools. Roma students face **discrimination** from both teachers and classmates, which hinders their academic performance and overall school experience. Schools are often ill-equipped to tackle these issues due to a lack of training and resources.

4. Insufficient Educational Resources:

Schools serving Roma populations are frequently underfunded and lack the **necessary resources** to provide a quality education. This includes a shortage of qualified teachers, insufficient learning materials, and inadequate facilities, all of which contribute to the **low academic achievement** of Roma students.

5. Needs expressed by the partner schools and other actors during implemented activities.

Albania

During the implementation of activities in Albania, several key needs were expressed by partner schools and other stakeholders:

1. **Teacher Training and Capacity Building:** Many schools highlighted the need for **additional training for teachers**, particularly in **inclusive education** practices. Teachers requested resources and professional development programs to help them better support marginalized students, especially those from Roma and Egyptian communities. Schools emphasized the importance of **specialized training** on how to manage diverse classrooms and engage with students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
2. **Infrastructure and Learning Resources:** Schools in **rural areas** and economically disadvantaged regions expressed the need for improved **infrastructure** and access to basic educational materials. Many schools lack modern technology, libraries, and science labs, which limits the quality of education they can provide. These schools also need **transportation support** for students who live in remote areas.
3. **Addressing Dropout Rates:** A recurring concern was the **high dropout rate** among students from vulnerable communities. Schools emphasized the need for **social workers** and **psychologists** to work with at-risk students and their families to address the underlying social and economic factors contributing to early school leaving.
4. **Parental Engagement:** There was a clear demand for **programs aimed at increasing parental involvement** in their children's education. Many schools noted that engaging parents, particularly from marginalized communities, is crucial for improving student outcomes and preventing dropouts. Schools expressed a need for workshops and initiatives that help parents understand the value of education and their role in supporting their children's learning.

Hungary

In Hungary, schools and other actors highlighted the following needs:

1. **Support for Roma Integration:** One of the most significant needs expressed was the development of **programs aimed at integrating Roma children** into mainstream education. Schools called for **additional funding** and **resources** to support inclusive education, including more teaching assistants who can work with Roma students. There was also a need for **culturally relevant educational materials** that reflect Roma history and traditions.
2. **Combating Segregation:** Many stakeholders, including local NGOs, stressed the need for **more robust measures to combat school segregation**. This includes policy interventions at the national level to prevent the creation of segregated

classes or schools. Schools also requested support in implementing **desegregation strategies**, such as cross-school collaborations and joint extracurricular activities that bring together Roma and non-Roma students.

3. **Teacher Support in Managing Diversity:** Teachers expressed the need for **guidance on managing multicultural classrooms**. They emphasized the lack of resources to support them in addressing the specific learning and social needs of Roma students, who often face language barriers and cultural differences.
4. **Psychosocial Support:** Schools requested more **psychosocial support services**, including access to **school psychologists** and **counselors** to work with vulnerable children who may face trauma, poverty, or discrimination. Schools also called for programs that promote **mental health** and **well-being** among students.

Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, the needs expressed by partner schools and other actors were focused on addressing the challenges faced by Roma students and improving overall school environments:

1. **Inclusive Education Programs:** Schools expressed a strong need for **inclusive education programs** that specifically address the **educational needs of Roma students**. These programs should focus on providing additional support for students who may not be proficient in the Bulgarian language or who come from highly disadvantaged backgrounds.
2. **Reducing Early Dropouts:** A major concern was the **high dropout rates** among Roma children, especially girls. Schools and community leaders emphasized the need for **mentoring programs** and **vocational training** to keep these students engaged in the education system. They also highlighted the importance of **culturally sensitive interventions** that respect Roma traditions while promoting education.
3. **Teacher Training on Anti-Discrimination:** Schools expressed a need for **teacher training programs** focused on **anti-discrimination** and **inclusive pedagogy**. Teachers felt unprepared to handle the discrimination that Roma students often face from their peers and even within the school system itself.
4. **Improved School Infrastructure:** Many schools, particularly those in **Roma-majority neighborhoods**, reported a need for **better infrastructure** and **learning resources**. This includes updated facilities, more classroom materials, and access to digital learning tools to help close the achievement gap between Roma students and their non-Roma peers.


Slovakia


In Slovakia, the needs expressed by partner schools and other actors were heavily focused on addressing the systemic segregation faced by Roma students:

1. **Desegregation Policies:** Schools and advocacy groups called for **stronger enforcement of desegregation policies**. Many actors emphasized that while national laws exist to prevent segregation, they are not effectively implemented at the local level. Schools requested support in creating **integrated learning environments** and reducing the separation of Roma students from mainstream education.
2. **Specialized Educational Support:** Schools noted the need for **specialized educational programs** that support Roma students who have been placed in **special education** due to misdiagnosed learning disabilities. Teachers and administrators asked for resources and training to help them better assess the needs of these students and integrate them into mainstream classrooms.
3. **Parent and Community Engagement:** Similar to other countries, Slovak schools highlighted the need for greater **parental involvement** in the educational process. Schools expressed a desire for **parent outreach programs** that build trust with Roma families and encourage parents to be more involved in their children's education.
4. **Combatting Prejudice and Stereotypes:** There was a clear need for programs that address **prejudice and negative stereotypes** about Roma students among teachers, students, and the wider community. Schools asked for **awareness-raising workshops** and training that would help reduce discriminatory attitudes and promote a more inclusive school environment.


School management system


This section provides a general analysis of the education management systems in the partner countries, highlighting common structures and operational approaches. The following section will delve into the division of management responsibilities across key institutions in each country.


 The education management systems in Albania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Slovakia reflect diverse approaches, ranging from centralized to decentralized models, each tailored to address specific national contexts and challenges.

 In centralized systems like Albania and Hungary, national ministries play a dominant role in setting education policies, curricula, and standards, as well as overseeing resource allocation and teacher recruitment. Regional or intermediary bodies, such as Regional Education Directorates in Albania and KLIK in Hungary, ensure that national policies are implemented at the local level. These institutions provide oversight, training, and logistical support

while monitoring school performance. However, centralized structures often limit the autonomy of schools and principals, who focus primarily on daily operations and the implementation of prescribed policies.

 Conversely, Bulgaria and Slovakia adopt more decentralized frameworks, granting significant responsibilities to regional and local authorities. These governments manage funding, infrastructure, and resource distribution, tailoring solutions to local needs. National ministries in these countries establish overarching policies and standards, while local bodies ensure their adaptation and implementation at the ground level. This model fosters greater collaboration with municipalities and local communities, though it may lead to variability in resources and outcomes.

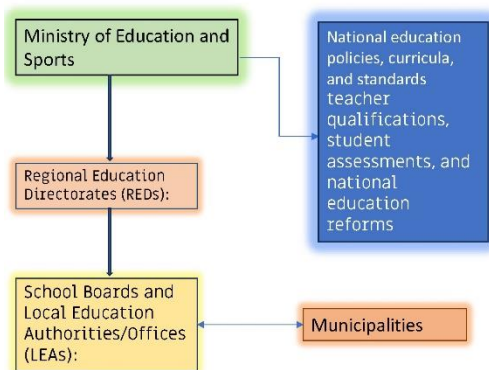
 Across all four countries, school principals and boards act as key operational players. They oversee daily management, ensure compliance with policies, and engage with staff and communities to improve educational environments. Collaborative structures, such as school boards and governing bodies composed of teachers, parents, and community representatives, support decision-making and encourage community participation in educational initiatives.

 Despite structural differences, common challenges include ensuring adequate infrastructure, improving teacher training, and fostering inclusive practices. Efforts are needed in all systems to enhance collaboration between stakeholders, promote equitable resource allocation, and strengthen leadership capabilities to address the diverse needs of schools and communities effectively.

Responsible Institutions in the Management System for Pre-University Education in Albania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Slovakia

Albania

In Albania, the management and governance of pre-university education is structured across **national, regional, and local levels**:

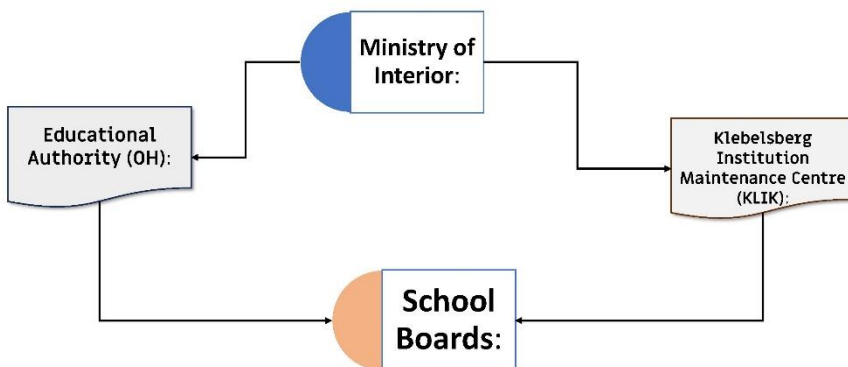


1. Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES): The **Ministry of Education and Sports** is the central institution responsible for **developing national education policies, curricula, and standards** for pre-university education. It oversees teacher qualifications, student assessments, and national education reforms. The ministry also coordinates with international organizations on education projects and sets the strategic direction for improving education across Albania.

- 2. Regional Education Directorates (REDs):** The **Regional Education Directorates** operate under the Ministry of Education and Sports and are responsible for **implementing national education policies** at the regional level. They oversee school performance, ensure adherence to national curricula, and provide support and supervision to schools in their region.
- 3. School Boards, Local Education Authorities and School Principals (LEAs):** Local Education Authorities and **School Boards** play a role in managing the daily operations of schools, including **resource allocation, infrastructure improvements, and teacher appointments**. School Boards, which include representatives of parents, teachers, and the local government, work closely with school principals to ensure the school meets community needs. School principals are the key figures responsible for the **day-to-day management** of schools. They handle administrative tasks, ensure the implementation of curricula, and lead school staff.
- 4. Municipalities:** In Albania, **municipalities** also play a role in providing **infrastructure and financial support** for schools. While the curriculum is centrally controlled, local municipalities are involved in the **maintenance of school buildings**, funding for extracurricular activities, and ensuring that schools have the necessary resources to operate.

Hungary

In Hungary, pre-university education is managed through a **centralized system** with direct oversight from the national government:



1. Ministry of Interior:

The **Ministry of Interior** oversees Hungary's education system after

the Ministry of Human Capacities was dissolved. The Ministry is responsible for **setting national education policies, curricula, teacher standards, and school funding**. It develops key legislation related to pre-university education and ensures the implementation of national reforms in schools.

2. Educational Authority (OH):

The **Educational Authority** is responsible for monitoring **school compliance with national regulations**, conducting inspections, managing **national exams**, and overseeing the **allocation of teachers and resources**. It works directly under the Ministry of Interior and ensures that schools follow the national curriculum and maintain performance standards.

3. Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre (KLIK):

KLIK is responsible for the **operation and maintenance** of all public schools in Hungary. It controls the **budgeting, infrastructure, and hiring of staff**. KLIK is also in charge of **administrative tasks** related to the daily operations of schools, ensuring that schools function within the guidelines set by the government.

4. School Boards:

School boards are made up of parents, teachers, and community representatives who provide input into school operations and development plans, though they have limited power in decision-making compared to the centralized structure of KLIK.

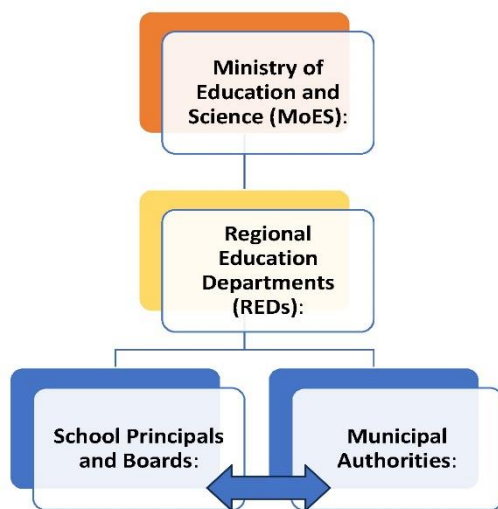
5. School Principals:

School principals manage the daily operations of schools, implementing educational programs and policies as directed by KLIK.

They have limited autonomy in decision-making due to the centralized structure but are responsible for leading school staff and managing student affairs.

Bulgaria

Bulgaria's pre-university education system is governed by a mix of national, regional, and local authorities, with a focus on decentralization:



1. Ministry of Education and Science (MoES):

The **Ministry of Education and Science** in Bulgaria holds the primary responsibility for setting the **national education strategy**, including curriculum design, teacher certification standards, and student assessment. The Ministry is the main body for overseeing **educational reforms** and policy implementation across the country.

2. Regional Education Departments (REDs):

REDs work under the MoES and are responsible for the **regional oversight of schools**. They monitor school compliance with national policies, supervise school management, and ensure that quality education is being provided. REDs offer training for teachers and school staff and help address local educational challenges.

1. School Principals and Public Councils:

School principals manage the day-to-day operations of schools and are responsible for **implementing educational programs**, ensuring staff qualifications, and reporting to both REDs and MoES. **Public Councils** are established in all the schools according to the Preschool and School Education Act. They include parents and teachers, provide guidance and support to principals in decision-making processes, particularly in areas concerning school improvements and community engagement.

3. Municipal Authorities:

Municipalities in Bulgaria play an essential role in **managing school infrastructure, budgets, and local-level initiatives**. They ensure that schools are properly funded and equipped and work in collaboration with school principals and REDs to address issues related to student attendance, resources, and teacher shortages.

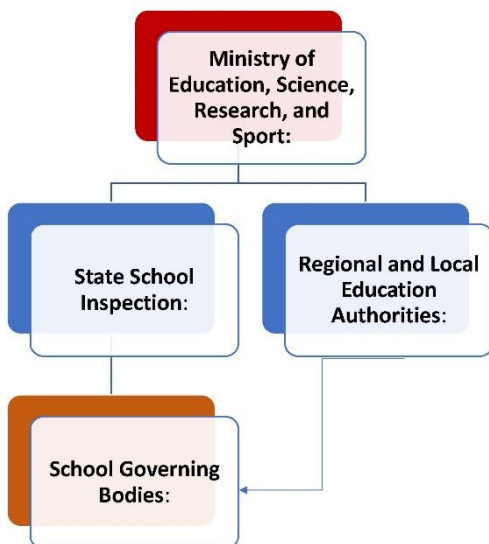
4. School Principals and School Boards:

Principals oversee the daily management of schools, including the implementation of curricula, staff management, and student discipline.

School Boards consist of representatives from the teaching staff, parents, and local communities. They support decision-making processes, particularly those related to school improvement and development.

Slovakia

Slovakia's pre-university education system is highly **decentralized**, with significant responsibilities delegated to regional and local authorities:



1. Ministry of Education, Science, Research, and Sport:

The **Ministry of Education** is the central authority responsible for **national education policies**, curriculum standards, teacher certification, and the overall strategy for pre-university education. The Ministry defines national goals for education and supervises the performance of schools across Slovakia.

2. State School Inspection:

The **State School Inspection** body monitors **school compliance with national laws** and evaluates school performance. Inspectors visit schools to review the quality of teaching, infrastructure, and adherence to the national curriculum. They also assess teacher performance and help implement corrective measures if schools fail to meet the required standards.

3. Regional and Local Education Authorities:

Slovakia's education system grants **regional governments** significant autonomy in managing schools. Regional authorities are responsible for **funding schools, maintaining infrastructure**, and ensuring that schools meet local needs. Regional and municipal governments work closely with school principals to address challenges such as **teacher shortages, infrastructure maintenance**, and the allocation of resources.

4. School Governing Bodies and principals:

Each school is managed by a **school governing body**, which consists of the principal, teachers, parents, and community members. The governing body plays an advisory role in **school development plans** and helps ensure that schools address both national and local educational priorities.

Principals are responsible for managing day-to-day school operations, implementing educational programs, and ensuring compliance with both national and regional directives.

Recommendations

Methodology Followed in Drafting the Recommendations

The recommendations in this document were developed using a structured and evidence-based methodology, ensuring a comprehensive and context-specific approach to addressing the challenges faced by educational managers in public education. This methodology framed the collection of data, stakeholder engagement, and the eventual formulation of practical recommendations tailored to the needs of educational managers, particularly in socio-economically disadvantaged and marginalized communities. Below is a detailed account of the steps followed in drafting the recommendations.

1. Review and Analysis of Existing Literature and Data

Objective: The first step was to review and analyze existing literature and data to understand the educational landscape in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia. This stage provided foundational insights into the key challenges faced by educational managers in these countries.

Actions Taken:

- A **comprehensive literature review** was conducted, focusing on academic studies, governmental reports, and previous education reform projects, including the **State of the Art Study** from the Inclusion4Schools project, alongside with reports delivered by experts leading the community building activities in the selected pilot areas in all countries. Two policy papers produced by the I4S project were also considered in drafting this document.
- Quantitative data on school performance, student demographics, and teacher qualifications were analyzed to identify patterns and key challenges in public education, especially in disadvantaged and segregated schools.
- **Best practices** from schools that had successfully addressed issues such as resource shortages and ethnic segregation were identified and documented to serve as models for the recommendations.

2. Stakeholder Engagement and Interviews

Objective: Engaging key stakeholders was essential to ensure that the recommendations reflected the practical needs and experiences of those directly involved in education management.

Actions Taken:

- **Stakeholder identification** was carried out, involving a diverse group of educational managers, teachers, policymakers, and representatives from NGOs. These stakeholders were selected from Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia to ensure a broad range of perspectives. This activity was delivered from the first months of project implementation, and initial fact-finding missions were conducted in the selected areas.
- **Semi-structured interviews** were conducted with school principals, regional educational directors, and community leaders to gather insights on governance, resource management, and inclusion practices in schools.
- In addition to individual interviews, **focus group discussions** were held with groups of educational managers to explore specific challenges and potential solutions.
- Moreover, all the **community activities, implemented under WP 3**, are significant resources to address some of the problems surrounding the segregated pilot schools.

General recommendations.

The following general recommendations are designed to address critical issues in public education, especially in marginalized and disadvantaged communities such as those found in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia. These recommendations aim

to enhance the management of public schools, promote inclusivity, ensure equitable access to resources, and foster positive school-community relationships. Each recommendation is based on extensive research and practical insights from educational challenges in these countries.

I4S Recommendations for education managers

<p>Promote Inclusive Education Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Teacher Training: • Develop Culturally Responsive Curricula: • Address Segregation: 	<p>Enhance Resource Allocation and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Equitable Distribution of Resources: • Improve School Facilities: 	<p>Strengthen School Leadership and Autonomy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase School Autonomy: • Develop Leadership Training Programs: 	<p>Foster Community and Parental Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build Stronger School-Community Partnerships: • Increase Parental Involvement: 	<p>Address Dropout Rates and Early School Leaving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Targeted Intervention Programs: • Provide Social Support Services:
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1. Promote Inclusive Education Practices

Inclusive education is vital to creating equitable learning environments where all students, regardless of their socio-economic background or ethnicity, can thrive. In many cases, marginalized communities, such as the Roma, face systemic exclusion and segregation, which hampers their educational opportunities.

Implement Teacher Training:

- **Continuous Professional Development:** Educational managers should ensure that teachers receive regular, comprehensive training in inclusive teaching methods. This should involve:
 - **Workshops on Cultural Competence:** Equip teachers with tools to understand and respond to the cultural and socio-economic diversity in their classrooms. This includes learning about the history, culture, and language of marginalized groups like the Roma, as well as strategies for reducing unconscious bias.
 - **Differentiated Instruction Techniques:** Teachers should be trained in adapting teaching methods to cater to diverse learning needs. This includes designing lessons that meet the needs of students with different learning styles, backgrounds, and abilities.

Develop Culturally Responsive Curricula:

- **Contextualized Learning:** Schools should develop and integrate curricula that reflect the cultural, social, and historical realities of the communities they serve. For example:

- **Local History and Heritage:** Include local histories and contributions of ethnic minorities (e.g., Roma communities) to foster a sense of belonging and respect for diversity.
- **Bilingual Education:** In regions with significant minority populations, schools should offer bilingual or multilingual education to help bridge language barriers and support student learning.

Address Segregation:

- **Policy Enforcement and School Integration:** Governments and educational managers should implement and enforce desegregation policies. This could involve:
 - **Mixed-Group Learning:** Promote integrated classrooms where students from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds learn together, rather than being separated based on background or perceived ability.
 - **Integrated Extracurricular Activities:** Schools should organize extracurricular activities that bring together students from different backgrounds to foster social cohesion and reduce prejudices. Activities like sports, arts, and cultural events can play a crucial role in building bridges between segregated communities.

2. Enhance Resource Allocation and Infrastructure

Ensuring that all students have access to modern, well-equipped learning environments is fundamental to improving educational outcomes, particularly in under-resourced areas.

Ensure Equitable Distribution of Resources:

- **Data-Driven Resource Allocation:** Ministries of Education should use data to allocate resources more equitably, ensuring that schools in rural, impoverished, or marginalized areas receive the support they need. This includes:
 - **Prioritizing High-Need Schools:** Schools serving disadvantaged students should receive priority in resource allocation, ensuring they have access to up-to-date textbooks, digital tools, and teacher training opportunities.
 - **Funding for Student Support Services:** Allocate additional resources for student support services like counseling, health services, and psychological support, which are often lacking in disadvantaged areas.

Improve School Facilities:

- **Infrastructure Investment Programs:** Governments should create dedicated funding streams to improve the physical infrastructure of schools in rural and underdeveloped areas. This should involve:
 - **Renovation and Modernization:** Schools should undergo renovations to ensure they provide safe, well-maintained learning environments. This includes installing appropriate sanitation, heating, and ventilation systems, as well as upgrading classrooms with modern technology such as smart boards and internet access.
 - **Safe Transportation:** In remote areas, ensure that students have safe, reliable transportation to and from school, particularly where schools are far from students' homes.

3. Strengthen School Leadership and Autonomy

School leadership plays a critical role in shaping the culture, inclusivity, and overall performance of schools. By increasing autonomy and providing targeted leadership training, schools can better address their local challenges and needs.

Increase School Autonomy:

- **Decentralized Decision-Making:** Schools should be given greater autonomy in managing their budgets, staffing, and curriculum decisions. This allows them to:
 - **Tailor Solutions to Local Needs:** Schools in disadvantaged communities may face unique challenges (e.g., high dropout rates or lack of resources), and greater autonomy will enable them to implement context-specific solutions, such as hiring additional support staff or developing community partnerships.
 - **Flexibility in Resource Allocation:** Principals should have the authority to allocate resources where they are most needed, such as hiring social workers, counselors, or educational mediators to support students from marginalized backgrounds.

Develop Leadership Training Programs:

- **Ongoing Leadership Development:** Educational managers and school leaders should receive regular, targeted training that equips them with the skills necessary to manage diverse schools effectively. This should include:

- **Training on Inclusive Leadership:** Focus on building leadership skills that prioritize inclusion, equity, and collaboration with teachers, students, and parents.
- **Crisis Management and Conflict Resolution:** Train school leaders in managing conflicts that arise in diverse educational settings, including cultural misunderstandings or issues related to discrimination or bullying.

4. Foster Community and Parental Engagement

Strong school-community partnerships are essential to improving educational outcomes and ensuring that schools are responsive to the needs of the communities they serve. Engaging parents, particularly in marginalized communities, is crucial for fostering a supportive educational environment.

Build Stronger School-Community Partnerships:

- **School-Community Partnership Programs:** Schools should establish formal partnerships with local community organizations, businesses, and NGOs to support educational initiatives. These partnerships can:
 - **Enhance Learning Opportunities:** Collaborate with local businesses and community organizations to provide internships, apprenticeships, and after-school programs for students, particularly in areas where educational opportunities are limited.
 - **Create Advisory Committees:** Establish community advisory committees that involve parents, local leaders, and community stakeholders in school decision-making processes. These committees should meet regularly to provide input on school policies, resource allocation, and community engagement efforts.

Increase Parental Involvement:

- **Parent Education Programs:** Schools should implement programs that educate parents on the importance of their involvement in their children's education. This can include:
 - **Workshops for Parents:** Offer workshops on topics such as supporting homework, creating a positive learning environment at home, and effective communication with teachers.
 - **Parent-Teacher Collaboration:** Encourage parents to actively participate in parent-teacher associations (PTAs), school board meetings, and school events. Provide translation services and culturally

sensitive outreach to ensure that all parents, including those from marginalized communities, can participate.

5. Address Dropout Rates and Early School Leaving

Dropout rates are particularly high in marginalized communities, where students often face socio-economic challenges that interfere with their ability to complete their education. Early intervention is key to reducing dropout rates and ensuring that all students remain in school.

Develop Targeted Intervention Programs:

- **Early Warning Systems:** Implement early warning systems to identify students at risk of dropping out based on attendance, academic performance, and social indicators. Once identified, these students should receive targeted support.
 - **Mentorship and Counseling Programs:** Establish mentorship programs where at-risk students are paired with older students, community mentors, or school counselors who provide academic and emotional support.
 - **Vocational Training:** For students at risk of leaving school early, provide vocational training and career counseling that offer alternative educational pathways. Partner with local businesses to create internship and apprenticeship opportunities for students who may not pursue traditional academic routes.

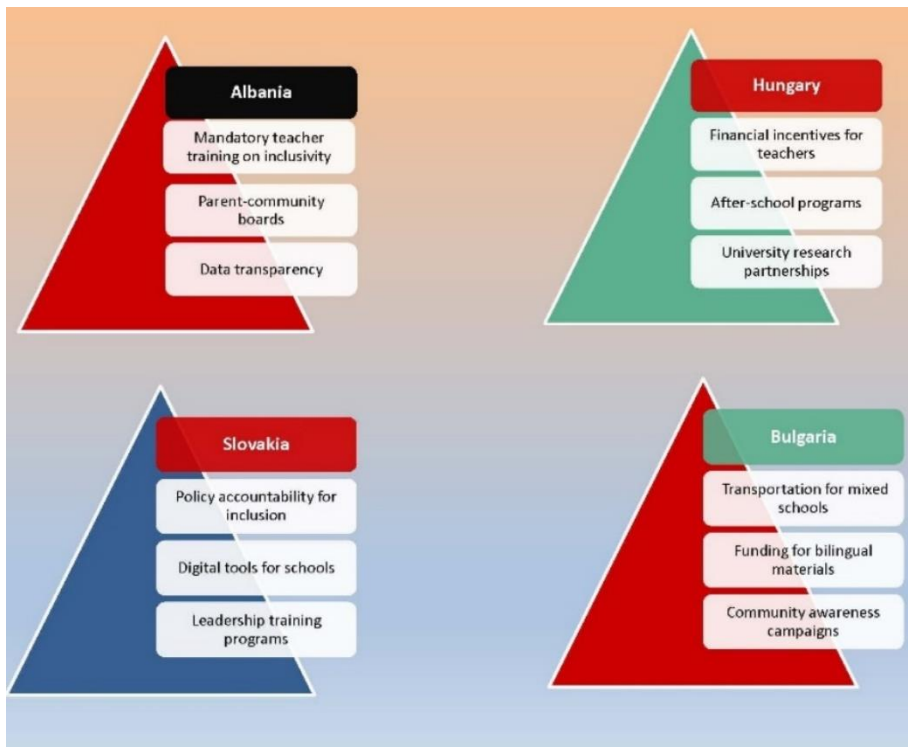
Provide Social Support Services:

- **School-Based Social Services:** Schools should collaborate with local social services to provide integrated support for students facing personal or family challenges (e.g., poverty, domestic violence). This could involve creating dedicated spaces within schools where students can access psychological counseling, health services, and social workers.

Recommendations as per institution and country

Country-Specific Recommendations

The recommendations in this document are structured into two sections: general recommendations applicable across all countries, and specific recommendations



tailored to each country and its institutions. General recommendations are designed to be comprehensive, offering actionable strategies that can be adopted by any nation seeking to foster inclusivity in education. However, considering the unique challenges and contexts of each country, priority is given to targeted initiatives that

address country-specific needs and institutional structures. These tailored recommendations ensure a strategic focus on the most impactful actions for each nation.

1. Albania

- **Policy Priorities:** Implement mandatory professional development on inclusive practices for teachers in segregated schools.
- **Community Engagement:** Establish parent-community boards to bridge communication gaps.
- **Data Transparency:** Strengthen data collection mechanisms to monitor inclusivity and equity in schools.

2. Hungary

- **Teacher Capacity:** Offer financial incentives for teachers to serve in underprivileged schools.
- **Innovative Practices:** Pilot after-school programs designed to support marginalized students.
- **University Partnerships:** Expand access to inclusive pedagogical research through university collaborations.

3. Bulgaria

- **School Integration:** Encourage the removal of Roma students from segregated schools and their inclusion in mainstream schools in the respective settlement, including by providing transportation.
- **Resource Allocation:** Equalization of funding for materials, equipment and infrastructure between segregated/Roma schools and other mainstream schools.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Organize community events to address systemic prejudice and its impacts on education.

4. Slovakia

- **Inclusive Policies:** Revise national education policies to include accountability for segregation reduction.
- **Technology Integration:** Equip disadvantaged schools with digital tools for remote and hybrid learning.
- **Leadership Training:** Develop specialized programs for school administrators to manage diverse classrooms effectively.

Partner countries and associated institutions are strongly advised to carefully consider and implement these recommendations in a manner that aligns with their specific national and institutional contexts. The suggested actions should be prioritized based on local needs, existing educational frameworks, and the resources available to each country. Institutions are encouraged to collaborate actively with local communities, stakeholders, and international partners to ensure the successful execution of these initiatives. By customizing these recommendations to fit the unique challenges and opportunities within each country, a more effective and sustainable approach to inclusive education can be achieved.

Albania

Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES):

1. **Increase funding for rural schools:**
 - **Establish an Education Infrastructure Program:** Design a strategic plan focused on improving facilities in “at risk of segregation” schools. This program should include financing for essential infrastructure upgrades such as building repairs, internet access, and digital learning tools. Work with international donors (e.g., EU, World Bank) to secure additional funds.
 - **Community-focused Development:** Engage local stakeholders in infrastructure projects. Collaborate with parents, local businesses, and

NGOs to contribute to the funding and development of projects. Community support fosters ownership and helps ensure the longevity of the improvements.

2. **Strengthen teacher training for inclusive education:**

- **National Inclusive Education Initiative:** Provide **structured in-service teacher training programs** focused on inclusive education and differentiated instruction. Include modules on how to adapt curricula to suit the needs of Roma and Egyptian students.
- **Incorporate Teacher Mentorship Programs:** Pair new teachers with experienced mentors to ensure effective implementation of inclusive practices. These programs should be monitored and evaluated annually.

3. **Address dropout rates through social support programs:**

- **School-Community Partnerships for Dropout Prevention:** Create school-based social work teams that include counselors, social workers, and educational mediators. These teams should work closely with at-risk students, their families, and local authorities to provide comprehensive support.
- **Establish Local Education Councils:** These councils should consist of school administrators, parents, local authorities, and NGO representatives. Their role will be to oversee dropout prevention programs, ensuring that they are tailored to local needs and adequately financed.

Regional Education Directorates (REDs):

1. **Ensure policy implementation:**

- **Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Units:** Create dedicated teams to monitor the implementation of inclusive education policies at schools, particularly in regions with significant Roma and Egyptian populations. These teams should conduct regular assessments and support schools in adjusting their strategies based on real-time data.
- **School Community Engagement Plans:** Require schools to submit annual **community engagement plans** that demonstrate how they involve local stakeholders in educational processes. REDs should provide guidance and incentives for schools that successfully implement these plans.

2. **Support school leadership through training:**

- **Regional Leadership Development Programs:** Conduct regular training workshops for school principals and administrators, focusing on

leadership in diverse and inclusive settings. Topics should include effective resource management, community engagement, and conflict resolution.

- **Principal Peer Learning Networks:** Foster the development of **regional principal networks** where school leaders can share best practices and collaborate on challenges related to school management and inclusion efforts.

School Principals and Boards:

1. Engage parents and local communities:

- **Establish School-Community Committees:** Each school should establish a **School-Community Committee** that includes parents, teachers, local businesses, and representatives from marginalized groups. The committee's purpose is to plan community events and address local educational challenges, with a particular focus on reducing dropout rates.
- **Community-Led School Activities:** Schools should organize **monthly community events** such as family days, open forums, and cultural exchange events where students and parents can engage in school activities. Funding for these events should be provided through partnerships with local businesses and municipalities.

2. Peer Mentorship Programs for Marginalized Students:

- **Peer-to-Peer Support Networks:** Establish peer mentorship programs where older students mentor younger students, focusing on academic tutoring and personal development. Schools should collaborate with NGOs to provide mentors with specialized training in dealing with marginalized populations.

Hungary

Ministry of Interior:

1. Develop and enforce desegregation policies:

- **National Integration and Desegregation Task Force:** Establish a task force dedicated to monitoring school segregation. This task force should provide oversight, ensuring that Roma students are not disproportionately placed in segregated schools or classes.
- **Provide Grants for Integration Initiatives:** Introduce a grant system that rewards schools for effective desegregation. Schools that successfully integrate Roma students and achieve diversity targets

should receive additional funding to support teacher training and extracurricular activities.

2. Allocate more resources to disadvantaged schools:

- **Establish a Disadvantaged School Resource Fund:** Allocate additional resources to disadvantaged schools, particularly those in regions with a high percentage of Roma students. This fund should prioritize infrastructure upgrades, digital tools, and extracurricular activities that foster integration.

Klebensberg Institution Maintenance Centre (KLIK):

1. Grant autonomy to schools in resource management:

- **Pilot Program for Autonomy:** Launch a **pilot autonomy program** allowing selected disadvantaged schools to control their own budget and staffing decisions. This flexibility would help schools address their specific needs, such as hiring specialized teachers or social workers.
- **Community-Based Budget Planning:** Schools should involve community members in the budgeting process. This transparency can build trust and ensure that resources are allocated in ways that directly benefit the community.

2. Improve school infrastructure:

- **Modernize Facilities in Roma-Dense Areas:** Prioritize infrastructure improvements in schools that serve a high population of Roma students. Focus on creating inclusive spaces by upgrading classrooms, building accessible facilities, and integrating modern teaching tools (e.g., computers, tablets).

School Principals:

1. Promote inclusive leadership:

- **Inclusive Leadership Training:** School principals should receive training on how to create inclusive school environments that value diversity. The training should include conflict resolution, fostering cooperation among diverse staff, and engaging marginalized families.
- **Engage Local NGOs:** Collaborate with NGOs that specialize in Roma integration and education to provide additional support services, including after-school programs, mentorship, and psychological support for disadvantaged students.

Bulgaria

Ministry of Education and Science (MoES):

1. Develop inclusive education policies:

- **Create a Comprehensive Roma Inclusion Framework:** Develop a national policy that provides clear guidelines and targets for Roma inclusion in education. This framework should include specific actions for early childhood education, primary schooling, and vocational training.
- **Incentivize Teacher Participation in Inclusion Programs:** Provide financial incentives for teachers who participate in professional development programs on inclusive education, focusing on how to engage Roma students effectively.

2. Allocate resources to schools in disadvantaged areas:

- **Fund Community-Based Initiatives:** Allocate resources specifically for community-driven projects in impoverished neighborhoods. Encourage schools to collaborate with local organizations to create extracurricular activities that cater to Roma students, such as arts programs, tutoring, and sports leagues.

Regional Education Departments (REDs):

1. Strengthen school oversight:

- **Inclusive Education Audits:** Conduct regular audits of schools to evaluate their performance in integrating marginalized groups, particularly Roma students. REDs should work with schools to develop improvement plans and provide technical assistance as needed.
- **Continuous Professional Development for Teachers:** REDs should coordinate professional development opportunities for teachers to help them manage diverse classrooms and implement inclusive teaching strategies.

Municipal Authorities:

1. Support community engagement:

- **Public-Private Partnerships for School Development:** Municipalities should engage local businesses and NGOs to fund school development projects. These partnerships can be used to finance extracurricular activities, school infrastructure, and family engagement programs.

- **Roma Parent Engagement Programs:** Develop programs specifically designed to encourage Roma parents to participate in school activities. These programs should include workshops on the value of education, financial literacy, and parent-teacher collaboration.

Slovakia

Slovakia: Comprehensive Recommendations for Inclusive Education

Ministry of Education, Science, Research, and Sport

1. Enforce Anti-Segregation Laws

- **National Anti-Segregation Action Plan:** Develop and implement a national strategy aimed at eliminating segregation in schools. This includes clear guidelines for integrating Roma students into mainstream classrooms, a timeline for achieving these goals, and accountability measures for schools. Conduct regular monitoring through third-party evaluations to ensure compliance.
- **Incentivized Funding:** Offer performance-based grants to schools that demonstrate effective integration practices. These funds can be allocated for infrastructure upgrades, inclusive extracurricular activities, and the development of multi-language teaching resources to address the needs of Roma and other disadvantaged students.

2. Anti-Discrimination Teacher Training

- **Mandatory Training Programs:** Establish a national curriculum for all teachers that addresses anti-discrimination principles, inclusive teaching techniques, and the history and culture of the Roma community. Training should include workshops, online courses, and hands-on case studies to prepare teachers for real-life classroom challenges.
- **Continuous Professional Development:** Incorporate inclusive education modules into ongoing teacher certification renewals. Provide incentives such as career advancement points or stipends for completing these programs.

State School Inspection Authority

1. Inclusivity Monitoring and Enforcement

- **Regular Inspections:** Conduct biannual or annual inspections in schools to evaluate inclusivity standards. Inspectors should assess classroom

demographics, teaching practices, and interactions between students of different backgrounds.

- **Public Reporting:** Publish detailed reports on the outcomes of these inspections to increase transparency and highlight best practices. Schools that fall short should be required to submit improvement plans with specific timelines for corrective actions.

2. Supportive Framework for Inclusive Practices

- **Guidance for Schools:** Develop guidelines that outline practical steps for desegregating classrooms, such as using inclusive teaching materials and creating culturally sensitive school environments.
- **Conflict Resolution Teams:** Establish teams to mediate and resolve conflicts that arise due to integration efforts, ensuring a smooth transition for all students.

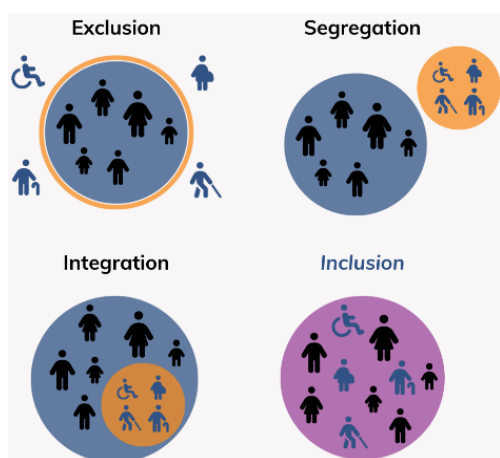
Additional Proposals for Implementation

- **Digital Learning Resources:** Introduce e-learning platforms offering interactive modules on Roma history, anti-discrimination practices, and inclusive pedagogy for teachers and students.
- **Parent Involvement Programs:** Work with local Roma communities to engage parents in their children's education through workshops and school events, building trust and collaboration.
- **Infrastructure Modernization:** Ensure that schools in disadvantaged areas meet the national standards for facilities and technological access, fostering a more conducive learning environment for all students.

Conclusion

The challenges of segregation and inequality in education are not just statistics or policies; they represent real barriers faced by children, families, and entire communities in Albania, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Slovakia. This document reflects the stories behind the numbers, shedding light on the aspirations of children who, despite being caught in cycles of exclusion, still dream of a better future through education. These recommendations are a call to action—not only for policy-makers but for every individual who has a role to play in shaping the future of our education systems.

Key Takeaways:

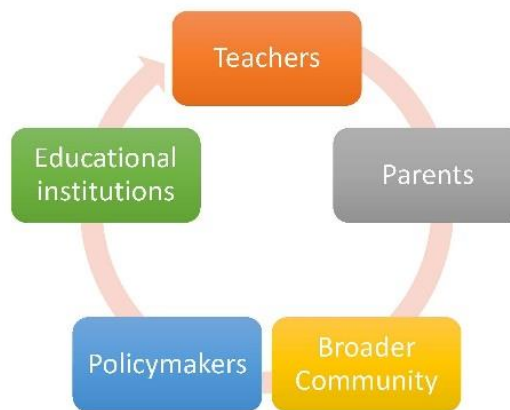


1. **Inclusive Education as a Cornerstone:** Promoting inclusivity in schools is essential for ensuring equitable learning opportunities for all students, particularly those from marginalized communities such as the Roma population. This includes developing culturally responsive curricula, enforcing anti-segregation policies, and equipping teachers with the skills and resources needed to manage diverse classrooms effectively.
2. **Strengthening Institutional Capacity:** Robust education management systems, whether centralized or decentralized, require enhanced collaboration between national, regional, and local authorities. Empowering schools with greater autonomy while ensuring accountability through effective oversight mechanisms is crucial for sustainable change.
3. **Community and Parental Engagement:** Building strong partnerships between schools, families, and communities fosters trust and cooperation. Initiatives that increase parental involvement and promote community engagement play a vital role in addressing systemic inequities and improving student outcomes.
4. **Resource Allocation and Infrastructure Development:** Adequate funding and resource allocation, particularly for disadvantaged schools, remain fundamental to reducing disparities. Investments in infrastructure, technology, and support services can significantly improve the quality of education and foster inclusive environments.
5. **Monitoring and Evaluation for Accountability:** Implementing systematic monitoring and evaluation frameworks ensures transparency, and enables

¹ <https://inee.org/collections/inclusive-education>

stakeholders to measure progress, identify gaps, and adapt strategies to evolving needs.

A Call to Action: The success of these recommendations depends on the active collaboration of policymakers, educational institutions, teachers, parents, and the broader community. Stakeholders must prioritize inclusive education as a shared responsibility, leveraging cross-country learning and partnerships to address common challenges while respecting the unique contexts of each nation.



By committing to these principles and working collectively, the partner countries can take meaningful strides toward dismantling educational barriers, promoting social cohesion, and ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality, equitable education. These efforts will not only transform the lives of individual students but also contribute to the broader goals of social justice, economic development, and inclusive growth in the region.

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