

# INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET

## APPRAISAL STAGE

**Report No.:** ISDSA1092

**Date ISDS Prepared/Updated:** 10-Dec-2014

**Date ISDS Approved/Disclosed:** 10-Dec-2014

### I. BASIC INFORMATION

#### 1. Basic Project Data

<b>Country:</b>	Romania	<b>Project ID:</b>	P148585
<b>Project Name:</b>	Romania Secondary Education Project (P148585)		
<b>Task Team Leader:</b>	Janssen Edelweiss Nunes T		
<b>Estimated Appraisal Date:</b>	15-Dec-2014	<b>Estimated Board Date:</b>	16-Mar-2015
<b>Managing Unit:</b>	GEDDR	<b>Lending Instrument:</b>	Investment Project Financing
<b>Sector(s):</b>	Secondary education (75%), Tertiary education (25%)		
<b>Theme(s):</b>	Education for all (75%), Education for the knowledge economy (25%)		
<b>Is this project processed under OP 8.50 (Emergency Recovery) or OP 8.00 (Rapid Response to Crises and Emergencies)?</b>			No
<b>Financing (In USD Million)</b>			
Total Project Cost:	250.31	Total Bank Financing:	250.31
Financing Gap:	0.00		
<b>Financing Source</b>			<b>Amount</b>
Borrower			0.00
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development			250.31
Total			250.31
<b>Environmental Category:</b>	C - Not Required		
<b>Is this a Repeater project?</b>	No		

#### 2. Project Development Objective(s)

The proposed Project Development Objectives are to improve the transition from upper secondary into tertiary education and increase the retention in the first year of tertiary education in project-supported education institutions.

#### 3. Project Description

The proposed Project will be implemented over a period of six years, between 2016 and 2021, and

would be financed through an Investment Project Financing (IPF) by a loan of EUR 200 million. This Project is structured in three components, with the first two designed to address the academic and personal reasons for poor student performance in upper secondary as well as in the initial years of tertiary education. The third component covers project management and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

**Component 1- School-Based and Systemic Interventions:** This component will finance supply-side interventions and analysis of demand-side programs at the school and system levels to address the academic and personal reasons that are the leading factors hindering Romanian students from transitioning from high schools to tertiary education, including dropping out, declining to take the Baccalaureate, or scoring a low mark on the Baccalaureate.

**Sub-component 1.1 – School-Based Interventions:** This sub-component would support the transition of students from upper secondary into tertiary education using a decentralized approach involving grants to high schools. Eligible high schools would be those that have either: (i) average Baccalaureate passing rates below 90%; (ii) dropout rates greater than 3.5%; or (iii) an average upper secondary completion rate below the national average of 80%. This would allow approximately 80% of all high schools in the country to be eligible for a grant, excluding only the highest performing high schools. The grants would support a menu of activities oriented primarily towards pedagogical support aimed to reduce high school dropout, increase completion, and improve performance on the Baccalaureate. Eligible activities would include, but would not be limited to:

- Remedial classes, tutoring, counseling, vocational orientation, and personal development (at least 50 percent of grant amount);
- Extracurricular activities such as documentary trips/visits, internships, participation in competitions, small prizes, and school networking activities, and outreach to families (up to 30 percent of the grant amount); and
- Minor civil works for interior renovation of school buildings (e.g. laboratories) and purchase of goods (up to 20 percent of the grant amount).

The grant allocation per high school would be calculated on the basis of a variable portion determined by the number of students (per capita), and a fixed portion according to the socioeconomic needs of students and their academic/pedagogical constraints. The needs dimension would be determined using a school index that combines the following factors: existing poverty index by municipality, type of high school, number of places reserved for Roma students, location of high school (urban or rural), average Baccalaureate passing rate, dropout rate, Baccalaureate participation among eligible students, and completion rate. In addition to the grants, this sub-component would finance technical assistance for eligible high schools on the preparation of proposals for the grants. With the facilitation of specialists, high schools will develop multi-year school development plans, from which school improvement plans will derive. School improvement plans will be assessed according to guidelines detailed in the High School Grants Manual. The implementation arrangements for this sub-component will incorporate lessons learned from the Romania Rural Education Project and the Reform of Higher Education and Research Project.

**Sub-component 1.2 – Systemic Interventions:** This sub-component would address the systemic challenges faced by all high schools in improving education quality, to be addressed centrally by the MoNE. Activities to be supported by this sub-component include: (i) revision of the upper secondary education curriculum, which should be done considering specific needs of disadvantaged students including Roma; (ii) training of teachers and school directors on implementing the revised curriculum, on adapting the curriculum to the needs and abilities of different students (inclusive education), student-centered teaching approaches, and on formative assessment; (iii) revising and updating Grade 8 and Baccalaureate exam items and associated training; (iv) development and implementation of an assessment for Grade 10 students, to be applied at the end of the compulsory

education cycle; (v) development of digital teaching and learning materials, in accordance with the Government of Romania's e-digital Strategy; (vi) development and implementation of campaigns to raise student and teacher motivation; and (vii) strengthening of MoNE's M&E capacity in the utilization of Education Management Information System (EMIS) data to track upper secondary education students and monitor their transition into tertiary education.

Sub-component 1.3 – Analysis of Demand-Side Programs to Inform Decisions: This sub-component would finance an analysis of demand-side programs addressing the financial needs of disadvantaged upper secondary students that are currently under implementation and, as needed, make recommendations on how to make these programs more efficient and effective. The analysis would review the target beneficiaries and mechanisms, subsidy amount, implementation arrangements, and outcomes for recipients in terms of secondary school participation and completion. These studies would be informed by, and conducted in alignment with, the Government's ongoing program to harmonize its social assistance programs. These studies will be carried out during the project implementation period and their findings and recommendations would be used to inform decisions by MoNE about demand-side policy and programs, including the use of European Structural and Investment Funds.

Component 2 – University-Level Interventions and Bridge Programs: The objective of this component is to support the needs of students from disadvantaged groups who are at risk of dropping out of universities in the initial years of study. This component would finance grants for public faculties either serving significant numbers of these students or seeking to increase the enrollment of these students. Faculties will apply for the grants in conjunction with their respective universities, with proposals for developing sustainable programmatic responses to serving at-risk students. The grant scheme would prioritize faculties teaching in fields of potential economic growth in Romania, such as agriculture, engineering, science and medicine. The size of the grants for each faculty would be determined by a weighted assessment of three factors: (i) number of enrolled at-risk students; (ii) academic area of the faculty; and (iii) selection of bridge programs between high schools and universities. This component would support the development of bridge programs, which would be implemented by faculties under the above-mentioned grant scheme and would finance activities such as: (i) tertiary-level campus-based summer courses for high school students; (ii) secondary school-university-labor market partnerships; and (iii) the development of managed and coordinated university campus-based tutoring programs for high school students. This component would also finance the design and implementation of learning laboratories in universities benefiting from the grant scheme, with the aim of increasing the supporting mechanisms that promote a greater likelihood of achievement toward retaining at-risk students, by providing targeted skills development and academic support services that are designed with the needs of these students in mind. Regarding the financial needs of tertiary education students, technical assistance financed by project Component 3 would update existing studies on this subject, including one on the development of a student loan scheme, and would propose recommendations for policy making. The activities that will be financed out of this component are complementary to those of several operational programs to be financed by European Structural and Investment Funds for the programming period 2014-2020.

Component 3 – Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation: This component would finance day-to-day project management activities, M&E activities, project audits, as well as incremental operational and staffing costs of the MoNE's Unit for Externally Financed Projects. M&E activities would include an evaluation of the bridge initiatives (financed under Component 2) on different groups of at-risk students, which would be novel and useful for policymaking.

#### 4. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project activities would be implemented across the country over approximately six years with most activities to be completed during five years. High schools and tertiary education institutions identified as beneficiaries of the grants components would implement their corresponding parts of the Project under a decentralized approach, but with technical assistance of specialists supported by the Project. The population targeted are disadvantaged students including those: from Roma communities; from minorities; from low income families; living in rural areas; at risk of leaving school early; and performing low in tests/exams including the Baccalaureate. No significant environmental issues or impacts are envisaged. No social or cultural issues are envisaged.

#### 5. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists

Cesar Niculescu (GENDR)

Mihai Magheru (GSURR)

6. Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/ BP 4.01	No	<p>Under the Component 1 – School-Based and Systemic Interventions, the Project will support a grant scheme for a menu of activities oriented primarily towards pedagogical support aimed to reduce high school dropout, increase completion, and improve performance on the Baccalaureate. Eligible activities would include, but would not be limited to: (i) Remedial classes, tutoring, counseling, vocational orientation, personal development (at least 50 percent of grant amount); (ii) Extracurricular activities such as documentary trips/visits, internships, participation in competitions, small prizes, and school networking activities, and outreach to families (up to 30 percent of the grant amount); and (iii) Minor interior works for renovation/repairs of existing schools' spaces and purchasing of equipment (up to 20 percent of the grant amount).</p> <p>Although minor civil works involving building renovation may be financed, these will be interior and small scale, and are expected to be positive for the environment, since they will serve for improved education conditions in the respective schools. No relevant environmental impacts are anticipated under the proposed project given the small size of the investments, which will only apply to existing buildings, and do not warrant triggering OP 4.01 or preparation of an EMP. However, as an added precaution, the PMU will be expected to use an environmental and social screening check-list for evaluation of grants to</p>

		screen out any potentially non-conforming activities, and this will be included in the Project's Operation Manual.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No	No new structures or works of significant size are envisaged under the project, and therefore the environmental or resettlement risks are expected to be negligible.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	

## II. Key Safeguard Policy Issues and Their Management

### A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues

#### 1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:

The proposed Project would support a grant scheme for eligible activities to be determined during preparation, which could include small civil works, i.e. rehabilitations of high schools. Although minor civil works involving building renovation may be financed, these would be interior and small scale. These investments to be supported under the project are expected to be positive for the environment, since they will serve for improved education conditions in the respective schools. No relevant environmental impacts are anticipated under the proposed project given the small size of the investments, which will only apply to existing buildings. No new structures or works of significant size are envisaged under the project, and therefore the environmental or resettlement risks are expected to be negligible. No safeguards are being triggered, and the environmental category for the proposed project is C, with no Environmental Management Plan (EMP) necessary to be prepared. However, as an added precaution, the PMU will be expected to use an environmental and social screening check-list for evaluation of grants to screen out any potentially non-conforming activities, and this will be included in the Project's Operation Manual.

The proposed Project is mostly targeted at socially disadvantaged students and, as such, its social impact is expected to be positive. For the grants program under sub-component 1.1, the eligibility criteria for selecting the beneficiary high schools focuses on educational outcomes, but the underlying evidence indicates that vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are those usually expected



to have poorer educational outcomes. These criteria also allow for inclusion of a significant number (approximately 80 percent) of high schools as eligible to benefit from the Project.
<b>2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area:</b>
N.A.
<b>3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts.</b>
N.A.
<b>4. Describe measures taken by the borrower to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described.</b>
<p>The environmental and social screening procedures will be applied to all submitted grant applications that will include rehabilitation works or purchasing of laboratory equipment and materials or consumables. As established, the first screening of all submitted such application is the responsibility of the PMU, which has to review the compliance of the proposal with the eligibility criteria. On the demand-side, each grant proposal must be submitted to PMU with a full application package, including a completed environmental &amp; social questionnaire. During the whole duration of the project implementation, until the grant contracts are closed, the field supervisors of the PMU will carry out periodic monitoring and evaluation of the environmental performance of the school, to observe potential project's impact, and to recommend remedial actions.</p> <p>The MoNE would be the main implementing agency of the proposed Project, and has successfully implemented World Bank-financed projects in the past and is prepared to play this role again. The MoNE's Unit for Externally Financed Projects (UEFP) - actual PMU - has extensive experience with Bank-financed projects, having implemented almost all of the previous operations in Romania, as well as projects financed from other sources (e.g. European Investment Bank, Council of Europe Development Bank, European Union Structural Funds). This unit has the adequate capacity to carry out day-to-day project management activities including those related to environmental and social protection.</p>
<b>5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people.</b>
N.A.

### ***B. Disclosure Requirements***

<b>If the project triggers the Pest Management and/or Physical Cultural Resources policies, the respective issues are to be addressed and disclosed as part of the Environmental Assessment/Audit/or EMP.</b>
<b>If in-country disclosure of any of the above documents is not expected, please explain why:</b>
N.A.

### ***C. Compliance Monitoring Indicators at the Corporate Level***

<b>The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information</b>			
Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank's Infoshop?	Yes [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	NA [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]
Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs?	Yes [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	NA [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]

<b>All Safeguard Policies</b>		
Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies?	Yes [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> × ]
Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost?	Yes [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> × ]
Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies?	Yes [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> × ]
Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents?	Yes [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> × ]

### III. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader:	Name: Janssen Edelweiss Nunes T	
<i>Approved By</i>		
Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name: Keiko Inoue (PMGR)	Date: 10-Dec-2014