

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROSE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT. CASE STUDY: RED ROSE (2019-2022)

Nicoleta Chicinaș*

DOI: 10.24193/subbeuropaea.2022.2.11

Published Online: 2022-12-30

Published Print: 2022-12-30

Abstract

On April 17, 2015, the Government of Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) signed the Loan Agreement No 8481-RO on the implementation of the Romania Secondary Education Project (ROSE), in Washington. ROSE is a project financed from a loan of 200 million euros by (BIRD), which contributes to reducing the dropout in secondary and tertiary education and to increasing the rate of passing the baccalaureate exam. We intend, through this article, to evaluate the results of the project from the perspective of one of the sub-projects implemented by the Faculty of European Studies, within the Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, between 2019 and 2022.

Keywords: tertiary education, educational project, ROSE, Babeș-Bolyai University, Faculty of European Studies.

* PhD in History, Master's degree in Jewish Studies at the Faculty of History and Philosophy, Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.
E-mail: nicoleta.chicinas@ubbcluj.ro.

©2022 STUDIA UBB. EUROPAEA. Published by Babeș-Bolyai University.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

Introduction

Almost eight years after the signing, in Washington, of the Loan Agreement (*Romania Secondary Education Project – ROSE*) between Romania and BIRD, we are at an opportune moment for reflection and for evaluating the course of this project, a project most often described as a success story, which was the basis of over 1200 grants offered to secondary and tertiary education in Romania.

From the position of project assistant for two of the ROSE sub-projects won by the Faculty of European Studies, the author aims to study, from an internal perspective, one of these two sub-projects, in order to highlight the effects on the students who formed the target group.

Romania Secondary Education Project – ROSE

Romania Secondary Education Project – ROSE (Project ID: P148585) is a complex project, distinctive between education projects, which aims to reduce school dropout in secondary and tertiary education, to increase the rate of passing the baccalaureate exam, to improve the transition from high school to college and to increase the degree of retention in the first academic year in the educational institutions funded under the project.

ROSE was declared effective on October 14, 2015. It is worth a total of 200 million euros¹ and is fully funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (BIRD),² based on Law no. 234/2015 for the ratification of the Loan Agreement (the project on secondary education)

¹ Total Project Cost: 243.10 million US\$ (includes funding from World Bank and non-bank sources). For Detailed Financial Activity as of November 30, 2022 see “Romania Secondary Education Project”, <<https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P148585>>, accessed on 15.12.2022.

² Romania became a member of the IBRD (World Bank) in 1972. After the Revolution of 1989, the activity of the World Bank in Romania was resumed in 1991. As of December 30, 2020, Romania's subscribed capital amounts to 720.1 million US dollars, considered at the value of 1944, representing 0.31% voting rights (“Banca Internațională pentru Reconstrucție și Dezvoltare (BIRD)”, <[https://www.bnr.ro/Banca-Internationala-pentru-Reconstructie-si-Dezvoltare-\(BIRD\)-1448-Mobile.aspx](https://www.bnr.ro/Banca-Internationala-pentru-Reconstructie-si-Dezvoltare-(BIRD)-1448-Mobile.aspx)>, accessed on 21.11.2022).

between Romania and BIRD, signed in Washington on April 17, 2015 (Official Gazette, Part I, no. 757 / 12.10.2015). The Loan Agreement has been amended on December 12, 2017 (first amendment) and on July 28, 2020 (the second amendment).

ROSE's initial duration was of 7 years i.e. 2015 – 2022. On June 24,³ the Government of Romania adopted the draft Decision regarding the approval of the extension of the National Program "Support for baccalaureate, access to faculty" to November 30, 2024 (the third amendment) and therefore of the ROSE project by modifying the Government Decision no. 251/2015 on the approval of the National Program „Support for baccalaureate, access to college”.⁴

The project is implemented by the Ministry of Education, through the Management Unit of External Financing Projects.⁵

ROSE contributes to achieving the objectives established by the strategy of reducing early school leaving and improving the opportunities to participate in tertiary education. ROSE was elaborated considering the need to ensure access to quality education, adapted to the needs of the labour market, for all young people. This objective is in line with the main national strategic objective of Romania, to harness the growth potential by stimulating competitiveness and productivity, strengthening social and

³ "AMENDMENT no. 3 of July 21, 2022 agreed by the letter signed in Bucharest on July 4, 2022 and July 21, 2022 between the Government of Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to the Loan Agreement (The Project on Secondary Education) between Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, signed in Washington on April 17, 2015", Act published in the *Official Gazette* no. 936 of 23 September 2022, <monitoruljuridic.ro>, accessed on 12.11.2022.

⁴ "DECISION no. Order of the Minister of Public Health no. 1.174 of September 21, 2022 for the approval of the third amendment, agreed by letter signed in Bucharest on July 4, 2022 and July 21, 2022 between the Government of Romania and BIRD, to the Loan Agreement (Secondary Education Project) between Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, signed in Washington on April 17, 2015", <monitoruljuridic.ro>, accessed on 08.11.2022.

⁵ "Romania Secondary Education Project", <rose-edu.ro>.

territorial cohesion, creating new jobs – all aiming to reduce the disparities with the other Member States of the European Union (EU).

The development objectives of ROSE are to improve the transition from high school to tertiary education and to increase the retention rate in the first year of university studies, in the institutions funded under the project.⁶

The expected results of the project are:

- Reducing the dropout rate in the final classes of the high schools supported in the project, from the reference value of 6.5% to the final target of 3.5%;
- Reduction, in the educational units supported in the project, of the percentage of high schools with drop-out rates over 7%, from the reference value of 23.1% to the final target of 10%;
- Increase the graduation rate in the high schools supported in the project, from the reference value of 86.9% to the final target of 93%;
- Increasing the pass rate of the baccalaureate examination in the high schools supported in the project, from the reference value of 49.6% to the final target of 59%;
- Increased retention rate in the first academic year in the faculties supported in the project, from the reference value of 82.3% to the final target of 84.5%.⁷

The beneficiaries of the ROSE project are:

- Students enrolled in the approximately 1,110 low-performing state high schools (accounting for 80% of all state high schools), especially students from disadvantaged groups;

⁶ *Ibidem.*

⁷ Romania Secondary Education Project – Proiectul ROSE, <<https://www.rose-edu.ro/proiectul-rose/>>, accessed on 12.09.2022.

- High school staff, including principals and teachers from the 1,110 participating high schools;
- Students enrolled in the first year of study in the selected tertiary education institutions, especially students from disadvantaged groups;
- Personnel from the approximately 350 state faculties of eligible state higher education institutions.⁸

As far as the beneficiary institutions are concerned, these are the Ministry of Education, the National Centre for Education Policy and Evaluation / Education Research Unit, the Houses of the Teaching Body, the eligible universities and state high schools.

ROSE Project Component Overview

The project comprises of three components.

Component 1 – School-based and Systemic Interventions

The first component, school-based and systemic interventions will finance supply-side interventions at the school and system levels to address the academic and personal factors hindering Romanian students from transitioning from upper secondary to tertiary education, including dropping out, declining to take the Bacalaureate, or scoring a low mark on the Bacalaureate. It consists of following two sub-components: school-based interventions⁹ and systemic interventions.¹⁰

⁸ *Ibidem.*

⁹ Sub-component 1.1 – School-based Interventions - supports the transition of students from upper secondary into tertiary education using a decentralized approach based on non-competitive grants to low-performing public high schools. The criteria for selection of eligible high schools combine the following rates: Bacalaureate passing rate and upper secondary graduation rate. Grants will be awarded to public high schools for a 4-year period to allow sufficient time for implementing activities aimed at supporting students from Grade 9 through Grade 12. At the end of the Project, it is estimated that approximately 80 percent of Romanian public high schools (around 1,000) would benefit from this sub-component.

High school grants are intended to support activities that reduce high school dropout rates, increase graduation rates, and improve performance on the Bacalaureate (e.g. pedagogical and support interventions, extracurricular interventions, minor civil works for renovation of internal spaces/rooms and procurement of goods).¹¹

Component 2 – University-Level Interventions and Bridge Programs

The second component, university-level interventions and bridge programs aim to support the needs of students who are at risk of dropping out of public faculties in the first year of study. It will finance two grant schemes - one non-competitive and one competitive - for public universities that serve these at-risk students.¹²

In addition to the grants, this component finances technical assistance for evaluation of proposals and grants implementation monitoring.

The project aims to support approximately 60,000 students at risk from about 300 faculties. Approximately 85 percent of Romanian public faculties would benefit from this component.

¹⁰Sub-component 1.2 – Systemic Interventions - supports a series of interventions aimed at addressing the systemic challenges faced by all high schools in facilitating the transition into tertiary education. The financed activities include, for example: training of teachers and public school directors on adapting the curriculum to the needs and abilities of targeted students, applying student-centered methods and using digital technologies for teaching-learning-assessment; improving teaching conditions within teacher training institutions through provision of goods; revising and updating Grade 8 and Bacalaureate exam banks of items and associated training, including the strengthening of the institutional capacity of the National Center for Policy and Evaluation in Education (NCPEE) etc. (“Romania Secondary Education Project”, <<https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P148585>>, accessed on 15.12.2022; “Project ROSE – Component 1, Interventions at the level of high schools and systemic interventions”, <rose-edu.ro>, accessed on 15.12.2022.

¹¹ The grants value is as follows: small grants – 70,000 euro, medium grants – 100,000 euro, large grants – 152,500 euro (Project ROSE – Component 1..., *op.cit.*).

¹² “Romania Secondary Education Project”, <<https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P148585>>, accessed on 15.12.2022.

Target group is represented by first-year students at risk which are in the following situations:

- entered the faculty with grades less than or equal to grade 7 on the baccalaureate examination;
- belong to the disadvantaged socio-economic groups (they come from families with low incomes; they come from rural areas; they are persons with disabilities or chronic diseases; they are orphans of one or both parents; they come from placement centers, orphanages, other similar institutions; or they are Roma).

Higher education institutions can define their own criteria for students at risk, according to the specific regulations. Both fully funded students from the state budget and those enrolled on the places with tax, regardless of nationality, are eligible.

The objectives of the strand aim to increase:

- motivation and access of disadvantaged students to quality education;
- using student-centered learning approaches and developing social-emotional skills;
- cooperation between stakeholders at faculty level (teaching staff, support staff, students, etc.);
- advising high school students on their options to continue their studies in tertiary education;
- the promotion rate at the end of the first year of university studies.¹³

The grant schemes of this component are aimed at supporting the faculties of the eligible public universities to develop and apply programs to improve the academic performance of students, tutoring, professional counseling and career guidance, guidance and support services, coaching services, development of social and emotional competences, workshops in

¹³ Project ROSE – Component 2, Interventions at university level and summer bridge programs, <rose-edu.ro>, accessed on 16.11.2022.

specific fields, as well as awareness-raising campaigns addressed to students at risk of high dropout or other similar activities.

The period of the grants granted to universities was intended to be of maximum 3 years, and their size is, on average, 100,000 Euros.¹⁴

Management structure for the management of the University Grants Scheme

- ME is the central authority responsible for coordinating the ROSE project, ensuring compliance with the Loan Agreement, Operational Manual and Subsidiary Agreement concluded between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance.
- UMPFE represents the direction within the ME that has the role to manage, supervise and coordinate the activities of the ROSE project, including regarding central procurement or financial aspects, monitoring and evaluation, reporting and environmental protection activities, if applicable. UMPFE is responsible for managing the University Grants Scheme. The UMPFE will also ensure coordination with other ME departments and agencies / entities, including beneficiary universities, involved in the implementation of the grants.
- The beneficiaries of the grants – the eligible Romanian universities / state faculties – will implement in a decentralized manner the activities approved and funded by the grant, based on a Grant Agreement, according to the model provided in Annex 1, signed by the beneficiaries and the ME / UMPFE. In order to ensure the quality of the mechanism for the implementation of the University Grants Scheme (SGU), eligible state universities will benefit from technical assistance financed through the ROSE project.

Other stakeholders involved in the implementation of the University Grants Scheme include:

¹⁴*Ibidem.*

- Members of the academic community and representatives of the local community, including teachers, students, parents, students and representatives of student associations or Career Counselling and Guidance Centers and of the Departments for the Training of the Teaching Staff / the faculties of education sciences and psychology from universities, economic environment and local NGOs working in the fields of interest etc.;
- Monitors, which provide on-site monitoring of project implementation and coordinate reporting at central level, through the computer system.¹⁵

Learning centers

Through the ROSE project, universities have received funds to set up learning centers in 24 public universities in Romania to help support students in order to improve academic and social support mechanisms for students at high risk of dropping out. We refer to learning spaces that can include laboratories for different types of practical activities, dedicated to the subjects studied in the first year, oriented to provide targeted support and self-learning, but also for teamwork. An eligible university can apply for a single grant, amounting to a maximum of 200,000 EURO.¹⁶

Summer Bridge Programs

Universities/faculties were invited to access grants to organize Summer Bridge Programs, where high school students could participate in courses, seminars, counseling activities, sports competitions or social and cultural activities, etc., on university campuses.

The courses offer high school students an early experience in a university, meant to familiarize them with the academic context and

¹⁵ *Ibidem.*

¹⁶ *Ibidem.*

encourage the early development of skills relevant to the success of higher education.¹⁷

Component 3 – Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

The third component, finances day-to-day project management activities, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities, information/dissemination campaigns, project audits, as well as operational and staffing costs of the ME's UMEFP.

The component ensures the overall project management, monitors and evaluates the impact of the other two components on upper secondary and tertiary education.

At the same time, the component also includes: surveys concerning high school students attending bridge programs, the development of studies on the effectiveness of various programs funded from various sources to support the school participation of students in upper secondary education, other M&E studies, as needed.¹⁸

Guides

In order to support the proposed activities, 3 series of pedagogical guides have been developed on topics of personal development and coaching, remedial and tutoring activities, counseling and professional orientation, social and emotional development and inclusive education. These guides have the role of facilitating the implementation of pedagogical activities for the grant beneficiaries as well as the improvement of the teaching-learning-evaluation approaches.¹⁹

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ "Project ROSE - Component 3, Project management, monitoring and evaluation", <rose-edu.ro>, accessed on 12.09.2022.

¹⁹ Pedagogical Guides - Project ROSE, <rose-edu.ro>, accessed on 12.09.2022.

Academic performance of the students that comes from rural vs. urban areas

The largest number of students benefiting from the ROSE project come from rural areas, the rural residence being one of the eligibility criteria.

According to a 2020 study, in the case of engineering universities, students coming from rural areas (but not necessarily those who graduated from rural high schools) performed better than those who come from urban areas. According to the analysis, living in the urban or rural environment, the average for passing the baccalaureate exam, gender and ethnicity have value as predictors of academic performance.

However, if we refer to the faculties of medicine, there are no statistically significant differences between students coming from high schools in urban areas and high schools in rural areas in terms of academic performance. It can be seen, however, the tendency for those who come from high schools in urban areas to perform better than those who have graduated from high schools in rural areas, the latter being present in a very small number in medical universities. The same trend is maintained regarding the residence of individuals, those located in urban areas tending to perform better, but the difference is not statistically significant. At the same time, it should be pointed out the extremely small number of students coming from rural areas. It can express the real need for policies that encourage rural students to enter college, rather than "keeping up" with their colleagues from urban areas.

In the case of comprehensive universities with a 3-year bachelor's degree, almost one in three students ends up with a bachelor's degree after the third year of study. Students coming from high schools in urban areas performed significantly better compared to students from high schools in rural areas. Also, students coming from urban areas have performed significantly better compared to those coming from rural areas, unlike in the case of engineering universities where both those residing in rural areas and graduates of high schools located in rural areas tend to perform better

in school. At the level of comprehensive universities, the average for passing the baccalaureate exam, coming from high schools in urban versus rural areas, living in urban versus rural areas and the year of birth have the value of predictors for academic performance.²⁰

Diagnosis study in relation to the objectives of the ROSE project

According to a research conducted by the National Alliance of Student Organizations (ANOSR) in 2017, one in three Romanian students drop out of college, this school dropout rate remaining almost at the same level in the last 4 years. The causes of abandonment, which usually occur from the first years of studies, are diverse, but on the first place are those of a financial nature, closely followed by the wrong choice of specialization or faculty. Regarding the dropout in the first years of university studies, ANOSR declares the following: "*Without better legislation, the contribution of universities and real advice regarding the future career since high school, the abandonment will remain at a high level*".²¹

At the time of writing the sub-project, Romania was facing a national average of the dropout of university studies of 35.68% at bachelor level, and the main causes of abandonment, identified by the ANOSR, are: financial shortages / impossibility of financing studies, national legislation on university education, low contribution of universities in supporting students threatened by the phenomenon of university dropout and, last but not least, lack of career counseling, which should have occurred as early as high school.

The lack of professional counseling is also responsible for the decrease in the number of young high school graduates who decide to

²⁰ Adrian Curaj et al., *Public policies on equity in higher education: the impact of social scholarships and special places for graduates of high schools in rural areas*, București: Comunicare.ro, 2020, pp. 37-48.

²¹ "Annex 3. Application Form", written by Adrian-Gabriel Corpădean, project manager, in *Archive of the Faculty of European Studies*, AG 116/SGU/PV/II (RED ROSE), vol. 1, 2019. p. 3.

continue their studies in tertiary (university) education and for the danger that they will be tempted to give up their studies as early as the first year of university.²²

At national level, in the academic year 2020-2021, the share of students in higher education for all three levels (bachelor, master, doctorate), out of the total school population included in the national education system in the academic year 2020-2021, was 16.0%.²³

Implementation of the RED ROSE sub-project at the Faculty of European Studies, Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca

The Faculty of European Studies of Babeş-Bolyai University has implemented, between 2019 and 2022, two ROSE sub-projects:

- AG No. 116/SGU/PV/II - *Remain In Education! Rise and Opt for European Studies About Europe! (RED ROSE)*;
- AG No. 166/SGU/NC/II – *Continue your studies, integrate! Remedial programme organised at European Studies (PROSE)*.

In this section we intend to present the results of the first project, RED ROSE.

RED ROSE was designed to be a three-year project implemented by the Faculty of European Studies and funded by the Romanian Ministry of Education with support from the World Bank. The project has been extended for 2022, the activities of the fourth year of implementation are currently being completed and the steps are being taken to prepare the fifth year of implementation.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ "The educational system in Romania – school/university year 2020/2021", <https://insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/sistemul_educational_in_romania_2020_2021.pdf>, p. 39, accessed on 07.08.2022.

Objective for 2019-2022

The general objective of the project is to enable 200 high school students to make the right choice of university education, based on their abilities and preferences, so as to facilitate their access to the labor market. Of these, at least 120 students must be at risk of dropping out of school. Every year, 50 eligible students attend an interactive 16-day summer school at the Faculty of European Studies, which includes teambuilding games, vocational counseling, creativity workshops, courses, sporting and recreational activities. All expenses are covered by the project.

An important aspect during the summer school is the vocational counseling of these students, graduates of the 11th grade. The lack of knowledge by high school students of their own competences, meant to facilitate the option for a relevant faculty, contributes to the abandonment of studies due to dissatisfaction or maladjustment.

Through the students' participation in curricular activities, workshops and extracurricular activities, organized by 12 experienced teachers and permanently supervised by qualified personnel, it was aimed at familiarizing the target group with the academic life, in terms of the subjects taught, methods, requirements, evaluation and extracurricular aspects. Thus, the students have acquired the necessary experience in order to opt for a relevant faculty.

The *selection criteria* were as follows:

- priority 1 – student included in one of the risk situations listed in the University Grants Manual;
- priority 2 - gender equality - minimum 50% girls;
- priority 3 – first come – first served.

Thus, the principle of non-discrimination was respected and the access to the project of the students who benefited the most from the proposed activities was transparently ensured.

Indirect beneficiaries:

- Teachers-supervisor from high schools: 16 teachers;
- The staff involved in the implementation of the sub-project, as well as the university professors, employees of Babeş-Bolyai University.

Running the summer school

In the first year of implementation, the summer of 2019, all activities were carried out at the Faculty of European Studies. There were 50 students from two high schools from Bistrița-Năsăud county, who came to Cluj-Napoca for a period of 16 days. From the project funds they were offered transport, accommodation, meals and a backpack with personalized goods, in order to increase the visibility of the project.

In the second year of implementation, summer 2020, following the decision of UMPFE no. 197/08.05.2020, which established the possibility of implementing projects in online format, in the context of the pandemic generated by COVID-19, we opted to continue the project in favor of the on-line format. Consequently, the activities in the second year of implementation were adapted to the online format, which has determined that all activities and acquisitions to be updated and adapted to the specific needs of support and monitoring of online activities.

Unused savings/amounts from the first year of implementation, as well as the initially estimated budget for the second year for activities with presence on campus (e.g. transport, meals and accommodation) were reallocated, purchasing a "Student Kit 2020", which included 50 laptops to ensure students' participation in online activities.

Through the activities of carrying out the sub-project, 50 students from Bihor County were directly involved, and by participating in courses, teambuilding, virtual study visits, professional counseling / career guidance sessions and recreational activities, all the specific objectives of the sub-project were met.

The same was done in 2021, when the activities continued in online format, the next 50 students also receiving 50 laptops needed to participate in the project's online activities.

With the end of the state of alert, as of March 9, 2022, universities have returned to teaching activities with physical presence. Under these circumstances, in the summer of 2022, the fourth year of implementation of the RED ROSE subproject, the physical format was chosen.

As a result of the activities carried out within the university campus, it was prepared to return to all the acquisitions initially foreseen in the first year, 2019, to the Training category, which provided for:

- accommodation expenses on the UBB campus of the students from the target group;
- expenses for meals in the canteen;
- travel expenses for students from high school to Cluj, respectively from Cluj to high school;
- expenses with subscriptions for public transport, necessary for the travel from the dormitory to the faculty, objective local transport;
- expenses for entrance/visiting fees for museums/tourist attractions/events/shows, etc.
- expenses with personalized packages for students.

If in the first three years the management team did not encounter any problems in the formation of the target group, in the fourth year of implementation, 2022, the number of 50 students who should have formed the target group could not be reached. There was a reluctance on the part of the students, who did not have the same willingness to come away from home for 16 consecutive days. The same reluctance was on the part of the parents. The difference between the 2019 generation and the one in 2022 is given by the period of the two years of the pandemic, when the relationship of students with the outside environment was greatly reduced, the effects being felt in the uncertainty of students and parents who did not opt to participate in the program. These aspects can also be found in the

reports of vocational counselors, who advised the students present at the counseling activities. This year, only 38 students (22 girls and 16 boys) participated in the activities of the subproject.

Target group 2019-2022

During the four years of implementation, the target group was made up of 188 students from eligible state high schools, especially those enrolled in the 11th grade and, in particular, those at risk. This required the existence of a target group of 50 students/year of implementation, with the exception of the fourth year of implementation. Given that the sub-project activities had to be addressed especially to students at risk, it was considered to include a minimum of 30 students / year who would be in one of the risk situations listed in the University Grants Manual.

In the first year of implementation, 2019, the selection of the target group, 50 students, was made by identifying two high schools with low performance and with a large number of students at risk, from the 11th grade, from Bistrita municipality, Bistrița-Năsăud county: The High School with Sports Program and the Infoel Technical College.

In the second year of implementation, the year 2020, the selection of the target group, 50 students, was made from Beiuș, Bihor County, the National College "Samuil Vulcan".

In the third year of implementation, the year 2021, the selection of the target group, 50 students, was made by identifying three eligible high schools: the Theoretical High School "Victor Babeș", in Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County - 20 students, "Emanuel" Baptist Theological High School, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County - 14 students and "Samuil Vulcan" National College from Beiuș, Bihor County - 16 students.

In the fourth year of implementation, 2022, the selection of the target group, 38 students, was made by identifying three eligible high schools from Bistrița-Năsăud county: Lechința Technological High School, which gave the target group of the project a number of 12 students,

technological high school "Ion Căian Românul", Căianu Mic, from where 15 students were admitted and the Theoretical Lyceum "Constantin Românul Vivu", Teaca, who contributed 11 students.

Indicators

Year	Total number of students (F+M)	F	M	Number of students at risk		
				F	M	Total
2019	50	9	1	2	5	37
2020	50	6	4	2	9	41
2021	50	5	5	3	1	34
2022	38	2	6	2	5	37
Total	188	22	6	9	0	149

Table 1. Red Rose Indicators Table

The target group was reached at a rate of 94% (188 students out of an estimated total number of 200), and the indicator on the number of students at risk was reached 100%.²⁴

If we refer to the financial aspect of the project, the total budget of the sub-project was 807,807 lei (170,000 EURO), and the total expenditures incurred and paid in the four years was 759,726.79 lei. Therefore, the variation between planned and paid expenses is 94.05%.²⁵

Conclusions. ROSE project status

At national level, the contracting of grants was concluded, 874 grants were contracted by ROSE high schools and 393 by the universities / faculties beneficiary ROSE. The high schools benefiting from round 1 grants, which concluded the grant agreement in 2017, should have completed the

²⁴ Archive of the Faculty of European Studies, AG 116/SGU/PV/II (RED ROSE) vol. 1, 2019; vol. 2, 2020; vol. 3, 2021; vol. 4, 2022.

²⁵ According to the "Progress Report no. 4, 2022", in Archive of the Faculty of European Studies, AG 116/SGU/PV/II (RED ROSE) vol. 4, 2022.

implementation in June 2021, but they may want to extend the implementation period. The high schools receiving grants in Round 2 have contracted the grants in 2018 and will complete the implementation in 2022. The high schools benefiting from round 3 grants (grant agreements concluded in October and November 2020) have a contract for only 2 years.

ROSE has already reached most of the proposed final indicators, and the rate of graduation of the first year and the transition in the second year to college have increased. The participation in the baccalaureate has also increased, and students who did not think they had chances to pass the baccalaureate exam presented themselves and passed it. An analysis of the baccalaureate exam results demonstrated that the baccalaureate graduation rate increased more in ROSE schools than in high schools outside the project.²⁶

If we refer to the RED-ROSE sub-project, among the quantifiable results, we recall that in 2019, 6 students from the two high schools participating in the project were admitted to the Faculty of European Studies, and in 2020, 10 students who participated in 2019 in the activities of the RED ROSE project were admitted to Babeş-Bolyai University. But beyond the quantifiable results, the beneficial effects of the RED ROSE subproject are highlighted by the testimonials received from the students in the target group, a large part of the students stating that they decided to continue their studies after graduating from high school, many of them opting for Babeş-Bolyai University. We exemplify by several randomly chosen testimonials.

"Thank you so much for this beautiful experience! I was able to see through 'other eyes' a little of the world of undergraduate and college, and this influenced for the better the way I looked at this next stage of my life. I would like to thank all the people and teachers involved in this project for their dedication! This RED ROSE project was an extra pillar to reinforce my idea of attending the college I wanted!" (Dan S.)

²⁶ "Results – PROJECT ROSE", <rose-edu.ro>, accessed on 10.12.2022.

"The teachers from the faculty led me to believe that the faculty is not as hard as others say, and this project helped me choose the direction I will go after graduating from high school [...]" (Bianca G.)

"[...] It was a beneficial experience for both personal development and guidance to the future. Although I knew where I wanted to go next, you helped me confirm what I like and am passionate about and what I will move towards next and thank you for that!" (Loredana C.)

"I participated in the RED ROSE project, a project that had a strong impact on me. I discovered how classes are conducted in college, being impressed by the different way that the teachers approached compared to the high school environment. The professors from the university managed to arouse my interest from the first meetings, from which I was left with a pleasant memory. It helped me to imprint new knowledge, assimilated in a short time. Student life is beautiful at the Faculty of European South, where there are the best teachers who have given me the opportunity to find out what it means to be a student. Considering that the project is set to be online, I thought something boring was going to follow. But everything changed from the first courses, making me active especially in history, my favorite part. Thank you for all the experience I have gained in the project, for me it meant a unique experience to be in the position of a student even for a short period, making me live something unique!" (Ionuț L.).²⁷

Correlation with the strategy of the higher education institution and the objectives of the ROSE

Last but not least, both the general objective of the RED ROSE sub-project, as well as the specific ones, correlate with the Strategic Plan of UBB for the period 2016-2020, through the assumed goals, one of them being the development of services offered to high school students in their final years. Thus, through the objectives assumed within the project, it was desired to

²⁷ „Testimonials”, in *Archive of the Faculty of European Studies*, AG 116/SGU/PV/II (RED ROSE) vol. 2, 2021.

contribute to the achievement of the goals proposed by UBB regarding the development of dissemination campaigns and promotion of the educational offer in high schools. The organization and conduct of summer schools are also closely related to the mission of the Faculty of European Studies to promote its educational offer, correlated with requirements of the labor market in terms of knowledge, qualifications and skills, in order to increase the number of students and to provide a complete tertiary study cycle.²⁸

References

1. Archive of the Faculty of European Studies, AG 116/SGU/PV/II (RED ROSE), vol. 1, 2019; vol. 2, 2020; vol. 3, 2021; vol. 4, 2022.
2. "Annex 3. Application Form", in *Archive of the Faculty of European Studies*, AG 116/SGU/PV/II (RED ROSE) vol. 1, 2019.
3. Banca Internațională pentru Reconstrucție și Dezvoltare (BIRD), [https://www.bnr.ro/Banca-Internationala-pentru-Reconstructie-si-Dezvoltare-\(BIRD\)-1448-Mobile.aspx](https://www.bnr.ro/Banca-Internationala-pentru-Reconstructie-si-Dezvoltare-(BIRD)-1448-Mobile.aspx).
4. Curaj, Adrian et al. (2020), *Public Policies on Equity in Higher Education: The Impact of Social Scholarships and Special Places for Graduates of High Schools in Rural Areas*, București: Comunicare.ro.
5. Monitorul Juridic, "AMENDMENT No. 3 of July 21, 2022 agreed by the letter signed in Bucharest on July 4, 2022 and July 21, 2022 between the Government of Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to the Loan Agreement (The Project on Secondary Education) between Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, signed in Washington on April 17, 2015"
6. Monitorul Juridic, "DECISION no. Order of the Minister of Public Health no. 1.174 of September 21, 2022 for the approval of the third

²⁸ "Annex 3...", *op.cit.*, p. 6.

- amendment, agreed by letter signed in Bucharest on July 4, 2022 and July 21, 2022 between the Government of Romania and BIRD, to the Loan Agreement (Secondary Education Project) between Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, signed in Washington on April 17, 2015”.
7. “Pedagogical Guides – Project ROSE”, rose-edu.ro.
 8. “Progress Report no. 4, 2022”, *Archive of the Faculty of European Studies*, AG 116/SGU/PV/II (RED ROSE) vol. 4, 2022.
 9. “Project ROSE – Component 1, Interventions at the level of high schools and systemic interventions”, rose-edu.ro.
 10. “Project ROSE – Component 2, Interventions at university level and summer bridge programs” rose-edu.ro.
 11. “Project ROSE – Component 3, Project management, monitoring and evaluation”, rose-edu.ro.
 12. “Results – Project ROSE”, rose-edu.ro.
 13. “Romania Secondary Education Project”, rose-edu.ro.
 14. “Romania Secondary Education Project – Proiectul ROSE”, <https://www.rose-edu.ro/proiectul-rose>.
 15. “Romania Secondary Education Project”, <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P148585>.
 16. “Testimonials”, in *Archive of the Faculty of European Studies*, AG 116/SGU/PV/II (RED ROSE) vol. 2, 2021.
 17. The Educational System in Romania – School/University Year 2020/2021, https://insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/sistemul_educational_in_romania_2020_2021.pdf.