Community schools.
Policy initiatives and practices in Romanian context

23rd of May 2013
EUNEC seminar, Brussels

Magda Balica, Institute of Educational Sciences, Romania

Understanding the context

History

highly centralised educational system, strict hierarchical decision, embedded ideology, limited school autonomy

School culture

Education seen as a chance offered to all and less a community service

Planned economy

Large enterprises parenting schools, workplaces ensured for all graduates, strict birth control and increased demography leading to development of new school infrastructure

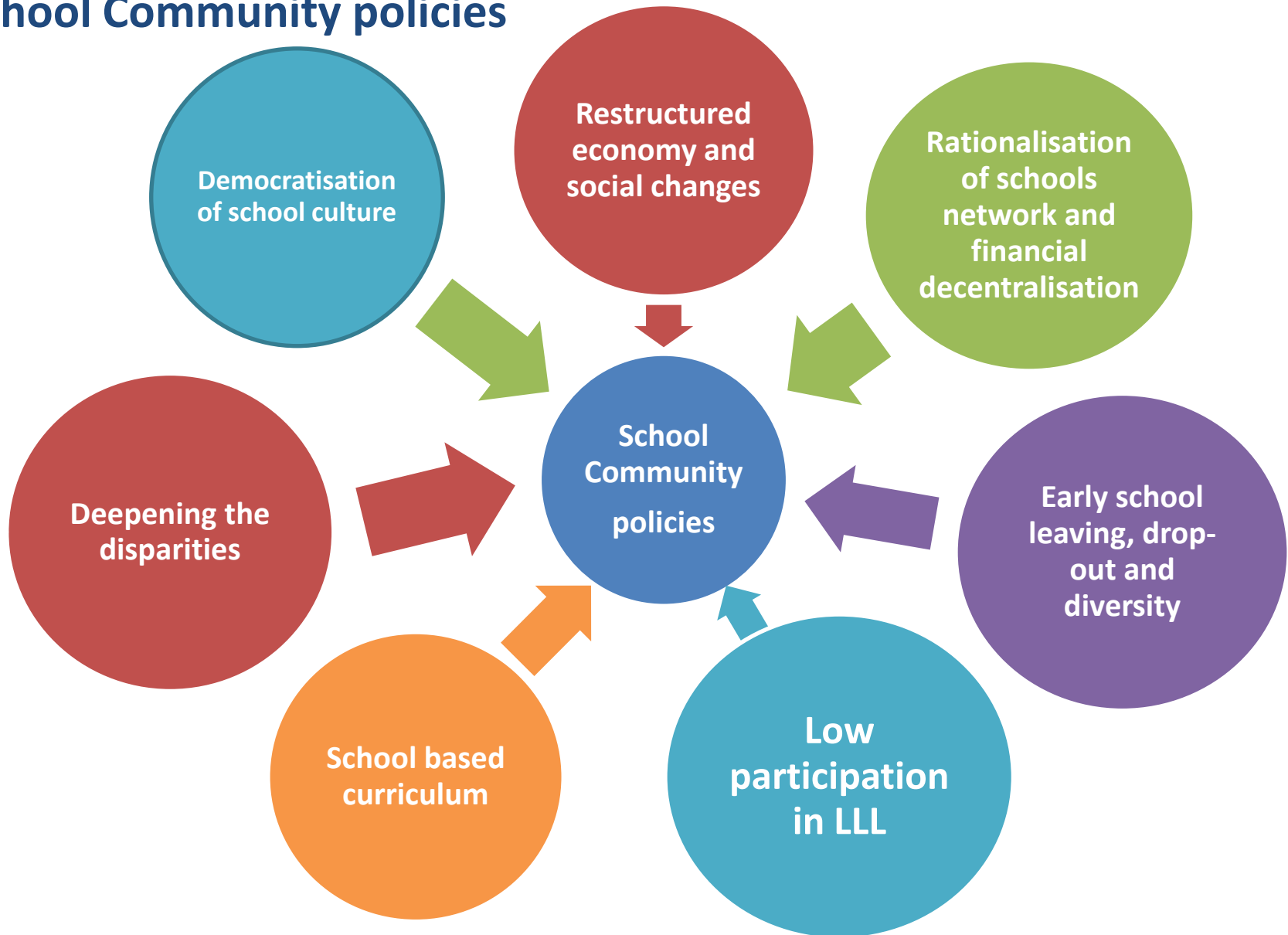## Low social capital

Underdevelopment of third sector

School disparities

Rural versus urban
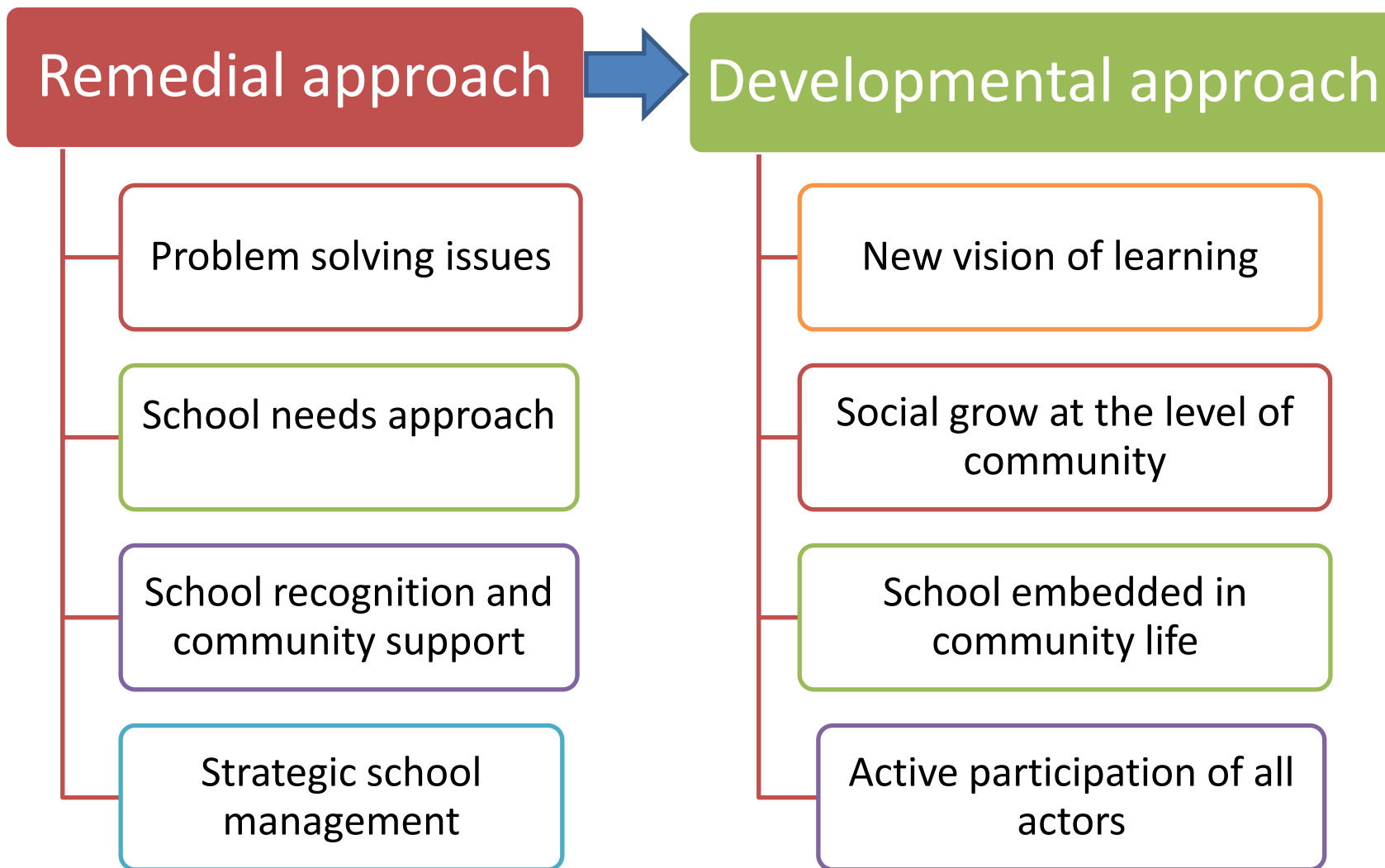Mainstream vs Special education
Ethnic segregation

Diversity?

Not a concept under debate…

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Context factors relevant for emerging School Community policies

Democratisation of school culture

Restructured economy and social changes

Rationalisation of schools network and financial decentralisation

Deepening the disparities

School Community policies

Early school leaving, drop-out and diversity

School based curriculum

Low participation in LLL

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School community approaches

Remedial approach	Developmental approach
Problem solving issues	New vision of learning
School needs approach	Social grow at the level of community
School recognition and community support	School embedded in community life
Strategic school management	Active participation of all actors

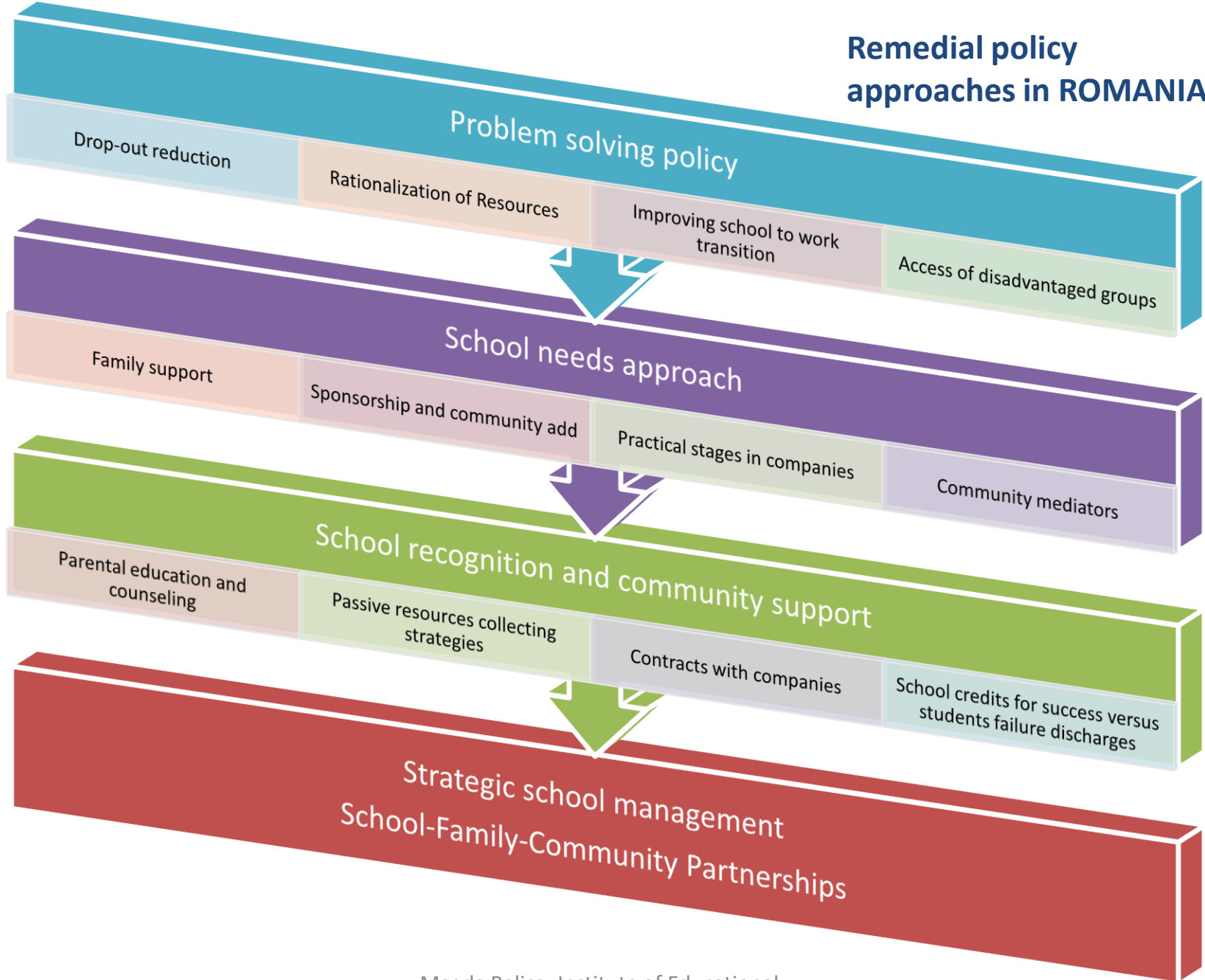Magda Balica, Institute of Educational Sciences, Romania

School community policies

- **Focusing on problems**
  - Quality of education
  - Access and equity
  - Standards and assessment of schools
  - Social disparities
- **Remedial policy solutions**
  - Focus on specific target groups and communities
  - Rationality of costs
  - Involving community in the educational discourse

Remedial policy approaches in ROMANIA

Problem solving policy

Drop-out reduction

Rationalization of Resources

Improving school to work transition

Access of disadvantaged groups

School needs approach

Family support

Sponsorship and community add

Practical stages in companies

Community mediators

School recognition and community support

Parental education and counseling

Passive resources collecting strategies

Contracts with companies

School credits for success versus students failure discharges

Strategic school management
School-Family-Community Partnerships

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Emerging developmental policy initiatives for School Community in Romania

Clear and coherent policy for IVET schools: School-companies partnerships in planning, monitoring and evaluation
- Local and regional school planning
- IVET schools networks
- Local and regional planning committees

School-based curriculum
- EPA school networks – adapted curriculum
- Civic education and other optional courses on community participation
- Extracurricular activities

A "Different School" program
- 1 week of learning activities into community

"School after school" program
- After school learning activities with community contribution

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New Law on National Education 2011 – a framework for emerging policies on School Community in Romania

School - family relation
educational contract
between parents and school

School-local authority partnership including managerial responsibilities

Networks of schools serving the community

LLL Centres
School hosting multi-functional LLL Centres based on community needs analyses

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Challenges for school community developmental approach

Learning culture

Rather closed school culture (ivory tour)

Low experience of networking and sharing resources

Insufficient decentralization

Education a priority more a discourse than a reality

Assuming facilitation role at the community level

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How do we measure school community success?

School community at work….

Community representatives gathering….

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Home visit...
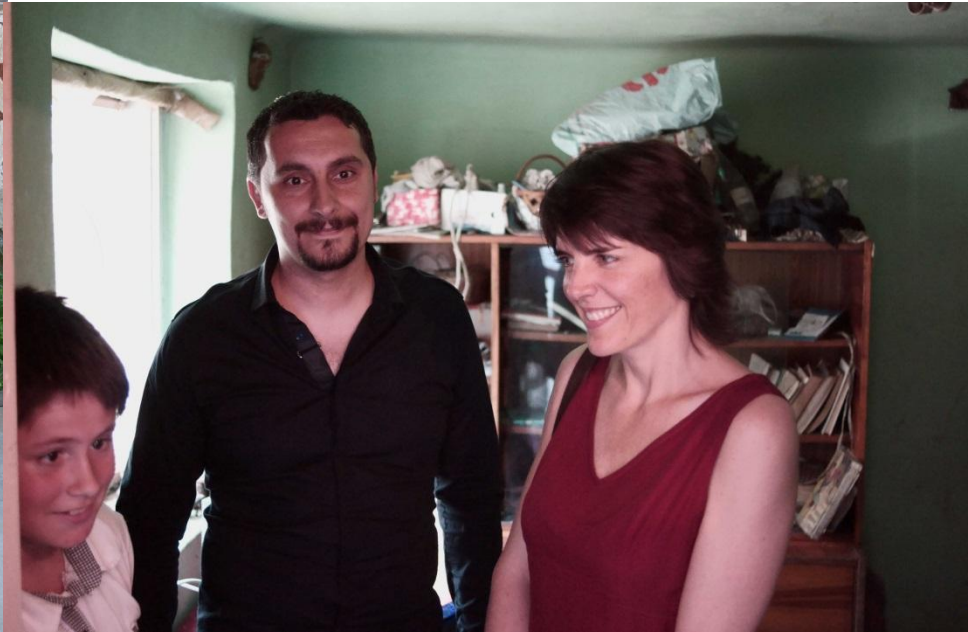
Community values, traditions, participation and joy…

Thank you!
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