Roma students in the public education
The case of Hungary

What works at system policy level to reduce
the impact of their disadvantage?

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inequality and achievement gaps in education

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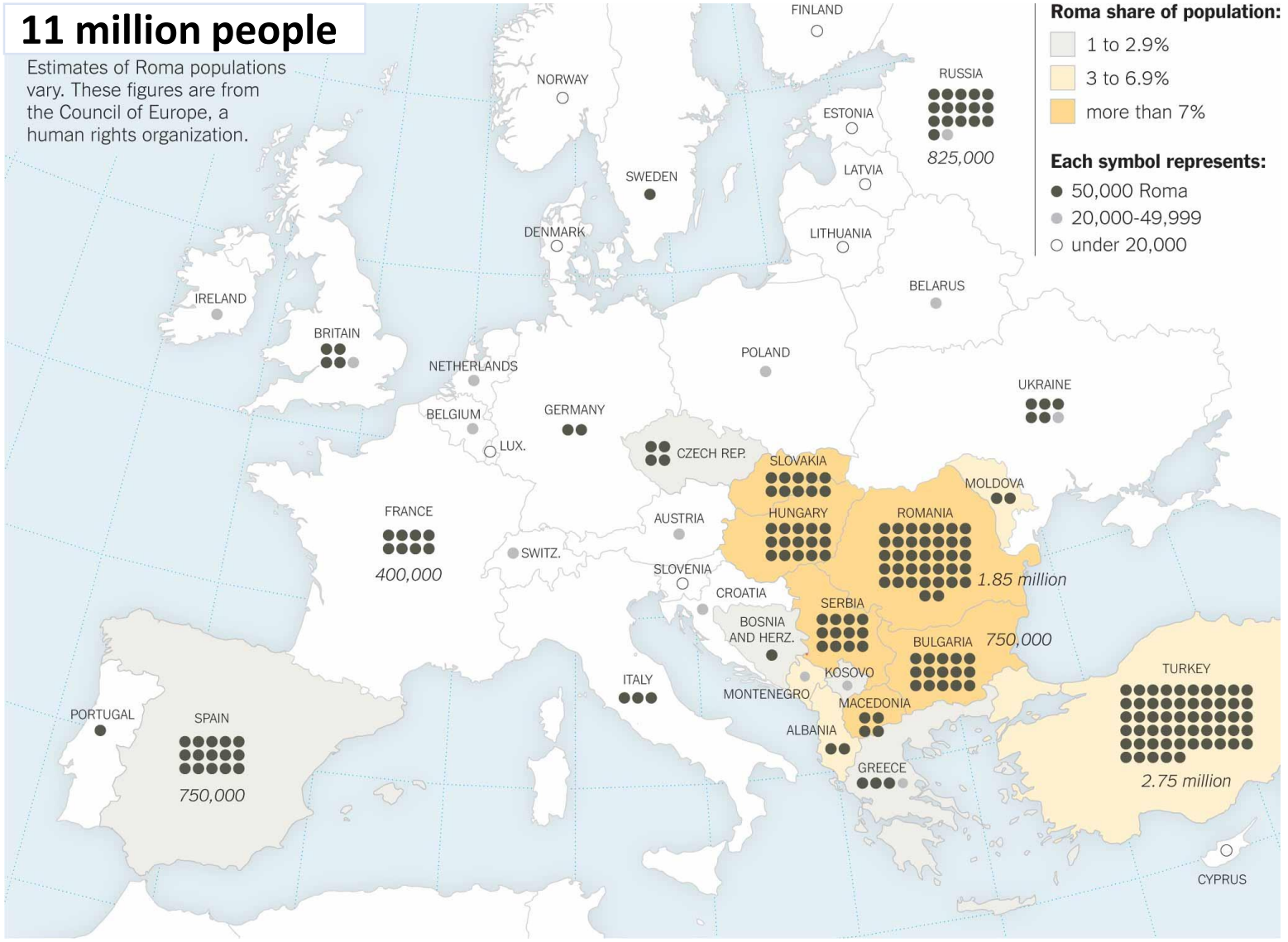
Why immigrants? Why Roma?

- Roma: one of the largest and poorest ethnic minorities in Europe
- Why in common section in this conference?
- Similarities: immigrants in WE – Roma in CEE
  - strongly rejected by the majority, prejudice
  - no matter they may have born in WE (2nd, 3rd generation)
  - no matter they have been living in CEE for centuries
- Representative survey of Hungarian adolescents (≈18 year old), 2009
  („agree" + „strongly agree" responses to standard prejudice questions, HLCS 4th wave)

„There is an inclination for criminality in their blood."	69%
„Their increasing share in population poses a danger to society."	76%
„They cannot coexist with majority. Must be segregated."	43%

Geography

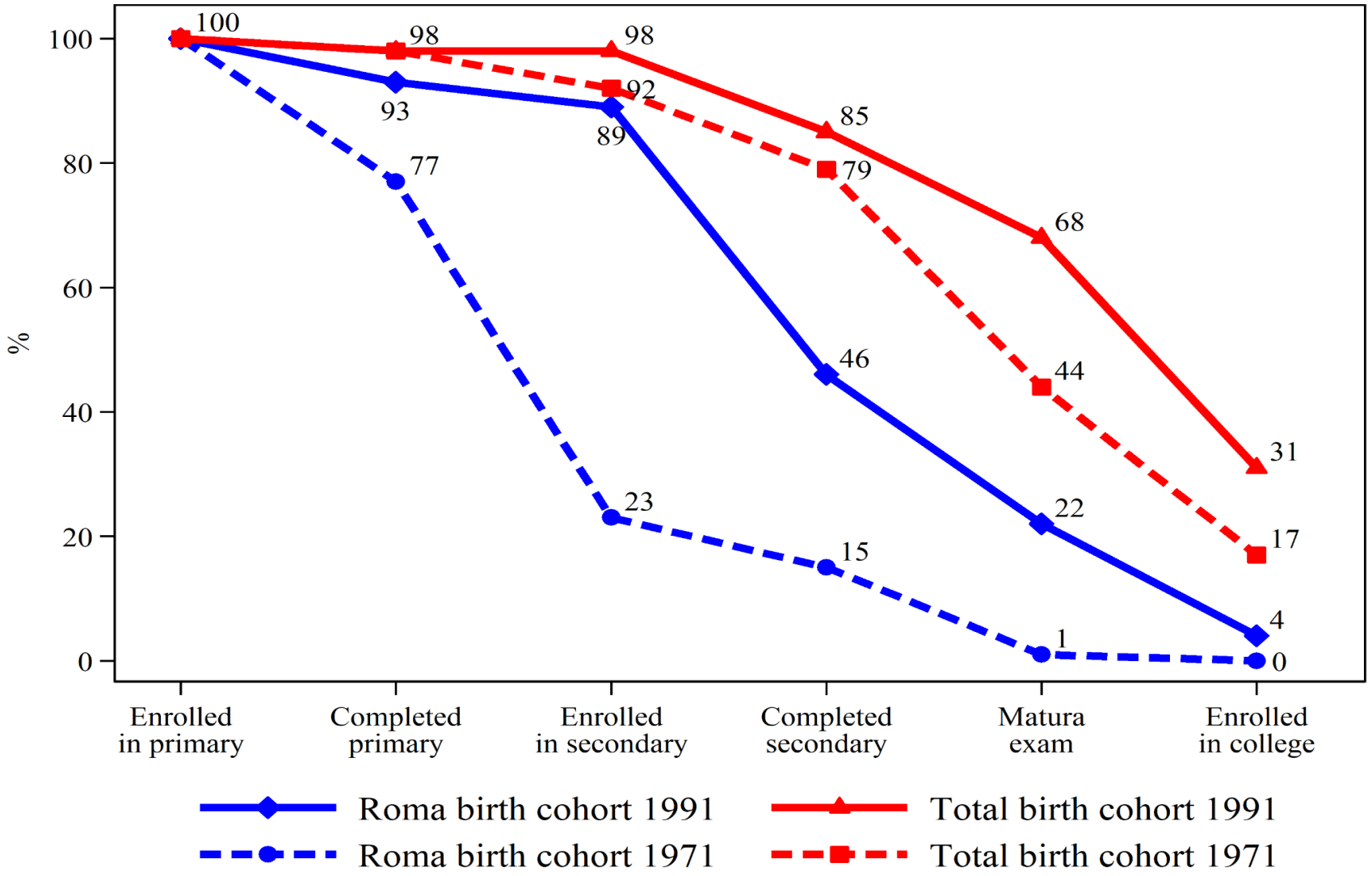


Council of Europe 2012 estimates: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-607_en.htm
Infographics: New York Times, October 19, 2013

Why Hungary? Why not other CEE countries?

- Ethnically homogenous majority + significant Roma minority
- Good admin data, researcher-friendly data environment only in Hungary
  - e.g.: Hungarian Census 2011: good ethnic markers, multiple identity
  - safe data matching allowed across admin data & censuses | surveys
  - researchers have access to individual admin data
  - other CEE: no good ethnic markers, limited access
- High quality survey data with good ethnic markers only in Hungary
  - e.g.: HLCS 2006-2012: NLSY-type panel for 8th grade students in 2006
- Harmonized data across countries exist but not really useful
  - FRA-UNDP, 2011, 2016: cross-country comparisons: 11 European countries
  - focus on segregated areas, integrated Roma not in the sampling frame
  - not enough variability in the middle and upper range of social indicators

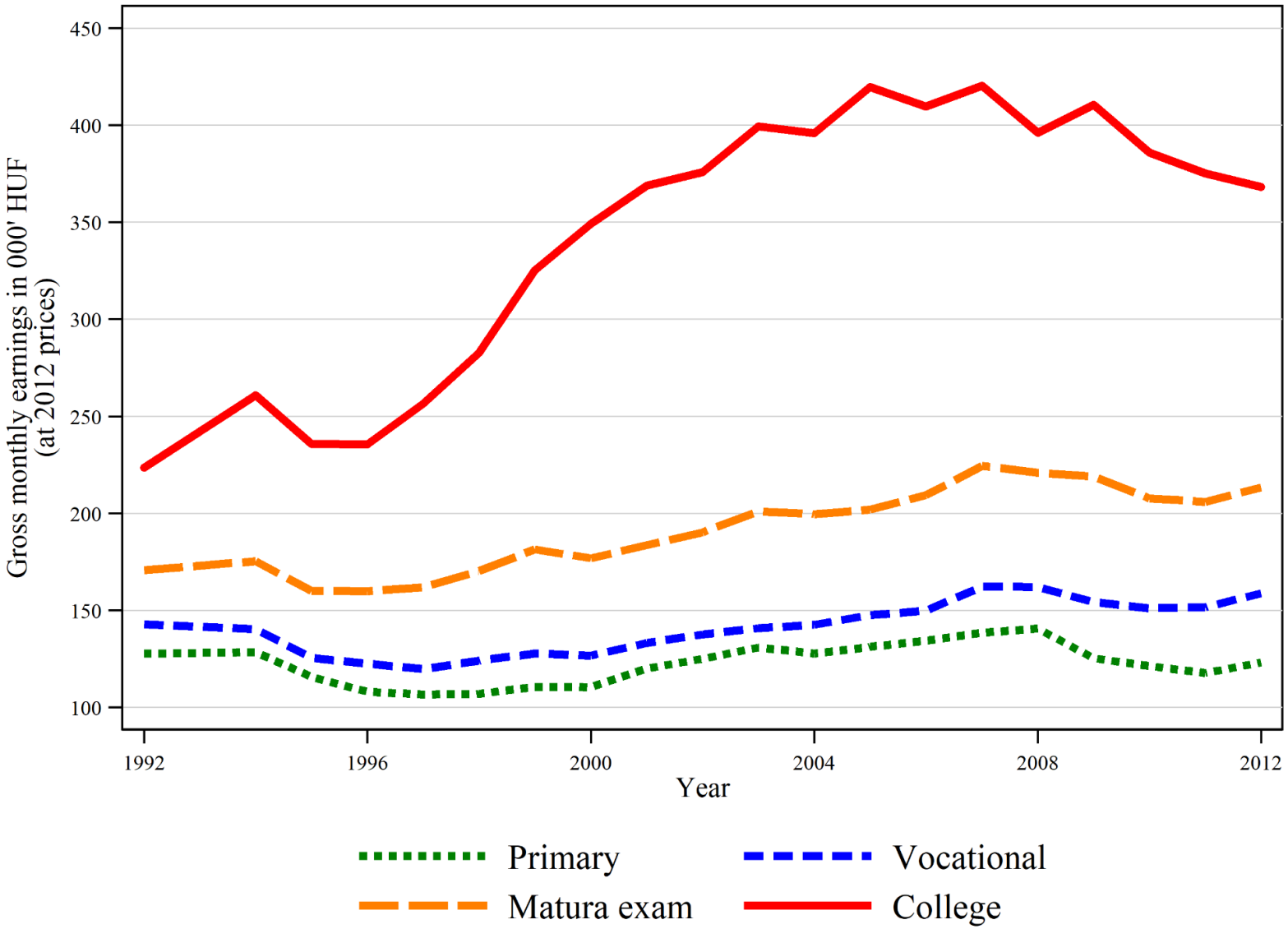
History: narrowing the gap, mostly at lowest levels



Sources:

- Censuses 2001, 2011
- National representative Roma survey 1993
- HLCS 2006-2012

History: education matters most where gap remains large



Source:

- national representative Wage Surveys, National Employment Office, 1992-2012

Roma - non-Roma social gaps*, Hungary

	Roma	Non Roma	Gap
Low birth weight (< 2500 gr)[a]	14%	6%	+ 8%
Tests scores (Reading, Math), 8th grade, age 14-15[b]	.	.	-1 SD-unit
PRIMARY: dropped / started[c]	7%	2%	+ 5%
SECONDARY: dropped / started[d]	48%	9%	+ 39%
COLLEGE: enrolled / started SECOND.[e]	5%	35%	- 30%
Has permanent job, age 25-39[c]	25%	72%	- 47%

* Enrollment in Primary / birth cohort: both complete (Census 2011); Enrolled in Second./completed Primary: 97-99% (HLCS 2006-2012)

[a] National Vital Statistics 2008-2010 - Census 2011 matched files, in the % of all live births, ethnic markers from Census.

[b] End of Hungarian Primary: 8th grade, NABC 2006 – HLCS 2006-2012 matched files, [c] Census 2011, ethnic markers exist.

[d,e] Secondary: any type (vocational or academic track), by the age of 20-21; HLCS 2006-2012,

NABC: National Assessment of Basic Competences (full cohort admin data, 6th, 8th, 10th grades);

HLCS: Hungarian Life Course Survey (NLSY-type panel survey; national representative sample of 8th grade students in 2006; N ≈ 10.000, 2006-2012; ethnic markers exist)

Empirical studies: results in nutshell

- Test score gaps at 8th grade: -1 SD unit
  - mainly due to parental poverty and social disadvantages
  - fully mediated by 3 transmission mechanisms, in order of importance
    - lack of cognitively stimulating home environment
    - inferior school environment: school segregation
    - adverse birth outcome and poor health
  - ethnic residual is small: Roma, non Roma with similar social background perform in school similarly

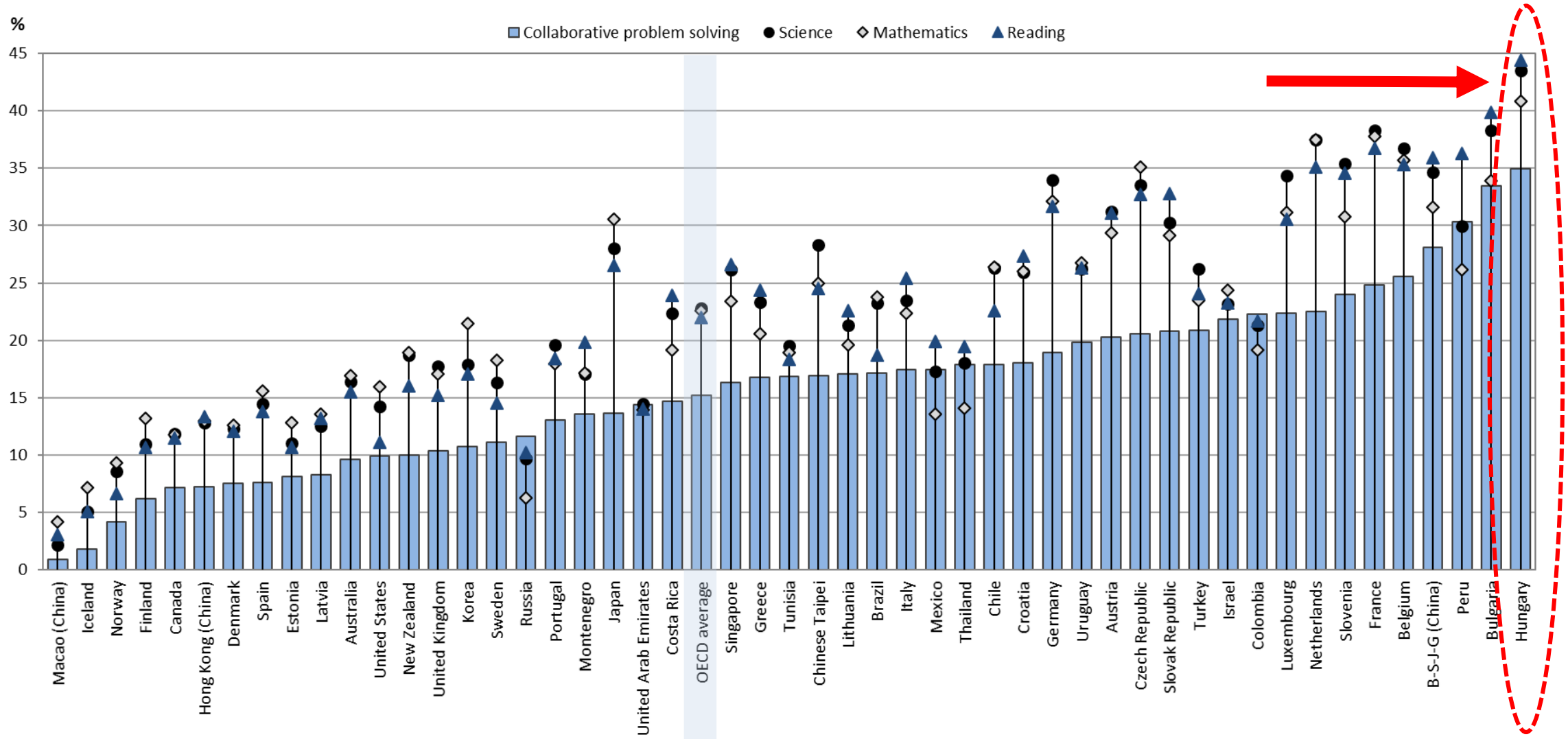
Empirical studies: results in nutshell, cont.

- Gap in secondary dropout rate: ≈ +40%
- Gap in college enrollment: -30 %
- If conditioned on 8th grade test results, GPA, class FE
  - 40 percent of the secondary gap disappears
  - 80 percent of the college gap disappears
  - large part of the gaps comes from age 0-14

Lessons from the study of Roma students in Hungary

- Future research in other CEE: How they relate to Hungarian results
  - data (role of OECD, EU, WB)
- Low educational performace of Roma: a large part a problem of poverty and exclusion
  - has little to do with ethnicity *per se*
- Intergenerational transmission of poverty
  - mediated by well known factors from educational & social policy literature
  - interventions can use worldwide accumulated standard knowlege
- What if the public school system cannot improve performance of the poor?
  - supporting evidence from cross-country comparisons, PISA 2015

How well social disadvantage predicts PISA scores?



Percentage of variation in performance explained by students' and schools' socio-economic profile
The socio-economic status is measured by the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS).
Countries and economies are ranked in ascending order of how well socio-economic status predicts performance in collaborative problem solving.
Source: OECD, PISA 2015 Database, Table V.4.13f.

Lessons from the study of Roma students in Hungary, cont.

- two components of social disadvantage in the PISA chart
  - childrens' SES + sorting poor children into segregated schools
- segregated schools and classes
  - deprives them of motivating peers
  - creates school environments in which teaching is difficult
  - segregation of Roma 8th graders (HLCS 2006)
    - classes difficult to teach: poor reading skills of the majority of classmates
    - Roma - non-Roma gap in attending such classes: 40% = 58% - 18%
    - even within small commuting distances (with place of residence FE): gap is still 28%
- universal free school choice (introduced in 1993 in Hungary) may play a role
  - OECD (2012, p.65): „If not well designed, school choice programmes can increase segregation and inequalities."
  - Next slide: rules of game of universal free school choice in Hungary

Universal free school choice for 1-8th grade students

- Regular primary track (primary: 1-8th grades), 90% of 8th graders
  - geographical assignment for all students
  - district school cannot refuse
  - students can apply for any out-of-district school
  - if admitted public funding follows the student
  - schools can refuse out-of-district students (only in lack of places, no admission exam)
  - If applications exceed number of places?
    - First come first served? No. Lottery? No.
    - Priorities for disadvantaged students? No.
    - Then what? Anything the school principal decides.
- Advanced academic track (starting from 5th|7th grade), 10% of 8th graders
  - extra channel for „gifted" students: 6 or 8 year long academic high schools
  - if admitted public funding follows the student
  - admission rules
    - mandatory : national standardized written exam
    - may use prior GPA or non-standardized oral exam

Universal free school choice in Hungary, cont.

- Social background affects school choice very selectively
  - with college educated mother: 50% go to out-of-district school
  - with not higher than vocational HS (lower half of the society): only 20%
  - raw gap: 30%; bulk of the gap preserves within small commuting distances
    - not only composition effect, with place of residence FE gap is still 20%
    - arbitrariness of admission rules; school are interested in easy-to-teach students
    - commuting costs, poor information, lack of preparation in advance may play a role
- Flanders experienced similar problems with unregulated school choice until 2003. (Musset 2012: 21-22)
  - rules were changed afterwards
- How to reduce the impact of disadvantage in school choice? 2 classes of options
  - changing the rules of game (as in Flanders)
  - compensatory interventions, endless list, some examples:
    - using incentives to enhance school choice among the poor
    - mixing students within schools, dismantling within-school segregation => IEP in Hungary

Integrated Educational Program, (IEP), Hungary 2005-2007

- A well designed Roma integration program: 2nd=>4th, 6th=>8th grades
  - 30-30 treated-control schools matched, altogether ≈ 4,000 students
  - mixing students of previously segregated classes, extra funding conditioned on mixing
  - *combined* with quality educational elements in the treatment group
  - impact evaluation? Yes, but only the impact of the *whole* package
  - cannot separate the impacts of different program elements
- Some impacts (6th through 8th grade), diff-in-diff results (Kézdi-Surányi, 2009)

Cognitive / non-cognitive skills	Roma	Non Roma
Reading test	+ns	+ns
Control over life events (Rotter)	**+**	+
Coping with difficulties (Lazarus-Folkman)	**+**	+
Positive self esteem (Harter)	+	**+**
Acceptance of the *OTHER* ethnic group	-ns	**+**
School cont. after 8th grade in academic HS track	**+**	+

Integrated Educational Program, (IEP), Hungary 2005-2007, cont.

- Additional results
  - The program demonstrates positive results of modern
    - student-centered teaching methods and
    - school management
- History of the program after 2007: declining phase
  - scaled up to several hundred primary schools
  - but in a discouraging way
    - interethnic mixing of students no longer a condition of funding
      - incentive for schools / school providers to preserve existing segregation
    - no longer central expertise in implementation
    - no longer quality control
    - no follow up of students, no measurement
  - program still exist this way

Summary

Some general advice for future planners of educational interventions that aim at helping Roma students in Europe

- Adapt what's known to work for disadvantaged children in general.
- Don't try reinventing the wheel by searching „good practices" for the Roma in particular.
- Compensatory programs can really help some.
- But addressing systemic problems can be more relevant. They are better solved by systemic means.
  - School choice - discussed here
  - Teacher selection, teacher education - in lack of time not discussed here

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