

**COUNTRY VET REPORT**

**2009**

**ROMANIA**

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## 1.1 Political and socio-economic context

Full name: Romania

Population: 21.6 million (via UN, 2006)

Capital: Bucharest

Area: 238,391 sq km (92,043 sq miles)

Major language: Romanian

Major religion: Christianity

Life expectancy: 67 years (men), 74 years (women) (UN)

Monetary unit: 1 new leu = 10000 bani

Main exports: Textiles and footwear, metal products, machinery, minerals

Romania is situated in South-East Central Europe, North of the Balkan Peninsula, on the Lower Danube, within and outside the Carpathian arch, bordering on the Black Sea.[3] Almost all of the Danube Delta is located within its territory. It shares a border with Hungary and Serbia to the west, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova to the northeast, and Bulgaria to the south.

With a surface area of 238.391 square kilometres (92,043 sq mi), Romania is the largest country in southeastern Europe and the twelfth-largest in Europe. A large part of Romania's border with Serbia and Bulgaria is formed by the Danube. The Danube is joined by the Prut River, which forms the border with the Republic of Moldova. The Danube flows into the Black Sea within Romania's territory forming the Danube Delta, the second largest and the best preserved delta in Europe, and a biosphere reserve and a biodiversity World Heritage Site.[84]

Romania is divided into forty-one counties (sing. *județ*, pl. *județe*), plus the municipality of Bucharest (București) -which has equal rank. Each county is administered by a county council (*consiliu județean*), responsible for local affairs and is further subdivided into cities (sing. *oraș*, pl. *orașe*) and communes (sing. *comună*, pl. *Comune*). There are a total of 319 cities and 2686 communes in Romania<sup>1</sup>. Bucharest have six sectors who elects a mayor and a local council.

The NUTS-3 level divisions reflect Romania's administrative-territorial structure, and correspond to the 41 counties, and the Bucharest municipality. Cities and communes are NUTS-5 level divisions. The country currently does not have NUTS-4 level divisions, but there are plans to make such associating neighboring localities for better coordination of local development and assimilation of national and European funds.

The 41 counties and Bucharest are grouped into eight development regions corresponding to NUTS-2 divisions in the European Union. There are also proposals to use four NUTS-1 level divisions; they would be called macroregions (Romanian: *Macroregiune*). NUTS-1 and -2 divisions have no administrative capacity and are instead used for co-ordinating regional development projects and statistical purposes.

- Macroregiunea 1:
  - Nord-Vest (6 counties; roughly northern Transylvania)
  - Centru (6 counties; roughly southern Transylvania)

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<sup>1</sup>[Administrative Organisation of Romanian Territory, on December 31, 2005](#), Romanian National Institute of Statistics. [Report](#).

- Macroregiunea 2:
  - Nord-Est (6 counties; Moldavia except the counties of Vrancea and Galați)
  - Sud-Est (6 counties; lower Danube, including Dobrudja)
- Macroregiunea 3:
  - Sud (7 counties; the core of Muntenia)
  - București (1 county and Bucharest)
- Macroregiunea 4:
  - Sud-Vest (5 counties; roughly Oltenia)
  - Vest (4 counties; southwestern Transylvania, or Banat plus Arad and Hunedoara counties).

After a decade of post-independence economic problems, Romania made economic reforms such as low flat tax rates in 2005 and joined the European Union in January 1, 2007. While Romania's income level remains one of the lowest in the European Union, reforms have increased the growth speed. Romania is now an upper-middle income country economy. Romania also joined NATO on March 29, 2004, and is also a member of the Latin Union, of the Francophonie of the OSCE and an associate member of the CPLP. In 2007, Sibiu, a city in Transylvania, was chosen as a European Capital of Culture. Romania is a semi-presidential unitary state.

Romania has the 9th largest territory and the 7th largest population (with 21.5 million people<sup>2</sup> among the European Union member states. Its capital and largest city is Bucharest the 6th largest city in the EU with 1.9 million people. The metropolitan area of Bucharest has a population of about 2.2 million. There are several plans to increase further its metropolitan area to about 20 times the area of the city proper.

There are 5 more cities in Romania, with a population of round 300,000, that are also present in EU top 100 most populous cities. These are: Iași, Cluj-Napoca, Timișoara, Constanța, and Craiova. More the 1.9 million people live in the capital Bucharest. Population density equals 90 persons per square km.

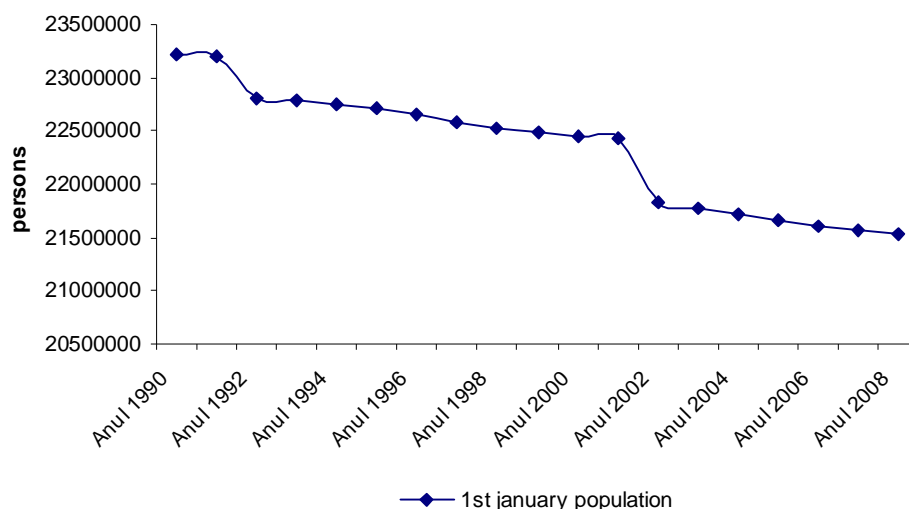
## 1.2 Population and demographics

Romania (RO) covers an area of 238.391 km<sup>2</sup> and the population was 21.5 million people in 2009. The population of Romania has been constantly decreasing since 1990. We can observe two period of pronounced decreasing 1991-1992 when the total population of Romania has decreasing from 23.2 millions of persons to 21.8 millions and the period 2001-2002 from 22.4 millions of persons to 21.8 millions.

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<sup>2</sup> ["Report on the Nominations from Luxembourg and Romania for the European Capital of Culture 2007"](#) (pdf). The Selection Panel for the European Capital of Culture (ECOC) 2007.

**The total population at 1st January in the period 1990-2008**



At the end of 2008 it equaled 21528 thousand and for the 1990-2008 period it has average decreased by 100 thousand<sup>3</sup>. Decrease in number is the result of the negative natural population growth (deaths are greater in number than births) and the foreign migration processes. The absolute number and relative share of the population at school age is also decreasing. For the 2000-2008 periods the biggest decrease in number can be seen with population at school age-7-14 from 2536 thousand to 1793 thousand.

The percentage of the population age 15-18 is also decreasing, which in turn affects the number of students at secondary vocational schools. During the last 8 years the absolute number of the population age 15-19 is also expected by average of 1650 thousand per year so as to drop down to 1485 thousand people. The negative natural population growth and the foreign migration have caused great changes in the age structure of the population. These changes, which are called ageing of the population, result in increase the share of older age groups and decrease of the share of children and young people.

Parallel to the constant decrease in number of the population as a whole, as well as the share of people at school age, during the past few years certain positive trends of the demographic development could also be witnessed as an increase of the birth rate, decrease of children mortality. For example the birth rate<sup>4</sup> for 1000 persons has increased- from 9.7 in 2002 to 10.2 in 2006, whereas infantile mortality rate has been reduced from 18.6 in 2000 to 12 per 1000 persons in 2007.

Forecast data show that the ageing process of the population will continue during the next twenty years. Relative share of the population age 0-24 is expected to decrease. Population ageing is evident in the age index (the ratio of population aged 65+ to 0-14-year-olds), which is expected to rise from 96.63% in 2008 to 118.78% in 2020. At the same time, the burden on the economically active population expressed by the dependency index (the ratio of population aged 65+ and 0-14 to the 15-64 age group) is expected to rise from 42.82% in 2008 to 47.28% in 2020.

Population ageing will have consequences to education and training systems. The role of adult education and training will increase considerably. On the other hand, due to demographic decline, schools (especially basic and secondary schools) will face the problem of low numbers of young students. This process already started and secondary VET schools are supported by national and regional authorities and by European structural funds to develop their capacity for adult education.

<sup>3</sup> Data source – NSI, Population statistics [www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro) , Tempo database

<sup>4</sup> [www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro), Tempo database

**Table 1. Projection of the population structure by age groups**

Age group	Population(thousands)				Population structure (%)			
	2008	2010	2020	2030	2008	2010	2020	2030
<b>0 – 14</b>	3259.7	3221.6	3057	2596.8	15.22	15.10	14.67	12.95
<b>15 – 64</b>	14968.7	14926.6	14145.5	13392.1	69.87	69.97	67.90	66.80
<b>65+</b>	3194.9	3185.6	3631.3	4060.2	14.91	14.93	17.43	20.25
<b>Total</b>	21 423.4	21 333.8	20 833.8	20 049.1	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Eurostat, EUROPOP2008 convergence scenario

**Table 2. Projected old-age dependency ratio %**

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	2055	2060
EU (27 countries)	25.9	28.26	31.05	34.23	38.04	42.07	45.36	48	50.42	52.45	53.47
Romania	21.34	22.54	25.67	29.11	30.32	35.37	40.75	47.77	54	62.67	65.27

Source: Eurostat.

This indicator is defined as the projected number of persons aged 65 and over expressed as a percentage of the projected number of persons aged between 15 and 64. If we take the EU 27 countries, we will see that in 2010 the proportion will be 1 to 4, meaning 1 retired against four employed/active population; whereas in 2060, the proportion will be 2 to 2, meaning 2 retired against 2 employed/active population. In case of Romania, in 2000 the old-age dependency ratio was about 19.3% and in 2008 was 21.3%. In 2020, the value 25.67% of old-age dependency ratio reveals the fact that 4 employees will support 1 retired and in 2050 the proportion will be 2 to 2, meaning 2 employees will support 2 retired.

### 1.3 Economy and labour market indicators

Analyzing the level of employment by economic activity, in the second quarter of 2008, we can observe the fact that the highest proportion is occupied by primary sector and utilities with 31.7%, followed by manufacturing (20.5%), distribution and transport (20.3%) and non marketed services (12.9%). The area of business and other services have the smallest percentage 6.8%.

The EU-27 countries has the highest degree of employment in activities as distribution and transport (22.2%), non marketed services (21.2%), business and other services (17.1%) and manufacturing (15.5%). Unlike Romania, the EU has the smallest rate of employment in the activity of primary sector and utilities (table 3).

The rate of employment in Romania is smaller than in the EU-27, but it has been declining with slightly in the period 2002-2007.

Analyzing the level of employment for the level of education ISCED 0-2 in Romania we can observe the fact that it follows a descendent trend in the period 2002-2007, registering the value of 21.2% in 2002 and 16.5% in 2007 for the young people, 48.4% in 2002 and 46.7% in 2007 for the age group 50-64 years.

The employment rate measured for education level ISCED 3-4 reveals the fact that it decrease for the age group 15-24 from 37.8(2002) to 31.8(2007), and it increase for the age groups 25-49 years.

At the level ISCED 5-6 the employment it increase for all age groups for the period 2002-2007 (table 4).

The unemployment rate in Romania is smaller than in the EU-27 for the age group 25-49 and 50-64, excepting the young people for which the rate of employment is higher than in the EU-27. For young people and for the group 50-64 years, the unemployment rate has the highest level for ISCED 3-4, while for the age groups 25-49 the highest unemployment rate is registered for ISCED 0-2.

The public expenditure on education as % of GDP decreased in Romania from 3.36% in 1999 to 3.28 in 2001. Since 2002 there has been a slightly decrease in this proportion which reached 3.44% in 2003, 3.29% in 2004 and 3.48% in 2005 (in the EU-25 the proportion is higher: 5.81% in 2005).

For the primary level of education (ISCED 1), the public expenditure as % of GDP reaches the value of 1.17% in 2001, 1.26% in 2002 and it decreases to 1.2% in 2004. For the 2005 it registers the value of 1.25 % of GDP.

**Table 3. Employment by economic activity, age 15+, male and female, NACE rev.1.1.-(1000)-2008 Q2**

Classification of economic activities - NACE Rev.1.1	primary sector and utilities		manufacturing		construction		distribution and transport		business and other services		non marketed services		TOTAL
	A_B_C_E		D		F		G_H_I		J_K_O_P_Q		L_M_N		
Countries	persons	proportion	persons	proportion	persons	proportion	persons	proportion	persons	proportion	persons	proportion	persons
EU27	11508,8	5,2%	34500,5	<b>15,5%</b>	16225,2	7,3%	49200,5	<b>22,2%</b>	38025,2	<b>17,1%</b>	47045,7	<b>21,2%</b>	221873,1
RO	3005,6	<b>31,7%</b>	1943,3	<b>20,5%</b>	745,9	7,9%	1924,4	<b>20,3%</b>	646	6,8%	1227,8	<b>12,9%</b>	9493,2

Source: Eurostat.

**Table 4. Employment rates by age groups and highest level of education attained (%)**

		2002			2005			2007		
		15_24	25_49	50_64	15_24	25_49	50_64	15_24	25_49	50_64
European Union (27 countries)	total	36.7(i)	77.3(i)	50.2(i)	36.1	78.1	53.3	37.4	80	55.6
	isced0_2	25.7(i)	65.9(i)	40.5(i)	24.7	66.2	42.5	25.3	67.5	44.2
	isced3_4	47.8(i)	79.1(i)	54.3(i)	47.1	79.4	56.8	48.9	81.4	59.2
	isced5_6	61.7(i)	88.2(i)	71.8(i)	60.5	88	73.6	62	89	74.9
	no answer	15.3(i)	73.4(i)	37.9(i)	4.6	73.7	5	5.1	74.6	6.6
Romania	total	29.1 (b)	76(b)	47.5(b)	24.9	74.9	49.6	24.4	76.3	51
	isced0_2	21.2(b)	66.7(b)	48.4(b)	16.6	59.9	47	16.5	61.1	46.7
	isced3_4	37.8(b)	76.3(b)	43.1(b)	34.3	76.2	48.3	31.8	77.3	50.3
	isced5_6	61.7(b)	90.8(b)	62.1(b)	61.2	91	68.9	63.4	92.5	71.6

Source: Eurostat

Legend:

isced 0\_2; 3\_4; 5\_6 refer to the ISCED levels of education

15\_24; 25\_49; 50\_64 refer to the age groupings

b break in series

u unreliable or uncertain data



**Table 5. Unemployment rates by age groups and highest level of education attained (%)**

Country	Isced level	2002			2005			2007		
		age 15_24	age 25_49	age 50_64	age 15_24	age 25_49	age 50_64	age 15_24	age 25_49	age 50_64
European Union (27 countries)	total	17.8(i)	8.2(i)	6.6(i)	18.5	8	6.7	15.4	6.4	5.5
	isc02	19.8(i)	11.3(i)	7.4(i)	21.7	11.6	7.8	19.9	10.3	6.9
	isc34	17.5(i)	8.4(i)	7.5(i)	17.2	8.2	7.6	13.3	6.1	5.8
	isc56	12.5(i)	4.5(i)	3.5(i)	14.1	4.7	3.8	11.3	3.7	3.2
	nresp	14(i)	7.1(i)	6.7(i)	27.5	:	:	20.1	:	:
Romania	total	22.2 (b)	7.5 (b)	3.8(b)	20.2	6.6	3.6	20.1	5.8	3.5
	isc02	18.2(b)	7.2(b)	2.6(b)	16.3	8.9	2.9	18.6	9.2	3.2
	isc34	25(b)	8.2(b)	5.9(b)	22.5	6.7	4.9	21	5.7	4.3
	isc56	19.8(b)	3.7(b)	2.3(b)	22.1 (u)	3.5	:	21.1(u)	2.4	:

Source: Eurostat

Legend:

isc02; isc34; isc56 refer to the ISCED levels of education

15\_24; 25\_49; 50\_64 refer to the age groupings

b break in series

u unreliable or uncertain data

**Table 6. Total public expenditure on education, at secondary level of education, by programme orientation, 2005**

	ISC 234			ISC 234_GEN			ISC 234_PVVO		
	in million EUR PPS	as % of GDP	as % of total public expenditure	in million EUR PPS	as % of GDP	as % of total public expenditure	in million EUR PPS	as % of GDP	as % of total public expenditure
EU25	247,426.0	2.3	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
RO	1,322.6	0.8	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

Source: Eurostat

ISC 234 secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary levels of education

ISC 234\_GEN general orientation programmes at secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary level of education

ISC 234\_PVVO pre-vocational and vocational orientation programmes at secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary level of education

For the secondary level of education (ISCED 2-4), the public expenditure as % of GDP reaches the value of 0.87% of GDP in 2001, 0.71% in 2003 and 0.77% of GDP in 2005.

For the tertiary level of education (ISCED 5-6), the public expenditure as % of GDP reaches the value of 0.79% of GDP in 2001, 0.70% in 2004 and 0.81% of GDP in 2005.

The total public expenditure on education as % of total public expenditure reaches the value of 8.5% in 2001, 8.9% in 2002, 10.26% in 2003, 10.07% in 2004 and 10.39% in 2005 (but this percentage is higher for EU-27 who registers the value of 10.45% at the end of 2005).

#### 1.4 Educational attainment of population

Compared to the EU-27, Romania's tackling of the early school-leaving rate leaves still a lot to desire. The proportion of the population aged **18-24 with basic or at most lower secondary education** who no longer participate in either initial or continuing education is higher than in a EU-27. We point out the fact that in Romania as well as in EU-27 the early school leaving rate is decreasing from 23.2% in 2002 for Romania to 19.2% in 2007.

**Table 7. Early school leavers: Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training<sup>5</sup>**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
EU (27 countries)	17.1	16.6	15.9	15.5	15.2	14.8
Romania	23.2	23.2	23.6 (b)	20.8	19	19.2

Source: Eurostat

Regarding the attainment level of youth education, we can see that the percentage of this indicator for Romania is smaller than for the EU-27. Per total, the share of population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education is higher in the European Union, 76.7% in 2002, 77.5% in 2005 and 78.1% in 2007. This rule is maintaining also on the sex structure. For females, this percentage have an oscillate evolution, reaching the value of 77.7% in 2002, 76.8% in 2005 and 77.7% in 2007. Instead of it, for the males the share of population that have completed upper secondary education registers a positive slope, reaching the value of 74.8% in 2002, 77.4% in 2005 and 77.1% in 2007.

**Table 9. Youth education attainment level - Percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 having completed at least upper secondary education**

	2002			2005			2007		
	total	females	males	total	females	males	total	females	males
European Union (27 countries)	76.7	79.3	74	77.5	80.2	74.9	78.1	80.8	75.5
Romania	76.3	77.7	74.8	76	76.8	75.2	77.4	77.7	77.1

Source: Eurostat

<sup>5</sup> Early school leavers refers to persons aged 18 to 24 in the following two conditions: the highest level of education or training attained is ISCED 0, 1, 2 or 3c short and respondents declared not having received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey (numerator). The denominator consists of the total population of the same age group, excluding no answers to the questions "highest level of education or training attained" and "participation to education and training". Both the numerators and the denominators come from the EU Labour Force Survey.

**Table 8. Graduates in ISCED 3-6 3-6 by field of education and sex**

Country	sex	2002			2004			2006		
		isced3vpv	isced4vpv	isced5_6	isced3vpv	isced4vpv	isced5_6	isced3vpv	isced4vpv	isced5_6
European Union (27 countries)	t	2293348 (s)	379912(s)	3165155(s)	2366669(s)	421341(s)	3595504(s)	2853434(s)	428945(s)	3846498(s)
	m	1244986(s)	171634(s)	1335544(s)	1263141(s)	195713(s)	1482590(s)	1545275(s)	199261(s)	1573072(s)
	f	1063240(s)	208279(s)	1829612(s)	1103528(s)	225628(s)	2112914(s)	1308159(s)	229685(s)	2273425(s)
Romania	t	125687	28456	93467	165393	22636	147412	245042	15899	174821
	m	79278	10160	39843	95729	8080	62964	141903	5437	71305
	f	61288	18296	53624	69664	14556	84448	103139	10462	103516

Source: Eurostat

s - Eurostat estimate

t - total; m- males; f - females

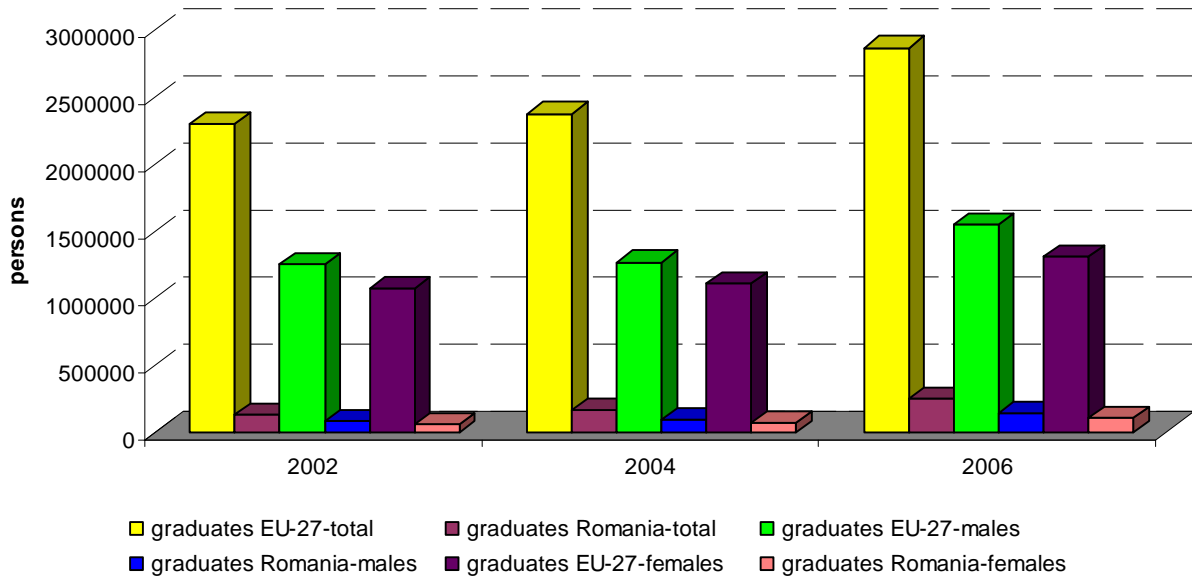
vpv - vocational and pre-vocational

**Table 10. Life-long learning (adult participation in education and training) –Percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey**

	2002			2005			2007		
	total	females	males	total	females	males	total	females	males
European Union (27 countries)	7.2	7.8	6.6	9.8	10.5	9	9.5	10.3	8.6
Romania	1	1	1	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.2

Source: Eurostat

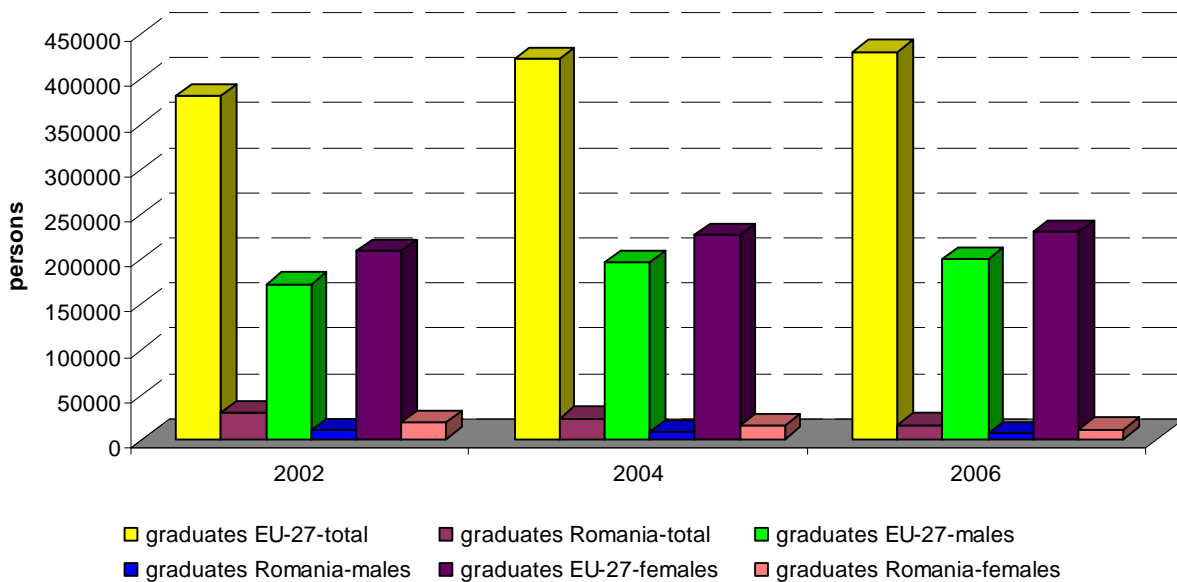
**The evolution of the graduates for the level ISCED 3vpv for EU-27 and Romania**



Source: Eurostat

Analyzing the number of graduates for the level of education ISCED 3vpv vocational and pre-vocational in Romania comparative with the average of EU-27, we can observe the fact that the difference is quite large. In the EU-27, the number of males' graduates is higher than this of the females for the period 2002-2006. In Romania, the tendency is the same: there are more men than women graduates. For this level of education, in Romania and in EU-27, we have an ascendant trend for the period 2002-2006 for total level, and also for sex structure, males and females.

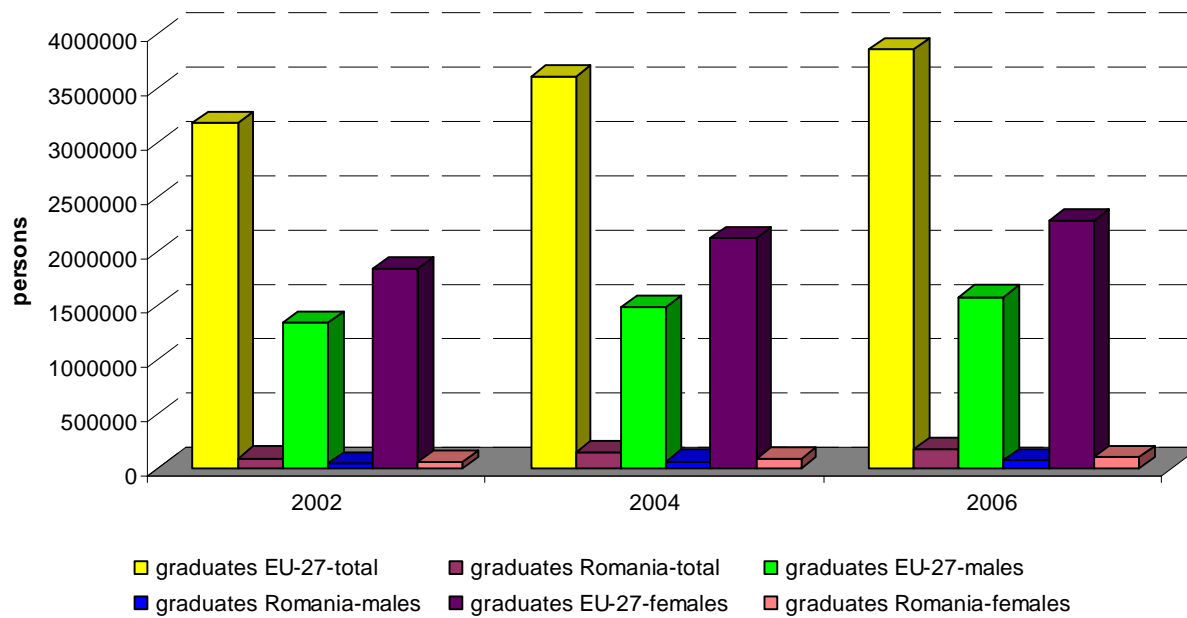
**The evolution of the graduates for the level ISCED 4vpv for EU-27 and Romania**



Source: Eurostat

For the level of education ISCED 4vpv vocational and pre-vocational, we can observe the fact the proportion of males vs. females is inverting. In EU-27 we have, a number of females graduates higher than the males graduates and this proportion is keeping also for Romania. One interesting observation refers to the fact that, while in EU-27 countries the average number of graduates for males, females and total for the ISCED 4vpv is increasing; in Romania we can see a descending trend in all the three situations total, males and females.

**The evolution of the graduates for the level ISCED 5-6 for EU-27 and Romania**



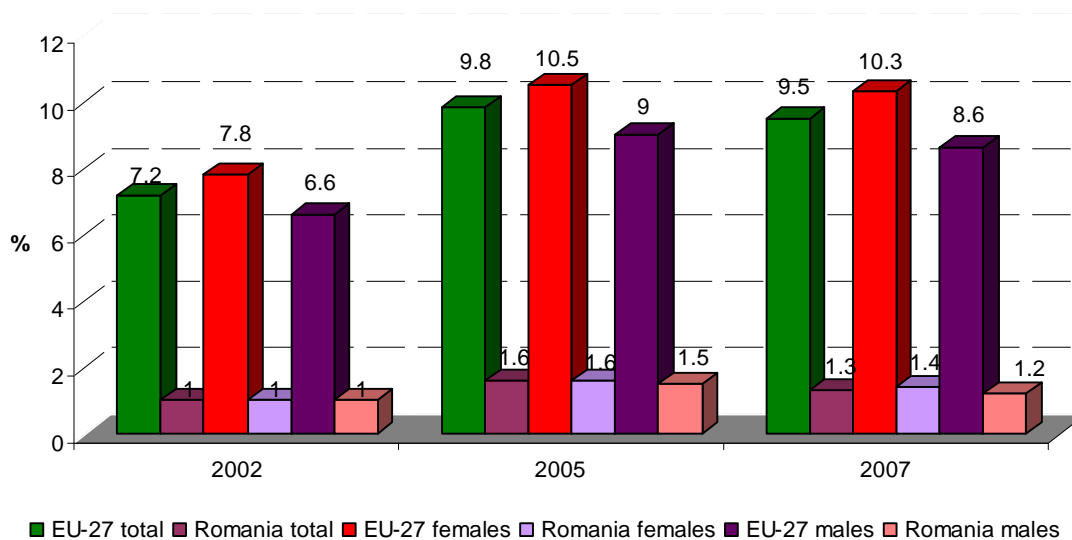
Source: Eurostat

For both the ISCED 3vpv and ISCED 5-6, the number of graduates in EU-27 and Romania is higher for women and is increasing for the period 2002-2006. Recently, the number of graduates has been on the rise for both sexes.

Analyzing the evolution of the number of Romanian graduates for the period 2002-2006 for the three level of education ISCED 3vpv, ISCED 4vpv and ISCED 5-6 we can observe the fact that the number of men graduates is higher than the number of women for the ISCED 3vpv, and this ratio is inverting for the higher levels of education as ISCED 4vpv and ISCED 5-6.

The conclusion is that in Romania we have more women graduating the colleges and universities than men.

### Percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training



Source: Eurostat

Regarding the life long learning-percentage of the population aged 25-64 participating in education and training we can observe that in the year 2002 the share of population for females and males is the same, but for the following years the male ratio is getting lower.

### The participation rates for the employees in VET mobility programmes by age in 2005



Source: National Institute of Statistics, Tempo database

The participation rate is the highest (34.4%) for the young persons with the age under 25 years. By contrary, the persons over 55 years have the lowest rate of participation to VET programmes.

## 1.5 Definitions

The terms concerning education and training are not legally defined and in most cases they are not even clearly identified. Therefore, the terms used do not differ from the European or international definitions.

## **2.1 Objectives and priorities of the national policy development areas of VET**

### **2.1.1 National LLL strategy**

Romania's National LLL strategy is part of the Romanian Government Short and Medium Term Strategy of Continuing Vocational Training 2005-2010.

The Strategy was elaborated under the Phare Twinning Project "Support for MLSSF for CVT" – Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family (MLSSF) from Romania and Ministry of Education from Denmark – and approved by the Romanian Government through G.D. no. 875/2005:

- The main partners were: National Adult Training Board (NATB), National Agency for employment (NAE), Ministry of Education Research and Innovation, Social Partners;
- A related operational plan has been implemented from 2006;
- The goal consists of increasing participation in education and training of the population of age 25-64 to 7% until 2010 through:
- **Strategic Objective 1** – To facilitate the access to CVT for all the categories of participants, in a LLL perspective
- **Strategic Objective 2** – To increase the CVT quality;

The draft national strategy for lifelong learning drawn up by the inter-institutional work group provides for the following areas of action (National Report on the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme in Romania, Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, 2007):

- Ensuring access to education and lifelong learning:
  - Implementing the national strategy of early education;
  - Including the "education and training" dimension in the national programmes for the elderly;
  - Encouraging the re-integration into the formal education system of early school leavers ("second chance" programmes, promoting informal learning; developing education programmes based on an alternative curriculum for "priority education areas"; setting up community lifelong learning centres at a local level);
  - Removing barriers to participation in continuing training for employed adults, especially for low skilled, people from isolated areas, elderly, people with disabilities;
  - Identifying, assessing and certifying competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts with a view to assure "vertical" and "horizontal" mobility of the labour force;
  - Diversifying the organisation of learning, especially for adults with a low level of education and qualification; one of the measures considered refers to open and distance learning
- Extending learning to cover all fields of life:
  - Encouraging participation in continuing training through measures at individual and institutional levels;
  - Strengthening the educational role of family;
  - Strengthening the educational and training role of holders of cultural values (cultural actors or cultural communities);
  - Encouraging the educational and training role of mass-media;
  - Promoting civic education and education for active, democratic citizenship through formal, nonformal and informal learning
- Developing competences related to a knowledge economy and society:
  - Increasing quality of basic education, stressing the ICT and key competences with a view to the integration in the "digital economy"; promoting learning of at least two foreign languages;
  - Attracting public interest in lifelong learning and creating a culture of lifelong learning through media campaigns and public debate;

- Developing information, guidance and counselling systems for lifelong learning;
- Encouraging e-learning – including the recognition of competences acquired through e-learning;
- Strengthening the education and training dimension of national programmes for disadvantaged, vulnerable or “risk” groups and communities
  - Developing institutional capacity for lifelong learning:
    - Developing quality assurance and management systems in the field of lifelong learning;
    - Increasing the quality of teacher training and trainer training from a lifelong learning perspective and for all life situations;
    - Identifying and developing national, regional and local learning networks;
    - Strengthening the institutional capacity of the social partners – employers’ and employees’ organisations – for initiation and participation in the national lifelong learning programmes.

The main obstacles, which Romania faces in its effort to adopt an integrated and coherent lifelong learning strategy, are:

- the existence of a historical delay with regard to the provisions of the Lisbon Strategy, followed by the insufficient development of a lifelong learning culture;
- the lack of a systemic and coherent debate involving ministries, public institutions, civil society and businesses in the development, implementation and monitoring of lifelong learning policies;
- the lack of global approaches in lifelong learning policies, which should consider the entire path of an individual learning and training and a unique vision, both pre-school education, compulsory education and initial training, and the continuing adult education and training;
- the gap, sometimes a significant one, between legal provisions on lifelong learning and their regional and local implementation;
- lack of correspondence between the priorities of the education policy documents and the financial resources allotted to their attainment;
- insufficient commitment of the responsible actors in the development and implementation of human resources development policies.

National Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training is managing the community programmes: “Life Long Learning”, “Erasmus Mundus”, and “Youth in Action “ for the 2007-2013 period.

The objective of the community programme Life Long Learning is to contribute through lifelong learning to the development of the European Union as an advanced knowledge society, with sustainable economic development, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.

The Life long learning programme continues the “Socrates” and “Leonardo Da Vinci” programmes. Romania has participated in the first phases of the “Socrates” and “Leonardo Da Vinci” programmes and the projects developed by the Romanian participants have confirmed the capacity of the schools, universities and other institutions or organizations in the educational and vocational education and training field to elaborate European projects in these fields.

Lifelong learning and promoting adaptability of workers and enterprises represent the main objective of the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOP HRD). This programme was elaborated for 2007-2013 and its general objective is the development of human capital and increasing competitiveness, by linking education and lifelong learning with the labor market and ensuring increased opportunities for future participation on a modern, flexible and inclusive labour market.

The SOP HRD addresses the most immediate needs in relation to tackling poverty and social exclusion: Encourage participation in employment, with an accent on lifelong learning and vocational educational training and on fighting forms of discrimination in all socioeconomic sectors; Intensifying measures to eliminate nonattendance in compulsory education, reducing school dropout and increasing participation in secondary education, at least to European standards, improving the adaptability of vocational and technical education to the labour market demands and enhancing lifelong learning;

The Priority Axis 1 of SOP HRD is: Education and training in support for growth and development of knowledge based society. The overall objective of it is: development of flexible



lifelong learning pathways and increasing the access to education and training by delivering modern quality initial and continuous education, including higher education and research.

The following *specific objectives* will contribute to the achievement of the overall objective:

- Improving the quality assurance system in preuniversity education and initial VET systems by supporting schools in management and capacity to provide relevant qualifications for labour market;
- Improving the quality assurance system in higher education by supporting universities in management and capacity to provide relevant qualifications;
- Improving the teachers' and trainers' qualifications and of other categories of human resources in education and training by supporting their initial and continuous training;
- Increasing the quality assurance in CVT by supporting CVT providers for developing quality assurance and management system;
- Supporting better knowledge and competences of young researchers by doctoral and Postdoctoral programmes.

The absence of the life cycle approach in education, training and employment limits LLL opportunities. Thus, a coherent and systemic approach of education and training is needed. Operational systems and mechanisms for validation of prior learning are a prerequisite; further developments and coherence in this area is needed in both education and training. The introduction of LLL as the core principle of education and training systems should be supported by recognition in formal education of prior learning achievements obtained in nonformal and in formal learning contexts.

Competence based education and training is a crucial issue for introducing a life cycle approach in education, training and employment, quality assurance and increased relevance of education and training to the changing labour market needs. For addressing it, the SOP HRD will support the development and implementing of the National Qualifications Framework.

The Priority Axis 2 of SOP HRD is: Linking life long learning and labour market and the following *specific objectives* will contribute to the achievement of the overall objective:

- A better transition from school to active life;
- Improved participation in second chance education and preventing early school leaving in particular for vulnerable groups;
- Increasing the readiness of enterprises to support the enhancement of employees qualification level;
- Increasing the qualification level of employees.

The need for transforming formal education and training systems in order to break down barriers between different forms of learning and broaden access and participation to learning are priorities for national policy. For employment related purposes, the modernisation of the education and training systems should target more flexible provision, increased relevance of the knowledge and competences delivered for the labour market needs and broaden access to all forms of learning for individuals in life cycle approach.

This Priority Axis is focused on life long learning for employment/labour market related issues and individuals, in terms of broadening and diversifying forms of learning, increased participation in learning/continuous professional training, provision of skills and competences facilitating the fast adapting to the job requirements for recent graduates etc.

The *continuous vocational training* for the persons in agriculture, subsistence and semisubsistence agriculture will be performed under SOP HRD either within Priority Axis 2 "Linking lifelong learning and labour market" or Priority Axis 5 "Promoting active employment measures". For those persons employed in agriculture and subsistence agriculture, SOP HRD PA 2 will finance the vocational training only for full qualification achievement (including requalification), as for the rest of sectors. Guidance, counselling and training in the entrepreneurial field and in nonagricultural fields will be also promoted under SOP HRD PA 5. NRDP (The National Rural Development Programme) under PA 1 "Improve the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors" will provide only short term training programs (basic training and

specialisation) to upgrade the skills of workers employed in agriculture and forestry. A notification of participation will be issued to these trainees.

### **2.1.2 Policy development in the main VET policy areas**

In Romania, the approximately equivalent translation of this European concept is “Invatamant profesional si ethnic” (technical and vocational education). The initial vocational training system in Romania is based on the following strategic directions:

- The need to ensure a coherent national framework, based on learning outcomes;
- The focus on demand, not on supply;
- Educational provision including multiple and flexible learning environments;
- Education pathways and multiple forms of organization, in an open system that allows for inputs and outputs based on the recognition of prior learning and certification of achieved competencies in the perspective of facilitating lifelong learning;
- Strong support and consistent implementation of principles of access and equity;
- Quality assurance of the VET provision

The initial vocational training in Romanian was restructured in order to ensure a better correlation with labour market needs and coherence with continuous vocational training as well as articulation with higher education, in the lifelong learning perspective.

Thus, starting with the year 1995, the VET system has been involved in a reorganization and modernization process (especially with the financial support of Phare VET RO 9405, Phare 2001-2003 and 2004-2006 Programmes).

The VET system has been addressing issues relating to the definition of training standards and the location of new and existing qualifications on the emerging national qualifications framework. Quality assurance instruments have been introduced through the inter-assistance school networks and main players in charge with internal and external assessment attributes regarding use thereof have been trained. The curriculum was revised in the perspective of a modular approach and an associated credit system was introduced. The teachers (including the staff in management positions) from the schools benefiting from the modernization projects supported by Phare funds have been trained in actuality fields regarding the teaching – learning process and participative management.

The involvement of the social partners in the design and assessment of vocational qualifications has become systemic through the creation of Sector Committees, which represent the various sectors of the Romanian economy, as well as corresponding Validation Commissions. In the same time, the social partners participate in Regional Consortia and other partnership structures at local level (Local Committee for Developing Social Partnership in Vocational Training) having as main goal educational planning. Thus, the provision of vocational training programmes is developed by increasingly taking into consideration the specific labour market needs, responding to these needs at regional and local level.

As regards higher education, Bologna cycles were introduced and universities have started the process of defining qualifications, reviewing study programmes and adopting quality assurance mechanisms.

The legislation that was adopted concerning the continuous professional training all along the adults life took into account the access to training opportunities of adults, of people searching for a job, reformation of the system of professional updating of initial training by introducing the European ideas concerning the assurance of the quality, decentralization, social partnership and system transparency, as well as the institutional enforcement that was required.

The VET curriculum is developed based on validated training standards by Sectoral Committees. Methodologies and mechanisms for updating training standards and VET curricula have been developed and applied during the Phare TVET projects and will be updated by the

institutional development of the NAQ, supported by Phare projects. The new VET curriculum introduced some innovations focused on developing learnerbased teaching methodologies and the individual tailored educational offers. The new curriculum, based on competences and the transferable credits system adopted create the premises for flexible and better adapted educational and initial VET offers to the labour market needs and for promoting entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial education is part of the key competences and is reflected in all curriculum development activities.

Entrepreneurial education is also part of the compulsory curriculum in gymnasium education (module within the technical education curricular area) and in 10th grade and high school lower cycle. Initial VET offer contains entrepreneurial education as part of curriculum in upper secondary education. The specific training of teachers who are instilling entrepreneurial spirit is still insufficient and remains a priority of the system. Schoolenterprises cooperation as predictor for entrepreneurship skills development is still insufficiently exploited, especially in rural areas. In case of university education, entrepreneurial education is less coherent and systematic compared to preuniversity education.

Tertiary education, university and nonuniversity (namely posthigh school education) is fostering the achievement of managerial skills. The first reference level ensuring managerial skills is the high school. Still labour market is requiring managerial skills within a competences package, including occupational related knowledge, to be delivered by post high school education.

Among the factors limiting the correlation between education and initial VET to the labour market, the following could be considered:

- Still insufficient involvement of relevant stakeholders in the participatory planning of educational activities/offers;
- Insufficient training provided to stakeholders in education and VET planning;
- Insufficient updated information and studies on long term labour market needs affecting the initial VET planning and responsiveness;
- Insufficient development and valorisation of partnership in education and training, limited cooperation in developing continuing learning programs, work based learning programs;
- Absence of mechanisms for monitoring the insertion and professional development of graduates (e.g. “tracer studies”).

In 2003/2004 a new curriculum, designed according to the vocational training standards and based on transferable credits has been introduced in the last two years of compulsory education (first 2 years of upper secondary). The new curriculum embraces the development of core and vocational competencies including career orientation. This structure goes beyond the traditional way of vocational training (limited training to specialised skills) and focuses on broader skills.

## **2.2 The latest developments in the field of European Tools**

The National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development (NCTVETD) through the EU Phare TVET projects, developed the National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF) for TVET in Romania, based on the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF), and two main instruments for quality assurance at provider level: the Self - assessment Manual, based on the European Guide on Self-assessment for VET providers and the Inspection Manual for external monitoring of TVET providers.

NCTVETD is the initiator of the National Reference Point (NRP), structured as an inter-institutional coordination structure whose role is to apply national and European QA strategies and measures in VET. The NRP includes experts of national institutions which have certain attributions regarding QA for Initial and Continuing VET: the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Chances, the Romanian Agency for QA in Pre-university Education, the National Adult Training Board, the National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development

The National Group for Quality Assurance, acting as National QA Reference Point in vocational education and training, was constituted at national level in 2006, in compliance with the recommendations of the European Network for Quality Assurance in VET (ENQA-VET), founded by the European Commission.

The National Group for Quality Assurance (GNAC) is an inter-institutional coordination structure with the role of applying in a coherent way the European and national measures for quality assurance in vocational education and training. The National Group for Quality Assurance includes experts of national institutions who have certain attributions regarding QA for initial and continuing VET: *the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities, the Romanian Agency for QA in Pre-university Education, the National Adult Training Board, the National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development, the National Centre for Staff Training in Pre – university Education.*

In 2007, GNAC coordinated the development of a *Guide of institutional practices in quality assurance of vocational education and training programmes*. The guide is accessible on the National Centre for Vocational Education and Training Development site: [www.tvet.ro](http://www.tvet.ro).

*Quality assurance* is almost lacking in case of CVET. Nevertheless, the existing systems for quality assurance are challenged by emerging development and emphasis placed at EU level on validation of learning achievements obtained in non formal and informal learning context/validation of prior learning. The existing tools, methodologies and mechanisms for quality assurances, the authorisation process of CVET providers need to be improved, with a particular focus on addressing the challenges of informal and nonformal learning. Also, insufficiency in quantitative and qualitative terms, of the existing quality evaluators and accreditation agents of the National Adult Training Board adversely affects the aim of providing of quality CVET. In this area, the ESF cofunded actions will consist of: developing, improving and implementing specific tools and instruments for quality assurance; improving the existing methodology for authorisation of CVET providers; training and retraining of quality evaluators. The ESF supported actions for the quality assurance and management will be in line with the European Framework for quality assurance.

In IVET, the vocational training standards and the school curriculum have been defined according to occupational standards. Evaluation standards are included in the vocational training standards. A final evaluation is carried out by the National Assessment and Testing Service. The evaluation of vocational skills – during the school year and at the completion of studies – follows the vocational training standards devised on the bases of the occupational standards. Student assessment is aimed at the certification of learning outcomes. At the end their study VET graduates are issued a vocational training certificate, indicating the level of qualifications and including a list of the acquired vocational skills, proven in the evaluation process.

### **2.3. Possible projections of the financial crisis on VET policies**

Both during the last quarter of 2008 as well during the first month of 2009 companies have started to shed staff or to opt or temporary lay offs, often known under the term of “technical unemployment”, under which a fraction of the basic salary (usually around 75%) is paid to the employees while they are awaiting a recall from their employer. The automotive industry has been hit pretty hard with the DACIA-RENAULT factory in Pitesti remaining close for almost the whole of the month of December and the first decade of January. This move has affected many other small and medium sized companies producing parts and accessories for this RENAULT-Group subsidiary. Although the factory did not yet start to shed staff it has opted not to renew determined duration contracts and is foreseeing yet another probable temporary closure in February.

Metallurgy is yet another branch feeling the pinch of the global downturn particularly hard. All the three steel mills owned by the multinational ARCELOR-MITTAL in Romania, Galazi, Hunedoara and Jassy have seen their output shrinking fast. Employees have been asked to take their statutory annual vacation in turns during the first quarter of 2009 as orders are constantly dropping.

Moreover, the number of hours worked has been drastically reduced and there are reports that the management is encouraging voluntary departures by offering severance payments.

Also hardly hit has been the chemical industry. Although the reduction in gas consumption may have been welcomed by the Government during the gas crisis of early January, the closure of the activities at the AZOMURES chemical factory in Targu Mures (county of Mures, Centre of Romania) was for surely not the most welcomed of news for both the employees as well as for the local and county council for which the company was a major source of income. An even greater impact at local level will have the almost total closure of the SOMETRA chemical plant in Copsa Mica (county of Sibiu, Centre of Romania).

The construction sector is also strongly buffeted by the crisis by the full impact will be only be visible spring when for surely far fewer cranes will start moving on the skies of Romania's cities.

Other sector hit are textile and leather industry, retailers, financial services especially credit brokerage firms which are closing one by one as banks have practically blocked almost all lending and most recently announces have been made that oil industries which are now starting to feel the impact of months of declining oil prices, will start shedding staff.

In the public administration, the number of employees will see a full 20% reduction which, in absolute numbers would have meant a job loss amounting at national level to 1,500 - 2,000 jobs. Therefore there are worries that national definition unemployment rate might be already at 5.6% for the month of mars 2009, which would mark a 27% increase as against the month of December 2008(4.4%).

No stimulus package of the sort being implemented in the developed economies is envisaged as yet by the Government. Therefore is unclear which of the industries that already bore the brunt of the first shock of the crisis will receive some state help.

In the meantime the Government is aiming at trimming the budget deficit by implementing a wide scheme of public expenditures reduction. It has tried to limit the right of old age pensioners to work in the public administration and in any service that receives public financing, including by this health, research and most notably education. Also all vacancies in public administration have been blocked.

**Research funding from public sources will also see a reduction by 65%.** Practically all research contracts will be put on hold and a large part of the staff (rough estimates run into a couple of thousands of researchers and auxiliary staff) will have to be probably laid off.

However the Government plans to allocate more than 20% of the budget resources for infrastructure works.

In order to re-balance the state social insurance budget and ensure the financing of the state pension scheme, contribution rate will see a rise by 3.3 pp, which will mean that the combined rate paid by the employer and the employee will reach 31.3%, with 10.5% for the employee and obviously the rest for the employer of course for normal working conditions. Out of the contribution rate paid by the employee the share of the mandatory private pension funds will be frozen for this year, according to the draft budget law submitted a couple of days ago by the Government to the Parliament, to2%.

Although the Government does not entirely rule out salary increases, they will be more than modest. The planned increase of 50% voted by the previous Parliament in its last session and which regarded salaries of personnel in education will become actually an only 5% increase, to be applied to all public employees, in two instalments

Pensions will also see only a modest rise of 5%, with the same two instalments being foreseen. This will squarely mean that the Governmental commitment of having the value of the pension point at 45% of the gross average salary gain starting with the 1<sup>st</sup> of January is by all means shelved.

Although it is rather difficult to categorize the measures taken by the Government, we organize them in the following format:

<b>Flexicurity component</b>	<b>Measure adopted or planned</b>	<b>Timing (approximately)</b>	<b>Budget allocation (where available)</b>	<b>Expect Results/Likely Effects</b>
<b>Contractual arrangements</b>	Limitation of the right of old age pensioners to work in the public administration	In application in a <i>lighter</i> form (compulsory termination of the contracts for those reaching statutory ret. age, after a first and more drastic form has been repealed by the Constitutional Court	Not available	It might trim to a certain extent the salary bill of the public administration but, in the meantime it will mean that activity rates which are already low will get even lower. An important part of the labour force will be practically pushed into idleness;
	Cap the salaries of state officials, high ranking civil servants and executives in the public administration	To start app. Beginning with Feb.2009	Impact estimated to around 0.1% of the GDP	To our opinion the impact is much exaggerated. Moreover it is difficult to see how some top management positions in important SOEs where responsibilities are vast (see the National Nuclear Electricity Company or the National Hydroelectric Company) will be filled at salaries that will not be much in excess of EUR 1000 (gross amount!);
<b>Labour Market Policies</b>	Increasing the length of unemployment	To start following the approval of the	The overall allocation for the Ministry of	It might as well help a bit but it would require

	benefit period by three months	state and state social insurances budget	Labour which includes the budgets of the state administrated social insurances scheme (pension and unemployment chief amongst them) is projected at the equivalent of 10.97% of the GDP or in absolute numbers EUR bn.15.87, of course taking into account the macro-economic assumptions detailed in the paragraph above; <b>The budget for the unemployment insurance fund</b> (at least projected) is worth 338 mil. EUR at forecasted exchange rate of RON 4.3/EUR; The budget is projected with a deficit of 1.5 mil. EUR to be financed by transfers from the state budget;	an increased amount of transfers from the state budget to the budget of the unemployment scheme which has been plunged in the red by the same reckless reduction in contribution rates against which the undersigned spoke so often;
	Incomes derived from “technical unemployment schemes” applied by the enterprises to be	Same as above	Not yet available	It might alleviate some of the pain but it will be difficult to sustain if growth

	exempted from social security contributions for three months following the moment of application			projections will not materialize themselves. If the doomsday scenario of the IMF will materialize then it might be as well that this will dig a huge hole into the state social insurances budget;
<b>Lifelong Learning Strategies</b>	Establishing budget allocation for Education to the equivalent of 6% of the GDP but...	Same as above	The total budget allocation for education taking the Govt. GDP projection will be of around EUR bn.8.68;	It might bode well for investment in human resources with the sole condition that money will not be squandered on teacher's salaries thus adding to the inflation woes, which as said in the second chapter of the report are indeed receding but are not to be discarded!
	... in the meantime the intention of reducing public funding for R&D which is included in the allocation of the Ministry of Education by 65% as against last year's figures!!!!	Same as above	The total allocation for R&D will drop dramatically from the equiv. of around 0.8% of the GDP last year to the equiv of only 0.28% this year;	It will be difficult in these circumstances to try and "tap into new sources of growth" as the Commission recommends. Much of the staff will be probably lost through lay offs and precious investment will be laid idle; long term impact will be



				however the one that will really matter and will it for the worse, if decision applied as such;
<b>Social Security Systems</b>	Cumulated social insurance (i.e.: read public pensions mainly) contribution rate will increase by 3.3 pp, coming back to 31.3% for normal working conditions	Same as above	The total budget of the public pension scheme is estimated at EUR bn.9.33, being constructed with a projected surplus of EUR mln.531;	The increase of the contribution rate is of course more than ill-timed as in times of gloom this is the last thing that households and businesses alike expect. However as the last Government recklessly and against all sensible advice reduced continuously contribution rates and moreover established the “carve-down” as a principle for the financing of the private pension funds, in the current circumstances there was no other option to consider.
	Capping the share of private mandatory pension funds of the contribution rate to 2% for this year instead of the initially foreseen 2.5%	Same as above	Might as well be the source of the projected surplus	Same as above; It will however affect negatively the private pension funds which will take yet another battering alongside the ones coming

				<p>from markets; Effects remain to be seen. Anyway this is a good signal so as to change the system and opt for a mixture between a carve-down and a top-up;</p>
	<p>Establishing a minimum social pension of RON 350 (EUR equiv at the budget projected ex. Rate of 81.3)</p>	<p>Application from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2009</p>	<p>Budgetary allocation equivalent to 0.10% of the GDP, with the source being the state budget;</p>	<p>This is one of the social measures announced during the campaign and which will be nonetheless kept especially as it seems that its impact on the consolidated budget is not quite so significant. This is due to the fact that we are not actually talking about a new social protection provision as it might look like at first sight but about a form of complementary income, to be financed via transfers from the state budget, and which will be added to existing state social insurance pensions below the threshold of RON 350 so to bring them up to this “social minimum”;</p>

The Government has been working closely with the social partners in an effort to get them agree to a budget that would practically see the complete evaporation of most of the social commitments made during the electoral campaign last autumn.

As for the structural funds which have seen a more than anaemic start last year, the Government has vowed to speed procedures so as to have all the SOPs audited by mid-February for intermediary payments also. In a press conference after the Government has adopted the draft of the Budget Law, the PM has also committed himself and his administration to a revision of the procedures so as to shorten the way for a project proposal from submission to approval to no more than 3-5 months.

Regarding the public measures taken in order to stimulate the VET for adults as response to the financial crisis, starting with the end of March 2009, the Romanian Managing Authority for Sectional Operational Programme for Human Resources Development finances the state aid for employment, specific vocational training and minimis aid.

Thus, any Romanian enterprise will may demand the subsidization of the new employees wages, of the vocational training or the improvement of work conditions, in order to reduce the work accidents and the occupational illness.

Within the state aid for specific and general vocational training called “Money for vocational training” it was open 3 financing lines:

- No.75 “Mentoring programs for young employees”-who offers assistance for the mentoring programs cost coverage of young employees;
- No.76 “Qualification/Requalification of own employees”- who offers assistance for the vocational training(qualification/requalification) coverage cost of own employees;
- No.77 “Specialized training of own employees” –who offers assistance for the vocational training(specialized training) coverage cost of own employees;

The main objectives of this state aid are:

- The development of enterprise performance to support the employees qualification level increase;
- The increase of employees qualification level;
- The increase of employees training;
- The betterment of access and participation to vocational training.

The amount of this state aid for general and specific vocational training is measured as percentage of total eligible costs, in accordance with the enterprise dimension, with the type of vocational training (general or specific) and in accordance with the class of the employee who take part at the vocational training. The difference represents the own contribution of the enterprise.

Thus, for small enterprises, the state aid is 80 %( general vocational training) and 45 %( specific vocational training). For medium enterprises, it is 70 %( general vocational training) and 35% (specific vocational training). For large enterprises, the state aid is 60% (general vocational training) and 25% (specific vocational training).

Just so as to contribute even more to the formation of an informed opinion, we are hereby providing in the end a synthetic table, comparing the anti-crisis measures that were envisaged by the previous Government and the ones that are planned through the State and State social insurance budget by the current administration, also organized along the four main FLEXICURITY components:

<b>FLEXICURITY COMPONENT</b>	<b>Measures envisaged by the former Government (P.M. – C.P. Tariceanu)</b>	<b>Measures planned by the current Government (P.M. – E.Boc.)</b>
<b>Contractual arrangements</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- limiting the possibility of old age pensioners to work in public administration;;</li> <li>- establishing a cap on salaries of state officials and other high ranking public officers and executives;</li> </ul>
<b>Labour Market Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5% tax bonus for firms and individuals alike;</li> <li>- 1000 EUR bonus for each new job created by enterprises on condition of hiring individuals being unemployed for more than 3 months;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increasing the duration of the unemployment benefit period by 3 months;</li> <li>- exempting from social insurance contribution payment, for a period of three months, all income derived from “technical unemployment” payments made by enterprises;</li> </ul>
<b>Lifelong Learning Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- planning the same allocation for Education as equiv. % of GDP, bur also a EUR.bn.3 as support for R&amp;D intensive, job generating investment;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establishing the budget allocation for education at the equivalent of 6% of the GDP but in the meantime planning a cut of 65% in public funding for R&amp;D;</li> </ul>
<b>Social Security Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing contribution rate by a further 1pp;</li> <li>Introducing a social minimum pension (amount remained unspecified)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing contribution rates by 3.3pp;</li> <li>Capping the share to be directed to the private pension funds to 2% for 2009;</li> <li>Introducing a social minimum pension of RON 350 (300 from Apr.1<sup>st</sup>; 350 from Oct.1<sup>st</sup>)</li> </ul>

### **3.1 Legislative framework for IVET**

A new legislative framework for pre-university education is set up through a law (*no. 268/2003*) and two Executive Orders (*68/2003 and 110/2003*), which amend the 1995 Education Law. According to the new law, the starting age of compulsory education will become 6 years of age (with parents consent) from 7 currently. Compulsory education will be extended from 8 to 10 years, as was already the case before 1990. High schools and Art and Trade Schools (ATS), the latter replacing the existing vocational schools and apprenticeship schools, will provide upper secondary education. The existing High schools will continue to offer both technical and general education. At the end of compulsory education graduates in the Arts and Trades School can obtain a level 1 qualification. This qualification enables the holder to perform relatively simple work. A level 2 and 3 qualification that are more in demand on the labour market, will still need an additional one to three year further study after compulsory education.

The GD 844/2003 approves the classifications of occupations, trades and specialisations for initial vocational education and training as well as the principles for updating and adapting specialisations to changing demands on the labour market.

### **3.2 Institutional framework: IVET**

In Romania the responsibility for policy making with regard to IVET transnational mobility is shared by The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour. Government has low involvement in IVET mobility. The stakeholder with apparently the biggest involvement in IVET mobility is the individual VET institution

Romania has made progress in the reform of vocational education and adult training through the creation of a National Qualifications Agency. The planning for technical and vocational education programmes has been decentralised and put into the hands of the regional consortia, and is no longer the responsibility of the central authorities.

The Romanian Ministry of Education and Research plays a predominant role in the IVET system. It is, among others, responsible for policy and strategy development in IVET. It is supported in this by the National Centre for the Development of Vocational and Technical Education (NCDVTE), that was established in 1998. It is responsible for designing, developing, implementing and revising the VET curricula, the system of evaluation and certification of vocational training, teaching staff training and the scientific coordination over VET development projects. It is also in charge of developing social partnership in IVET at national, regional and local level.

At the county level the Ministry of Education and Research is represented by the County School Inspectorates that are responsible for the quality of the provision of IVET, for establishing the availability of IVET and for approving school-based curricula (up to 30% in Arts and Trade school and up to 25% in technical high schools). The IVET providers themselves have the responsibility for their personnel (evaluation), ensuring the quality of the teaching and learning processes and developing the local development-based or school-based curriculum.

At the local/county level, social partners have been involved in the setting up of the Local Development Councils (LDCs) and their advisory role in IVET. LDCs also include representatives of the County Employment Agencies. These bodies are participating in the planning process at county level, are approving the local component of curriculum and nominating social partners in the evaluation commissions for IVET graduates. The chairs of the LDCs are also member of the Regional Consortia, that further exists of representatives from the County School Inspectorates, the County Agencies for Employment and the social partners. Employers are involved in the validation of qualifications acquired through IVET.

### 3.3 Legislative framework for CVET

*Law no. 375/2002* approving and modifying the *GD 129/2000* supports LLL measures specific to CVET such as: guaranteeing the access to CVET of all employees by including this right in the collective labour agreement, encouraging employers to invest in HRD, evaluating and recognising the competencies acquired by non-formal and informal learning. Whereas the above-mentioned issues are addressed in general terms, the law is very specific in defining the responsibilities and conditions for accrediting training providers. The National Adult Training Board is given a central role in the accreditation. *Law no. 253/2003* consequently reviews the functioning of the National Adult Training Board (NATB). It amends and completes a previous one (*Law 132/1999*) focusing more on NATB's new role in authorising training providers. With the new law the Council for Occupational Standards and Assessment (COSA) has been integrated into the NATB, bringing the occupational standards development and assessment tasks under a common umbrella. In October 2003, the methodology for authorising the adult training providers has been adopted through the *EO 522/2003*, completing the legal framework for adult training. The directive regulates the work of County Authorisation Committees under the coordination of NATB.

The National Agency for Employment and Vocational Training has been established through the *Law 145/1998* as a tripartite body with a major role in managing active labour market programmes and organising adult vocational training programmes. Through the regulations *EO 294/2000* and *GD 260/2001* the functioning of the re-baptised National Agency for Employment was reviewed, providing NAE with some new responsibilities in the field of employment and vocational training. According to the *Employment Law (76/2002)*, the Agency is responsible for coordinating vocational training and retraining programmes for the unemployed (financed from the Unemployment Fund) as well as for other persons looking for jobs.

According to the Labour Code (art. 189) firms can provide vocational training to their employees in any of the following forms: a) attendance of training courses organized by employers or by suppliers of vocational training services; b) vocational on-the-job training for new-entrants to a position or work place; c) probationary and post-graduate training in Romania and abroad; d) on-the-job vocational training; e) coaching; f) other forms of training agreed upon between employer and employee.

Employers of more than 20 employees are bound by law to prepare and provide, every year, in agreement with the trade union or the employees representatives, vocational training schemes, which are attached to the collective agreement at company level, as an integral part thereof.

Employers are also supposed to create the appropriate conditions for all their employees to take part in vocational training programmes, as follows: a) at least once every 2 years, if they employ 21 or more employees; b) at least once every 3 years, if they employ 21 or less employees. The related training expenses are borne by employers.

When the employer fails to comply with the obligation to provide the funds for the vocational training of an employee, such employee is entitled to a paid leave of up to 10 working days or up to 80 working hours, for vocational training purposes.

Government Ordinance no. 129/2000, regarding the vocational training of adults sets forth that adults have a right to enjoy equal opportunities of vocational training, with no discrimination on account of age, gender, race, ethnic origin, political or religious affiliation.

The same ordinance expressly provides:

- the obligation of all employers to take appropriate measures in order to put in place the requisite conditions for their employees to enjoy access to vocational training, and
- the right of job seekers to attend the free vocational training programmes provided by the National Agency for Employment (Agentia Nationala de Ocupare a Fortei de Munca, ANOFM) or by other, duly licensed, providers of vocational training services.

The Labour Code (*Law 53/2003*), in place from March 2003, pays ample attention to training in enterprises. Employers are obliged to provide regular training and develop annual training plans in consultation with staff representatives or trade unions. The law also establishes the general principles for apprenticeship contracts, whereby the employer, apart from salary payment assumes the responsibility to provide vocational training in a certain trade.

### **3.4 Institutional framework: CVET**

In Romania, the continuous vocational training system has been organised as a network of national, local and sector structures of the authorities in charge. The Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities (Ministerul Muncii, Familiei si Egalitatii de Sanse), in cooperation with the ministries and other relevant bodies, elaborates the policies and strategies for the continuous vocational training. MMFES closely cooperates with the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation (Ministerul Educatiei, Cercetarii si Inovarii) in order to articulate the correspondence between the initial and the continuous vocational training.

The National Council for the Vocational Training of Adults (Consiliul National pentru Formarea Profesionala a Adultilor, CNFPA), which also acts as national authority for qualifications (a tripartite body) performs a multitude of tasks: develops and implements, with the assistance of the sector committees (also tripartite), the methodological basis (including the instruments) for the assessment of competency, based on an occupational analysis for each specific sector; elaborates the occupational standards, and the qualification standards; validates the qualifications; elaborates the national register of occupations; certifies the levels of competence and qualification; ensures the quality of the continuous vocational training system; coordinates the licensing of providers of vocational training services.

The National Agency for Employment (NAE-ANOFM-Agentia Nationala pentru Ocuparea Fortei de Munca) also a tripartite body, carries out the active measures for the stimulation of employment, including vocational counselling, guidance, and training, and allocates the requisite financial resources from the unemployment fund.

Vocational training programmes are organised by the county employment agencies, through their own vocational training centres, through the regional vocational training centres for adults, and through licensed providers of vocational training services, all being available mainly to job seekers, but also to employees, and other, interested, individuals.

The task of private or state-owned vocational training services providers is to organise, implement and evaluate vocational training programmes, which must satisfy the competence needs of companies and individual clients.

## Theme 4: Initial vocational education and training

### 4.1 Background to the initial education vocational education and training system and diagram of the education and training system

Age	Grade	ISCED	Education level		Qualification Level Ro	Correlation with EQF levels	Type of education
>19		6	Post-universitar (post university education)		5	8 7 6	
		5	Universitar (university education)				
		4	Scoala post liceala (post high school education)		3	5	
18	XIII	3		Ciclul superior al liceului (high school upper cycle)	3	4	Post obligatoriu (post compulsory)
17	XII		Ciclul superior al liceului (high school upper cycle)	An de completare (completion year)			
16	XI						
15	X	2	Ciclul inferior al liceului (high school lower cycle)	Scoala de arte si meserii (School of arts and trades)	1	2	Invatamant obligatoriu (compulsory school)
14	IX						
13	VIII						
12	VII						
11	VI		Gimnaziu (Gymnasium, middle school, a bridge between elementary school and high school)				
10	V						
9	IV						
8	III						
7	II	1	Scoala primara (first stage of compulsory education, elementary school)		1		
6	I						
5		0	Gradinita (pre- school education, kindergartens, nursery school)		Invatamant prescolar (pre primary education)		
4							
3							

#### *Education and training system diagram*

The Romanian IVET system is a school-based system with two main pathways. The “technological route” offers general secondary education with a large vocational component at technical high schools providing a level 3 qualification. More than half the students in upper secondary education study at technical high schools, more than at theoretical high schools. Many high school graduates pursue their studies in post-high school and higher education. The “vocational route” prepares students for the labour market or further studying in Art and Trade Schools (ATS). The ATS is a product of a merger of the two existing school types: Apprenticeship



Schools (offering 2 year VET programmes) and Vocational Schools (offering 3 year vocational education) that have just been introduced with the extension of compulsory education. At the end of compulsory education (grade IX-X) graduates of ATS can obtain a level 1 qualification. This qualification enables the holder to perform relatively simple work. A level 2 and 3 qualification that are more in demand on the labour market, will still need one to three years further studies after the compulsory education. A level 2 qualification is awarded after grade XI that represents at the same time the “*class de passage*” towards level 3 for both routes (high school and vocational). Grades XII-XIII provide a level 3 qualification. The Post High Schools are a specialised technological route of 2 years leading to qualifications at level 3. The Foreman School is a post-high type of school aiming at preparing foremen for industry and leading also to a level 3 qualification. Foreman School courses are organised at the request of companies and do not have a steady intake every year. Post high school education refers to vocational qualification for maximum of 3 years offered to those who graduate high school (including those who do not hold the baccalaureate diploma), non-university education.

In conclusion in initial VET there are two training routes:

- a) Direct professional route (in technological high schools)- 2 years of the lower level of high schools (the last two years of compulsory education)+2 years of upper level of high school.
- b) Progressive professional route- School of Arts and Trades (2 years)+completion year (1 year)+2 years of upper level of high school (technological high schools).

The restructuring of the pre-university education system, namely the extension from 8 to 10 years of the compulsory education, includes within the last two years of the compulsory education one pathway dedicated to professional qualifications achievement. These two school years are part of a progressive professional route, which allows students to continue their studies up to ISCED 3-high school and up to qualification level 3.

Level 2 of qualification is offered to those who graduate the School of Arts and Trades after the completion year (XI grade). Schools of Arts and Trades and the Completion year represent the Vocational Education.

Level 1 of qualification is offered to those who graduate the School of Arts and Trades (IX-X grades).

In case of post high school education, the current financing system does not allow a proper development/pace in relation with labour market needs and current EU experiences in the field. The companies cofinance the post highschoools, in relation with their specific needs. This raises the issue of addressing in a coherent manner the labour market needs which requires intermediate qualification levels between high school and higher education. The lack of staff development strategies in companies, in particular in SMEs, affects also the development of this level of education.

Quality assurance is in a more advanced phase in initial VET than in the other components of the education system. It started earlier under a PHARE project and a system of quality assurance based on the common quality assurance framework (CQAF) agreed at European level has already been implemented. The experience acquired allowed the starting of implementing of the quality assurance instruments for initial VET at the level of the whole VET system.

In VET, the development of qualifications is organised with the direct involvement of relevant social partners. Since qualifications are not anymore linked to the type of provider (schools or private providers) or to the type of training (initial or continuing VET), their validation is the responsibility of Sectoral Committees 10 that are gradually established by the National Adult Training Board acting as National Authority for Qualifications. This is meant to increase coherency between initial and continuous VET. So far, vocational training standards for qualifications levels I, II and III which can be obtained through the initial VET system have been updated and are implemented at national level. The methodological developments and expertise as regards qualifications development and validation reached within the initial VET have been transferred to the whole VET.

The National Quality Assurance Framework in TVET is based on self-assessment, a process through which TVET providers evaluate their performance, after collecting and analyzing evidences.

The Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation draws up the self-assessment report and formulates the proposals for the improvement of quality of vocational education and training at the level of the TVET provider, **with the support of the entire school staff.**

The best practice (especially for large TVET providers) is to set up teams to perform the selfassessment of their activity area. These can be:

- teams per subjects of education / curricula areas;
- teams for specialized services, such as students' assistance.

Inspection is performed by the representatives of the school inspectorates under the coordination of the deputy general inspector responsible for quality assurance. For strengthening the inter-institutional cooperation between IVET providers, it is useful and recommended to include in the teams performing the external monitoring visits, managers and coordinators of the Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation of IVET providers with good practice in quality assurance. Inspection must be performed in cooperation with a representative of the management or of the Commission for Quality Assurance and Evaluation of the TVET provider.

External monitoring of TVET providers' and programmes' quality, validation of TVET providers' self-assessment reports, approval of TVET providers' improvement plans are provided by school inspectorates.

The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education (ARACIP – established on the basis of the QA in Education Law, to promote and to apply QA policies in the pre-university education system) coordinates the following processes :

- authorization and accreditation - certifying that a TVET provider and its training programmes have met predetermined standards. Accreditation is compulsory for each training programme, on the basis of the QA in Education Law. Accreditation is granted by order of the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, based on the approval of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education, by complying with the accreditation procedure of the QA in Education Law.

Accreditation requires going through two successive stages:

- *provisional authorization*, that grants the right to carry out the education process and to organize the admission to education and training programmes, as the case may be;
  - *accreditation*, that also grants the right to issue diplomas, certificates and other study documents recognized by the Ministry of Education and Research, and to organize graduation/certification exams;
- external evaluation of TVET providers' and programmes' quality - the multi-criteria examination of the extent to which a TVET provider and its programmes meet the quality standards; it is carried out by independent experts, under the coordination of ARACIP, every 5 years.

## 4.2 IVET al lower secondary level

There are no IVET elements at lower secondary level in Romania

## 4.3 IVET at Upper Secondary level

Upper secondary education is provided in upper secondary schools (liceu), vocational schools and apprenticeship training. Public upper secondary education is not compulsory, but it is free.

Pupils enrolled in vocational school by training profile:

	Pupils enrolled						
	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007
<b>Vocational schools</b>	<b>164973</b>	<b>180476</b>	<b>206109</b>	<b>246977</b>	<b>277838</b>	<b>274041</b>	<b>240924</b>
<i>Engineering</i>	21719	23748	28006	51063	67680	66068	55392
<i>Electrotechnics and electronics</i>	9344	11298	13995	25520	32729	30650	26995
<i>Mines</i>	1504	1495	1331	750	331	137	16
<i>Oil</i>	2510	2555	3065	2372	1760	1471	991
<i>Metallurgy</i>	924	1040	1141	632	325	148	59
<i>Energy</i>	3669	2805	1957	1182	1397	1744	1413
<i>Industrial chemistry</i>	2954	3268	3741	3517	3545	2957	2569
<i>Construction materials</i>	1320	1208	1473	1301	1238	1455	1202
<i>Mounting construction</i>	12016	12299	14747	16550	18168	19039	17270
<i>Wood exploitation and processing</i>	8227	8834	11097	14061	16420	15383	13431
<i>Transport</i>	40451	43705	46740	33679	19176	15299	13730
<i>Post and telecommunications</i>	1865	1754	1826	1137	395	484	274
<i>Food industry</i>	6854	7876	9260	10287	11535	12525	11908
<i>Light industry</i>	16092	18505	22102	31184	37175	34738	26768
<i>Poligraphy</i>	433	427	503	597	674	664	626
<i>Water management</i>	254	332	286	202	88	124	-
<i>Agriculture</i>	7864	8925	10423	16544	23709	25083	22203
<i>Sylviculture</i>	1160	1747	2110	2252	2911	3251	3394
<i>Theology</i>	-	-	-	826	769	592	543
<i>Tourism</i>	-	-	-	670	1627	1773	1569
<i>Trade</i>	4021	5127	6288	7638	9217	10600	11415
<i>Public catering</i>	10537	12220	14451	17778	21490	23693	22640
<i>Small-sized industry and rendering services</i>	11255	11308	11567	7235	5479	6163	6516

	<b>Total isced3</b>	<b>isced3gen</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>isced3pv</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>isced3voc</b>	<b>%</b>
European Union (27 countries)	22205390	10723395	0,48	1185480	0,05	10296515	0,46
European Union (25 countries)	20782183	10183168	0,49	1185480	0,06	9413535	0,45
Romania	1051851	369320	0,35	-	-	682531	0,65

*Students in upper secondary education by programme orientation 2006*  
*gen - general; pv - pre-vocational; voc - vocational*  
*Source of information: Eurostat*

Romania has a system which focuses on older teenagers and young adults. Here the IVET is part of the general, state managed, free of charge public system of education. This is framed as a combination between theoretical core subjects, vocational subjects and practical activities. Practical activities take place in school workshops and sometimes in companies or organizations. There are cases when the school runs an 'exercise firm' where the pupils can practice or apply what they learn.

<b>Enrolment</b>	<b>2000/2001</b>	<b>2001/2002</b>	<b>2002/2003</b>	<b>2003/2004</b>	<b>2004/2005</b>	<b>2005/2006</b>
Vocational education						
Total	18,50	19,70	20,00	20,10	20,90	20,30
Urban	18,00	19,00	19,40	18,70	18,40	18,20
Rural	19,30	20,70	20,90	21,80	24,30	23,20
Female	13,60	15,10	15,30	15,50	16,20	16,00
Male	23,30	24,10	24,60	24,50	25,40	24,60
High schools and vocational education						
Total	71,40	74,80	74,70	74,40	76,40	75,00
Urban	86,00	89,10	90,40	89,00	87,80	86,60
Rural	50,20	54,10	53,90	55,40	61,00	59,90
Female	72,70	76,50	76,70	76,10	78,00	75,90
Male	70,20	73,20	72,70	72,80	74,90	74,20

In high school and vocational education, participation in education recorded an ascending evolution: at this level of education, the gross enrolment rate increased from 71.4% in 2000/2001 to 75.0% in 2005/2006, but is decreasing as compared to the level of 76.4% in 2004/2005; participation in vocational education in rural areas is higher as compared to urban areas, during the entire period analyzed; this trend is explained by the increase of schooling capacity of VET in rural areas as part of the actions undertaken for increasing access to education for all.

School year	Initial VET		High School education			
	TOTAL INITIAL VET	Vocational education	Technological education (technological branch)	High school students with specific aptitudes (i.e. arts, sport)	Theoretical	Total Lyceum education
	Total no. of pupils enrolled (% in the rural areas)	Total no. of pupils enrolled (% in the rural areas)	Total no. of pupils enrolled (% in the rural areas)	Total no. of pupils enrolled (% in the rural areas)	Total no. of pupils enrolled (% in the rural areas)	Total no. of pupils enrolled (% in the rural areas)
2001-2002	565,665 11,26%	252,347 (15.8%)	313,318 (7.6%)	51,04 (2.6%)	346,30 (5.9%)	710,66 (6.4%)
2002-2003	596,531 11,47%	270,215 (15.9%)	326,316 (7.8%)	53,951 (2.3%)	360,14 (6.2%)	740,40 (6.6%)
2003-2004	618,951 (12.09%)	279,124 (17.3%)	339,827 (7.8%)	53,76 (2.1%)	365,33 (6.7%)	758,92 (6.9%)
2004-2005	637,803 (13.24%)	289,494 (19.4%)	348,309 (8.1%)	55,54 (2.1%)	370,00 7%	773,84 (7.1%)
2005-2006	628,554 (8.3%)	284,412 (18.0%)	344,142 (8.1%)	53,98 (2.0%)	369,32 (7.0%)	767,44 (7.2%)

Source NIS 2005

The number of students enrolled in vocational education route, 9th grade, increased by 3.1% in 2004/2005 as compared to 2003/2004, but it decreased by 1.5% in 2005/2006 as compared to 2004/2005).

The schooling capacity of the initial VET system increased substantially beginning with school year 2002/2003: from 844 school units in 2002/2003 to 1,474 school units in 2004/2005 and 1,495 in 2005/2006. Most of the increase was in rural areas: from 518 school units in 2003/2004 to 713 school units in 2005/2006. The increased number of schools is mainly a result of the reclassification of education. In some of these schools (those included in the Phare TVET projects) the learning environment has been improved by new equipment. The results achieved in 2005/2006 have been followed by a restructuring of the VET schools network having as result in 2006/2007 a total of 1,367 VET schools units, out of which 611 in rural areas. The reorganization of the network included also transportation facilities for students in rural areas, improving thus the access conditions. These schools offer first chance education to the graduates of grade VIII in their locality, preventing additional costs that the parents have to afford for transport or accommodation in case the students should go for learning in other localities.

## 4.4 Apprenticeship training

### *Pupils enrolled in apprenticeship schools by training profile*

	Pupils enrolled						
	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007
<b><i>Apprenticeship schools</i></b>	<b>62109</b>	<b>60309</b>	<b>52778</b>	<b>20465</b>	<b>387</b>	-	-
<i>Industry</i>	27706	25381	22732	9153	155	-	-
<i>Small sized industry</i>	23457	22619	19262	7149	232	-	-
<i>Services for population</i>	9316	10242	8378	3156	-	-	-
<i>Activities in agriculture</i>	1630	2067	2406	1007	-	-	-

Source: NIS 2007

Schools for apprentices provide a 1-2 year training that ends up with a practical test, the graduates getting in case they pass it a certificate of worker or apprentice worker. Apprenticeship can be organized in vocational schools, of school groups or at the very working place of the graduates in the private system.

In the field of professional education, graduates of vocational and apprentice schools who have a “certificate of capacity” can continue their studies in high school, usually in the same field in which they were trained at the schools from which they graduated. The courses of the vocational school and of the apprentice school end up in a “graduation examination” and the obtaining of the “graduation diploma”. In the case of the apprentice school the exam consists in a practical test. The graduation diploma certifies the training of the graduates and give them the right to practice the profession they were trained for. In the apprenticeship schools can enrolle the gymnasium graduates with or without certificate of capacity.

The vocational training of the employees may take place in the form of on the job apprenticeship (workplace apprenticeship). The apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration. The employer assumes responsibility for providing the trainee with training leading to a specific occupation.

According to the special law that regulates the institution of apprenticeship in Romania, namely the Apprenticeship Act of 2005 (Law no.279/2005), apprenticeship is to regarded as a special and distinct form of vocational training combining employment, in the form of a closed-end, determined duration contract, with vocational training, to be provided by the employer, both practical and theoretical. According to the law and to its application norms, are entitled to apprenticeship individuals aged between 16-and 25 years of age, provided that they had no prior qualification in the trade for which they demand entering into an apprenticeship contract. The contract as such, cannot be longer than three years but, also not shorter than six months, in accordance with the qualification to be provided. Actually, the Norms for the application of the law clearly state that the contract cannot actually exceed 24 months so as to be in full compliance with the provisions of the Labour Code for determined duration contracts. All enterprise can engage into apprenticeship contracts provided that they do have the necessary facilities and they do provide the local Labour Directorates of the Ministry of Labour with proof that apart from these, they do have a specifically designed training program for the occupation for which they do wish to organize apprenticeship. In addition to that, they must specifically employ a so-called “apprenticeship foreman”, a category of personnel that is created by the law and by its application norms and which has to fulfil certain professional criteria among them being that of possessing a “trainer’s training certificate”, thus attesting not only that he or she is a skilled professional in the trade/occupation for which apprenticeship is to be organized but, also that he or she can work with adults and apply specific vocational training techniques. Once the authorization has been given for apprenticeship

programs as well as for the apprenticeship foreman it is valid for a period of up to four (4) years, open for consecutive or non-consecutive renewal.

It is important hereby to mention that while the apprentice is considered a full time employee of the firm or of an individual authorized person or family association as these entities are also entitled to organize apprenticeships, he or she is entitled to all associated rights, with minimum salary as well as with working time regulations being applied. The apprentice also has to benefit from theoretical training which is to be provided inside the working hours. Also, employers have to provide housing and accommodation for apprentices if they are unable to shuttle between home and work.

#### 4.5 Other youth programmes and alternative pathways

European Social Fund (ESF) offers support for human resources development through the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (SOP HRD) 2007-2013.

*The activities that can be financed through the SOP HRD – Key Area of Intervention (KAI) Transition from school to active life (eligible activities) are:*

- ü Learning programmes at the work place for pupils (e. g. practice stages);
- ü Elaboration/updating/endorsement of the Local Development Curriculum (LDC);
- ü Career guidance and counseling;
- ü Development of partnership between schools, universities and enterprises;
- ü Monitoring of the insertion of young graduates on the labour market;
- ü Innovative actions to improve transition from school to active life (e. g. training firms).

The activities supported through SOP HRD – KAI 2.1. are addressed (target group) to:

- ü Pupils;
- ü Staff from enterprises assigned as tutors for the practice stages;
- ü Career guidance and counseling specialized staff;
- ü Personnel involved in the elaboration and endorsement of the LDC etc.;
- ü Young graduates.

*The eligible beneficiaries are:*

- ü Educational institutions from the national education system whose curriculum includes professional competences achieved through practice stages;
- ü Relevant structures within MoERI or structures coordinated by MoERI;
- ü Both public and private career guidance and counseling authorized providers etc.

SOP HRD – KAI 2.1 financial assistance can be accessed through projects.

The value of the projects may vary depending on their type, as follows:

- Strategic projects – budget: 1 850 000 lei (minimum) - 18 500 000 lei (maximum)
- Grant projects – budget: 185 000 lei (minimum) – 1 849 999 lei (maximum)

Maximum duration of the projects can be of: 3 years for strategic projects and 2 years for grant projects.

**The training firm**—represents an interactive learning method for the development of the entrepreneurial spirit, a modern conception of knowledge integration and its interdisciplinary application, a modern training approach, which assures the necessary conditions to practically exercise the competences students acquired during their vocational training. The introduction of the training firm concept in the Romanian technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system was done through a project initiated within the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and developed in cooperation with the Austrian Ministry of Education and Culture – the ECO NET Project.

In Romania, the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation took the strategic decision to disseminate at national level the training firm concept. During 2001-2004, the project was implemented in 10 schools included in the ECO NET project, by applying the method during

practical training (on the basis of Order 4508/2001). The results achieved allowed the extension of the training firm concept at the level of all economic schools by including the contents in the national curriculum in the 2006 -2007 school year (on the basis of Order 3172/2006).

Specific objectives:

- Facilitation of the graduates' transition from school to active life
- Development of the national TVET students' entrepreneurial spirit
- Development of the adults' entrepreneurial spirit in continuing training programmes

Beneficiaries in the school year 2007/2008: students from IVET schools – profile: services, which train the following qualifications:

- Ø tourism technician
- Ø mail activities technician
- Ø economic activities technician
- Ø technician in administration
- Ø technician in contracting and procurement
- Ø hostel services technician
- Ø technician in trade activities
- Ø technician in gastronomy
- Ø banqueting organizer

Future beneficiaries are:

- Ø Students who train in other domains than the economic one
- Ø Adults, to keep their job or find a new one.

### **The training firm in the compulsory curriculum**

Modules included in the compulsory curriculum, through which the necessary conditions to use the training firm method are assured.

XIth grade:

- Operational planning
- Business marketing
- Human resources

XIIth grade:

- Business negotiation
- Business financing
- Competitional environment

### **These modules include thematic contents which assure the development of entrepreneurship competences through the training firm. These contents refer to:**

- Establishment and registration of the training firm at ROCT1 (the CRISROM2 department for the coordination of pre-university education training firms) ;
- Legal and structural organization of the training firm;
- Transactions with other training firms;
- Recording of the operations carried out in the operative record;
- Use of the IT software for different applications;
- Use of foreign languages in business;
- Use of commercial correspondence.



## **Complexity levels of the training firm**

**Mini training firm – Level I** (*recommended before proceeding to the actual training in the training firm*)

The training will take place in a so called *learning office*, where all economic activities will be simulated on the basis of a closed model. The economic situations are initiated by the teacher, and the commercial relations with the customers, the fiscal institutions, the banks and the service enterprises are presented by teachers. This training firm organization model can be utilized within the framework of the local development curriculum for schools with profiles other than services, or in IXth and Xth grades as a stage preceding the establishment of the training firm.

### **Training firm features**

- no relation with the external environment
- not registered at ROCT (Romanian Centre for Training Firms)
- the simulated situations are initiated by the teacher
- action-oriented teaching-learning process. The student goes through all the office's departments and carries out his tasks either individually, or in a team.

**Training firm – Level 2** (*For new firms – at the Xith grade, direct pathway, and the XIIth grade, progressive route*)

### **Training firm features:**

- A properly endowed economic and entrepreneurial centre
- The firm is registered at the ROCT
- Business relations with national training firms
- Carrying out all necessary work within an enterprise in order to solve the current operations
- Organizing presentations of the training firm
- Opening of a bank account at the training firm bank within ROCT for the reimbursements

**Training firm – Level 3** (*For more than 2 years-old firms, i.e. training firms attended by several generations of students*)

### **Training firm features**

**Besides** level 2:

- contracts with at least 3 training firms from abroad
- operations also in foreign languages
- students have the status of an employee – are paid
- taxes are calculated correctly

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, the training firm is included in the national curriculum at the technological route, services profile, qualification level 3.

Activity in the training firm takes place within the technologic laboratory courses, as follows:

- XIth and XIIth grades, Technologic High-school –direct route, 3 hours/week, compact session.
- XIIth and XIIIth grades, Technologic High-school –progressive route, 3 hours/week, compact session

The Implementation of the concept required the covering of several stages:

Stage I: 2001-2004

Stage II: 2004-2006

Stage III: 2007-2009

Activities during stages I and II:

-HR training through training seminars for teachers who coordinate training firms from the 10 schools involved in the project.

- HR training through training seminars for teachers who coordinate training firms from other schools than those involved in the project.

-elaboration of didactic support (“The Training firm guide” and a CD with pedagogical resources for the teaching-learning activity carried out through the training firm.

The training has been carried out in cooperation with KulturKontakt, Austria.

The next stage will strengthen and will extend the training firms network. This will be done through:

\_ Elaboration and implementation of the training firms’ establishment and functioning procedures at the level of the *services* schools network and of the “quality mark” methodological benchmarks

\_ Elaboration of the procedures of monitoring and evaluation of the training firms’ activities.

\_ Organization of the IVth edition of the International Training Firms Fair, RO TIFE 2008

\_ Participation of the training firms to national and international fairs;

\_ Implementation of the adult continuing training concept.

### **The training firm in extracurricular activities**

Extracurricular activities allow the training of the competences developed through the compulsory curriculum within national and international training firm fairs.

These activities assure optimal conditions for the competitive spirit and help recognize the added value of the *training firm* method within the vocational education and training system.

The Romanian students’ competitiveness, creativity and professionalism were awarded with national and international prizes, for the following categories:

- Best catalogue
- Best training firm
- Best marketing department
- Best stand
- Best spot video
- Best negotiation
- Best salesman

## **4.6 Vocational education and training at post secondary level (non tertiary)**

**Post high school state education:** it is organized by the Ministry of Education and Research Innovation, on its own initiative or at the request of companies or other institutions that are interested. Tuition costs are paid by the applicants who must be high school graduates whether they are baccalaureate diploma holders or not. After they pass the final graduation exams, the graduates get a graduation certificate, accompanied by a certificate specifying their professional competence.

*Percentage of total school aged population*

	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007
<i>Post secondary</i>	1,8	1,6	1,4	1,2	1,1	1,0	0,8
<i>post high school</i>	1,6	1,4	1,2	1,1	1,0	0,9	0,7
<i>Foremen</i>	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1

#### 4.7 Vocational education and training at tertiary level

Concerning CVT it is usually provided by private organizations or by companies. The curricula of adult VET training in Romania is also a combination of classroom input and practical work in training workshops and in company owned facilities/venues/production lines.

The only data available relates to the vocational training courses organized by ANOFM.

<b>Persons who attended vocational training programmes organised by ANOFM</b>						
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Total participants</b>	93,786	99,644	140,256	75,209	59,780	65,031
<b>Unemployed (% of total participants)</b>	29.5	19.6	21.4	48.5	88.8	86.0
<b>Total graduates</b>	66,645	67,114	83,215	52,800	37,859	54,906
<b>Successful applicants (% of total graduates)</b>	15.9	23.9	17.3	21.9	43.0	45.2

Source: The Statistic Yearbook of Romania, National Institute of Statistics (Institutul National de Statistica, [INS](#)), Bucharest, 2007.

**5.1.1. General background (administrative structure and financing)**

*Law no. 375/2002* approving and modifying the *GD 129/2000* supports LLL measures specific to CVET such as: guaranteeing the access to CVET of all employees by including this right in the collective labour agreement, encouraging employers to invest in HRD, evaluating and recognising the competencies acquired by non-formal and informal learning. Whereas the above-mentioned issues are addressed in general terms, the law is very specific in defining the responsibilities and conditions for accrediting training providers. The National Adult Training Board is given a central role in the accreditation. *Law no. 253/2003* consequently reviews the functioning of the National Adult Training Board (NATB). It amends and completes a previous one (*Law 132/1999*) focusing more on NATB's new role in authorising training providers. With the new law the Council for Occupational Standards and Assessment (COSA) has been integrated into the NATB, bringing the occupational standards development and assessment tasks under a common umbrella. In October 2003, the methodology for authorising the adult training providers has been adopted through the *EO 522/2003*, completing the legal framework for adult training. The directive regulates the work of County Authorisation Committees under the coordination of NATB.

The National Agency for Employment and Vocational Training has been established through the *Law 145/1998* as a tripartite body with a major role in managing active labour market programmes and organising adult vocational training programmes. Through the regulations *EO 294/2000* and *GD 260/2001* the functioning of the re-baptised National Agency for Employment was reviewed, providing NAE with some new responsibilities in the field of employment and vocational training. According to the *Employment Law (76/2002)*, the Agency is responsible for coordinating vocational training and retraining programmes for the unemployed (financed from the Unemployment Fund) as well as for other persons looking for jobs.

According to the Labour Code (art. 189) firms can provide vocational training to their employees in any of the following forms: a) attendance of training courses organized by employers or by suppliers of vocational training services; b) vocational on-the-job training for new-entrants to a position or work place; c) probationary and post-graduate training in Romania and abroad; d) on-the-job vocational training; e) coaching; f) other forms of training agreed upon between employer and employee.

Employers of more than 20 employees are bound by law to prepare and provide, every year, in agreement with the trade union or the employees representatives, vocational training schemes, which are attached to the collective agreement at company level, as an integral part thereof.

Employers are also supposed to create the appropriate conditions for all their employees to take part in vocational training programmes, as follows: a) at least once every 2 years, if they employ 21 or more employees; b) at least once every 3 years, if they employ 21 or less employees. The related training expenses are borne by employers.

When the employer fails to comply with the obligation to provide the funds for the vocational training of an employee, such employee is entitled to a paid leave of up to 10 working days or up to 80 working hours, for vocational training purposes.

Government Ordinance no. 129/2000, regarding the vocational training of adults sets forth that adults have a right to enjoy equal opportunities of vocational training, with no discrimination on account of age, gender, race, ethnic origin, political or religious affiliation.

The same ordinance expressly provides:

- the obligation of all employers to take appropriate measures in order to put in place the requisite conditions for their employees to enjoy access to vocational training, and

- the right of job seekers to attend the free vocational training programmes provided by the National Agency for Employment (Agentia Nationala de Ocupare a Fortei de Munca, ANOFM) or by other, duly licensed, providers of vocational training services.

The Labour Code (*Law 53/2003*), in place from March 2003, pays ample attention to training in enterprises. Employers are obliged to provide regular training and develop annual training plans in consultation with staff representatives or trade unions. The law also establishes the general principles for apprenticeship contracts, whereby the employer, apart from salary payment assumes the responsibility to provide vocational training in a certain trade.

In Romania, the continuous vocational training system has been organised as a network of national, local and sector structures of the authorities in charge. The Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities (Ministerul Muncii, Familiei si Egalitatii de Sanse), in cooperation with the ministries and other relevant bodies, elaborates the policies and strategies for the continuous vocational training. MMFES closely cooperates with the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation (Ministerul Educatiei, Cercetarii si Inovarii) in order to articulate the correspondence between the initial and the continuous vocational training.

The National Council for the Vocational Training of Adults (Consiliul National pentru Formarea Profesionala a Adultilor, CNFPA), which also acts as national authority for qualifications (a tripartite body) performs a multitude of tasks: develops and implements, with the assistance of the sector committees (also tripartite), the methodological basis (including the instruments) for the assessment of competency, based on an occupational analysis for each specific sector; elaborates the occupational standards, and the qualification standards; validates the qualifications; elaborates the national register of occupations; certifies the levels of competence and qualification; ensures the quality of the continuous vocational training system; coordinates the licensing of providers of vocational training services.

The National Agency for Employment (NAE-ANOFM-Agentia Nationala pentru Ocuparea Fortei de Munca) also a tripartite body, carries out the active measures for the stimulation of employment, including vocational counselling, guidance, and training, and allocates the requisite financial resources from the unemployment fund.

Vocational training programmes are organised by the county employment agencies, through their own vocational training centres, through the regional vocational training centres for adults, and through licensed providers of vocational training services, all being available mainly to job seekers, but also to employees, and other, interested, individuals.

The task of private or state-owned vocational training services providers is to organise, implement and evaluate vocational training programmes, which must satisfy the competence needs of companies and individual clients.

One of the most important sources of finance concerning development of human resources and professional training remains the European Community projects. The European Community has started and financed many programs: Phare: RICOP, which is part of the Economic and Social Cohesion Phare Programs for Human Resources. Romania takes part in the communitarian programme Leonardo da Vinci, which follows the improvement of the quality, innovative character and the European dimension of the practice and of continuous professional training systems.

The expenditures covered from the unemployment fund, for vocational training and retraining of the unemployed rose from 9.4 million in 2001, 11.3 million in 2002, 14.7 million in 2003, 16.6 million in 2004 to 15.4 million in 2005.

The 2006 - 2008 short and medium-term Strategy for continuing vocational training, enacted through Government Decision no. 875/2005 states that: Continuous vocational training (CVT) is not properly supported in the manufacturing industry, with the exception of the big corporations, particularly the multinational ones.

No official data exist in respect of the individuals who funded their own training needs. Individually funded attendance of CVT courses is minimal due to unaffordable costs and due to the

lack of a system of incentives or extra deductible costs for the persons who are willing to pay for their own training out of pocket.

The Tax Code has provisions designed to encourage vocational training:

- Vocational training activities performed by any entity, irrespective of such entity ownership status, shall by value added tax exempt;
- For the determination of the taxable income, the expenses incurred by an employer for the vocational training and professional upgrading of its staff shall be deemed deductible;
- For income earned from free lance activities, tax payers may also deduct from their and their employees earnings the amounts spent for participation in congresses and other events if professional by their nature.
- The unemployment fund provides free vocational training for the unemployed and disadvantaged persons.
- In addition to these categories of persons, the unemployment fund also provides funding for 50% of the vocational/professional training of maximum 20% of the employees of a company. Such vocational/professional training programmes are devised to prevent unemployment, and the companies have to meet a number of requirements to qualify for them.

In Romania, the first two programmes financed from the European Social Fund, i.e. the Sectoral Operational Plan for the Development of Human Resources (SOPDHR), and the SOP for the Development of Administrative Capacity (SOPDAC), was launched on 15 February 2008.

EUROSTAT survey CVTS2 (2002), conducted in enterprises by the National Institute of Statistics with 1999 as the reference year, shows that, on an average, Romanian enterprises spent for each employee 3 times less than the EU member states average.

In many situations, the responsibility for training is “transferred” by the enterprise to the employee. No data are available with regard to the individuals’ contribution to their own training.

A similar survey, using EUROSTAT compatible methodology was completed in 2006, relying on the data collected in 2005. Results show that the discrepancy between Romania and EU27 remains approximately to the same level (average cost of CVT courses/by participant represented 0.3% from the average cost of CVT courses at EU27 level).

### 5.1.2 **Major characteristics of formal CVET**

## **5.2 Non-formal education**

### 5.2.1 **General background (administrative structure and financing)**

Non -formal education has not been recognized until very recently in Romania. However, starting with the year 2000, a procedure has been designed so as to recognize non-formally acquired skills and competencies. The NATB has accredited evaluation centres whereby persons having acquired several skills and or competencies can receive certification following of course an examination procedure. In the meantime, the system allows for partial certification as most of the training curricula for which training providers do receive accreditation from the NATB are modular in their concept thus allowing for partial certification. In most of the cases, this being valid of course for qualification courses, the law allows for participants to go directly at the level of training for which they need certification, after passing an examination which tests their acquired skills and competencies, be they formally or non-formally acquired ones. This system practically allows for great flexibility in training provision as well as in the recognition of already acquired qualifications or competencies, depending which is the case for. It also brings into the mainstream of the labour market all those competencies, skills and even sometimes qualifications for which either individuals do not hold a formally recognized certification or for which, alternatively, there is no formal vocational training pathway.

### 5.2.2 Major characteristics of non-formal CVET

### 5.3 Measures to help job-seekers and people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market

The main measures to help people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market are:

- **The national programme of vocational training for 2008 of National Employment Agency** with the main objectives:
  - ü To facilitate the access of all persons to vocational training congruent with its abilities and the needs of the labour market;
  - ü To change the qualification in order to correspond with the requirements imposed by the economic reorganization, by the social mobility and by the changes in the work capacity;
  - ü To insure a participation rate, at national level, slowly increased against 2007, when it was 12% of the average stock of registered unemployed at the territorial agencies of employment.
  - ü To increase the level of human capital to become competitive on a concurential market;
  - ü To increase of the coverage level in vocational training for persons from rural area;
  - ü The reinsertion of unprivileged target groups through qualification/requalification.

Thus for the year of 2008, it foreseen the inclusion of 55150 beneficiary persons of vocational training programmes and 44.059 unemployed who are on the evidence of territorial employment agencies. From those 44059 unemployed persons that will be included on courses, 20861 will be women.

The national programme for vocational training for the year of 2008 organized through the employment agencies it address to:

- § Long term unemployed (8585 persons)
- § Persons who works in the rural area(20532 persons)
- § Persons with disabilities(216 persons)
- § Rom persons(2143 persons)
- § Prisoners(2549 persons)

O special attention is accorded to the people from rural area that is looking for a job.

- **The employment programme for the people vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market for 2008 of National Employment Agency** with the general objective: the social inclusion of the people vulnerable to the exclusion from the labour market.

The specific objectives are:

- ü The decreasing risk of social exclusion;
- ü The guidance of the people vulnerable to social exclusion in the system of formal and non-formal education;
- ü The decreasing number of unemployed persons with age under 35 years. From the category of persons vulnerable to social exclusion.

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## Theme 6: Training VET teachers and trainers

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### 6.1 Types of teacher and trainer occupations in VET

In Romania, there are three main types of teachers in technical and vocational schools: general education teachers, vocational subject teachers and practical trainers, respectively. A vocational subject teacher in a technical school must have a university education (4-6 year programmes) and a psychology-pedagogy course. A vocational subject teacher in a vocational school must have a three year degree from an institution of higher education. A practical trainer must complete a two year training programme comprising both specialty training (theory and practice) and psychology-pedagogy training in addition to three years of work experience after having completed their vocational education.

Initial training for the teaching profession differs according to the level of education.

-Teachers for pre-school and primary education must be graduates of the pedagogical high school (qualified as educators, primary school teachers respectively) or short-term pedagogical university college (qualified as institutors).

-Teaching staff for the other levels of education (including VET system) must be graduates of higher education (university-pedagogic and university-polytechnic education), long term (4-6 year for high school teachers) or short-term (3 years for vocational and apprenticeship schoolteachers). In addition to specialised training for those who wish to become teachers it is compulsory to take a psychology-pedagogy module organised by the Teacher Training Department, which exists in each higher education institution. The programmes that provide psychological-pedagogical training include: courses in pedagogy, psychology, specific teaching methodology, teaching practice and optional courses (established according to the orientations and options of every higher education institution).

- Foremen instructors must be graduates of a foremen school. At this level and as a consequence of the reform process the position of foreman-instructor/trainer has been introduced for a variety of broad vocational qualification domains (e.g. foreman-instructor in engineering, telecommunications, etc). Training programmes for foremen-instructors last for 2 years and have a 3-module structure: individual and social development, specialised training (theoretical and practical) and pedagogical and didactic training (theoretical and practical). To become foremen-instructors graduates of foremen schools who have not attended the special training programme described above must have at least 3 years experience in the field.

The teachers contribute to quality assurance in VET by:

- use of student-centred teaching methodology;
- improvement of the quality of the teaching process after regular evaluation (at least annually) of students' satisfaction;
- team planning, at least at curriculum level, of teaching and assessment activities;
- offering individual support, at students' request;
- knowing and applying the quality assurance measures established at school level.

The low attractiveness of a teaching career, the relative persisting rigidity in the professional routes and rewarding of the teachers, limit the possibilities of the education and initial VET providers to recruit and maintain the quality young graduates in a teaching career. Combined with the ageing trend of the personnel, it is expected for the existing deficits to accrue and to coexist with an overall surplus of teaching personnel. All these will negatively affect the quality and responsiveness of the education and initial VET to the labour market demands, particularly in case of new occupations.

In 2001, the Ministry of Education adopted the Strategy for Initial and Continuing Training of Educators and Education Managers. Covering the period 2001-2004, the aim of the strategy is to



give the teaching career a more professional status by establishing a system of occupational standards based on teaching skills and modernise the teacher training provision. For the first time the education manager is recognised as a profession, requiring appropriate training. Modular periodical in-service training programmes have been developed. By GD 604/June 2002 a National Training Centre for Teaching Staff in pre-Tertiary Education was established as a development and quality assurance agency for teacher training, merging two existing teacher-training centres. Since universities carry out teacher training, the training of teachers will be affected further by changes introduced through the Bologna process. The strategy does not address personnel management issues (such as career perspectives, motivation and remuneration) that could make the teaching profession more attractive.

The current stage of VET in Romania induces the necessity that teacher should conceive and implement development projects inside their school. Project management and project design training is needed to access financing programs issued by the Government or the EU.

Also the teachers in VET currently need communication skills and networking skills in order to enable them to access European projects and networks related to their activity.

As a methodological approach, the teachers of technical disciplines further need pedagogical skills in order to enable their creativity towards implementing new participative training ways, to encourage dialogue and common search for answers with the trainees, thus making a big step towards developing linguistic and logical competences together with technical skills.

Teachers need to learn how to pass to their students (apart working skills) broader concepts, responsibility towards actions, analytic skills, communication skills, teamwork spirit.

Since teachers in VET are preparing workers, skilled workers and technicians for the companies and since SMEs form the majority of employers, the teaching process should be in fact simulating conditions in the company, and the pupil must acquire information on how a company generally works, apart technical skills on how his specific technical task has to be fulfilled.

In 2008, it was continued the implementing of the Phare ESC 2005 and 2006 grant schemes "*Developing the continuous training of pre-university personnel*" which support the training of teachers and school principals from high-schools in rural areas; financing contracts were signed for 18 projects aiming at training 1,670 teachers from 77 high-schools in rural areas. Under Phare 2006 "*Developing the continuous training of pre-university personnel*", a TA project started and aims to develop the monitoring system of the accredited continuous training programmes; it also seeks to conduct the impact assessment of the continuous training programmes for the direct beneficiaries (teachers and principals) and indirect beneficiaries (students, school, community etc.). The conclusions of this impact assessment will be used for adopting measures to improve the methodological framework and programs for continuous training of teachers.

The "*Continuous training for teachers*" programme has continued in 2008 with the following categories being targeted : teachers from the management and control personnel in pre-university education (49% of the management personnel) and some teachers took part in training programmes like: tenure and didactic degrees programmes, regular training programmes with 90 compulsory credits gathered at graduation, Ministry of Education and Research priority programmes, continuous training programmes developed the County Teachers' Training Centres.

Adult learning and education (ALE) for teachers is financed by the government (public funds), by the participants and from dedicated European funds. Every teacher receives an amount equal with the total costs of the courses needed for a five years period and he/she will choose the LLL courses according with his/her training needs.

Build and develop the professional competencies of teachers in order to raise the quality and the efficiency of the education system is an important objective of the Ministry of Education Research and Innovation policy.

As far as Comenius (the component of the Community Programme Socrates) is concerned, there is one sub-component that allows for teachers involved in school education to attend in-

service training courses abroad, organised by training centres in EU countries. As a result of their participation at such continuous training activities, one could mention:

- improved teaching skills and knowledge of the teachers, with up-to-date information and methodology provided by European teacher training institutions;
- better knowledge of the other European educational systems and the future objectives in education and training for EU;
- encouraging innovation in teaching and, therefore, in the school life ;
- strengthening the European dimension at school level.

In the period 1997-2008, 4,491 teachers at the pre-university level benefited from inservice training courses/stages/activities abroad, financed through Comenius funds, amounting 6,736,500 EUR. The National Centre for Staff Training in Pre-university Education (NCTPE) was created in 2001 as a public body in charge with the accreditation of the programs for train the teachers. Among the institutions dealing with the education of adults included also in the Ministry of Education and Research network, NCTPE has mainly attributions in development of the carrier of teachers (the quality assurance in the field of the continuous training programs).

As a consequence of implementing Law no 288/2004, a new teaching plan has been designed for training teachers both from primary and secondary education. On one side, there is a step ahead represented by the training of all the teachers within programs at tertiary level. On the other side, focusing on the general didactic training puts at risk the efficient work in class of these graduates. For the secondary level, the initial training of the teachers leaves less room for didactics. The accent placed on the general psycho-pedagogical training, the teachers' training programs helps the future teacher too little in order to face the challenges of the modern classroom and the knowledge-based society.

## 6.2 Types of teachers and trainers in IVET

## 6.3 Types of teachers and trainers in CVET

Regarding the TVET teachers' training, under TVET 2005 Phare, in 2008, 1,274 TVET teachers were trained, as follows:

	<b>Number of persons trained under TVET 2005 Phare in 2008</b>
Teachers in the field of quality assurance	227
Teachers in the field of participative management	340
Teachers in the field of qualifications development /review and curriculum development,	232
Teachers in the field of development of learning materials	169
Teachers in the filed of developing learning modules for students with special educational needs	93
Quality monitors and school inspectors	196
Teachers in the field of distance learning	17

Teachers trained in 2008 under Continuing training programmes:

	<b>Number of persons trained in 2008 under the <i>Continuous training teachers programme</i></b>
Teachers from the management and control personnel in pre-university education	6,089
Teachers in tenure and didactic degrees programmes	18,306
Teachers in regular training programmes with 90 compulsory credits gathered at graduation	19,884
Teachers in Ministry of Education and Research priority programmes,	16,831
Teachers in continuous training programmes developed the County Teachers' Training Centres	188,236

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### **Theme 7: Matching VET provision with labour market needs**

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For Romania, there is no institutional capacity dedicated to the task of anticipating the skill needs mismatch and other as such. However, studies and researches have been undertaken with the financing of Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of education by the National Labour Research Institute. None of the studies is systematic in nature in the sense that they have been only performed once.

#### **Providing an easy transition of young people from school to labour market**

In the second quarter of 2008, the youth unemployment rate was 17.4%, and the youth employment rate was 25.9%.

In the first half of 2008, 74,666 youths were included in programmes of active measures, while the number of employed people was 47,268. By the end of the first semester of 2008, the number of unemployed people under the age of 25 attending vocational training programmes was 4514.

ANOFM implements the programme - *From school, to professional life, towards career*, which addressed the future graduates of pre-university education. In the first semester of 2008, 1,392 awareness and counselling sessions were carried out for students in pre-university education (students in terminal grades), when compared to 1,782 sessions held throughout the year 2007.

#### **Obstacles and issues preventing further adult participation in lifelong learning and skills development**

At the beginning of the decade, studies into CVT and LLL in Romanian enterprises would have highlighted the cost of training as the main obstacle in offering training to employees. This is not a predominant factor, although of the 26,100 enterprises that did not offer any type of CVT-LLL to their employees (59.7% of the total number of enterprise studied), around half, still indicate the high cost of training as the main hurdle.

A significant share of these companies are companies in the textile and footwear industries which tend to employ a larger than average number of women; of the two industries, 61.6% of the leather industry and 56.6% of the textile industry have not been able to offer any form of LLL due to the impossibility of meeting the associated cost. The fact that such companies still contribute a significant part of the national economy and, by the nature of their activity, have low profit margins

which do not allow them to invest in training and LLL for their participants, not only points to a significant obstacle in accessing LLL for many workers but also indicates one of the causes of the labour shortages facing this industry at an alarming rate. With an average salary below the national average and with no prospects of advancement through training and LLL, it is little wonder that workers shun these sectors and prefer to emigrate (even though the latter may lead to undeclared work and thus expulsion in destination countries).

However, of the enterprises that have provided some form of CVT-LLL to their employees, one third has offered the classical type course and 94.9% have offered some form of special courses to low qualified or unqualified workers. It is therefore the vulnerable group that has received the most attention possibly courtesy of the booming activity in construction and infrastructure - both labour hungry sectors - who also feel the loss of labour inflicted by emigration.

Other vulnerable categories, like ethnic minorities or people with disabilities are not evident as beneficiaries of training or LLL, either in training for entrepreneurs or traditional and more expensive forms of training courses; of the 12,100 enterprises that have offered training courses to their employees, only 1.1% have offered any form of special training or LLL for minorities, (notably the Roma population), or for individuals with disabilities.

Therefore, these two groups remain the most disadvantaged in the labour market for accessing CVT and LLL.

Out of the 26,100 enterprises which have not offered any form of CVT to their employees, more than 84% have declared the “current level of knowledge and skills of their employees” as the main reason for doing so.

Skill gaps and skill shortages are the main complaint of Romanian businesses, but it also highlights the extent to which schools/university [in]sufficiently prepare people for the labour market and the long period of time after the completion of studies where no further training or formalised learning is felt to be needed. This also explains why Initial Vocational Training which can qualify more as Life Long Learning than CVT itself has been offered only by 1.8% of the total number of enterprises investigated of those offering CVT.

This points to the fact that new-entrants in the labour market, to whom initial vocational training is usually addressed, are another group facing additional difficulties accessing LLL.

The Romanian system of information, guidance and counselling services is composed of many networks, centres or services, under the supervision of several Ministries (the Ministry of Education -MoE-, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity -MoLSS-, the Ministry of Youth -MoY- and the Ministry of Health network -MoH-). All institutions above are funded by the state budget.

Within the Ministry of Education's network the Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres (PPAC) and Inter-School Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Offices (ISPPAC) are territorial centres subordinated to the county School Inspectorates that offer information, guidance and counselling services to students at all levels of pre-university education.

By the MoE Order no. 3370 (03.09.1998), the **Institute of Educational Sciences** through its **Educational and Vocational Guidance Department** was granted the role of methodological authority for the MoE's guidance and counselling network. The Institute for Educational Sciences is a departmental research institute in the field of education, funded by the MoE. It undertakes research in the field, designs working tools that meet counsellors' professional needs, organises short-term information/training programs for counsellors working in the information, guidance and counselling network.

The **Educational and Vocational Guidance Department** within the Institute of educational Sciences is run by a team of highly qualified researchers, experts in the field of guidance and counseling. Their educational background is in psychology and educational sciences; most of them have a PhD in Psychology or a Master degree in Educational Sciences, Guidance and Counseling. They began as promoters of information, guidance, counseling and continuous education projects and participated as partners in European evaluative research projects targeted at: distance counseling, use of ITC in counseling activity, drawing up occupational profiles, designing open models of counseling, entrepreneurial education and adult education, respectively, creating information tools for disseminating - on a transnational scale - information on education and training opportunities.

In the actual context of institutional and professional development of counseling services, the Educational and Vocational Guidance Department undertakes the following activities:

- Methodological coordination of the national school-counseling network involving Centres of Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance;
- quality assurance for counseling activities at undergraduate level through research focused on working methods, dissemination of publications in the field, curriculum guideline proposals and legislative initiatives;
- interface and resource centre for pupils, teachers, parents and practitioners, aiming at offering information, practical support, guidance, consultations and supervision in the field of career counseling;
- professional information and good practice exchanges together with support and guidelines for a coherent action strategy for counseling networks working with different target groups (pupils, students, adults);
- implementing the Romanian National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (NRCVG-RO) activities, as the national representative of the Euroguidance Network that is made up of similar centres from European countries;
- facilitating the development of interinstitutional contacts and international partnerships through exchanges and mobility programmes;
- participating in national and international projects with different objectives: improving working methods in career counseling, free-barrier access to information concerning education, training and working in the EU, diversifying the training offer and structures etc.;
- modernisation of professional practice by promoting modern career counselling tools, especially Information and Communication Technology (ICT) achievements;
- support for the decision making process of the Ministry of Education for implementing policies in the field of career counseling.

The Educational and Vocational Guidance Department within the Institute of Educational Sciences also developed the following ICT instruments for counsellors' use:

- **Education 2000** - educational guidance software, aimed at facilitating the choice of study stream at pre-university level.
- **PICC 2002** - career guidance software for primary registration of data on the beneficiaries of counselling and guidance services: school or university students, adults or other clients.
- **Agenda** - primary registration software on counsellors' working data: institutions, individuals, publications etc.
- **EUROSTAGE project** - facilitates the mobility of students looking for an internship abroad.
- **ESTIA** - European platform containing information on education, labour market, world of occupations.
- **Distance counselling** - the objective of this project is to develop a specific methodology for distance counselling (through phone, letters, fax, e-mail), as a response to the increasing need for information on European opportunities of vocational training and employment.

Career guidance refers to services and activities intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers.

Such services may be found in schools, universities and colleges, in training institutions, in public employment services, in the workplace, in the voluntary and community sector and in the private sector.

The activities may take place on an individual or group basis, and may be face- to- face or at a distance.

The guidance career include:

- Ø Career info provision
- Ø Assessment and self-assessment tools
- Ø Counseling interviews
- Ø Career education programmes
- Ø Taster programmes (to sample options before choosing them)
- Ø Work search programs
- Ø Transition services.

One of the main environments for delivering guidance services is –and has been for a long time – the school, and indeed, it is there where young people are most likely first to come across formally-provided guidance.

Today, most countries extend the provision of services to different school levels, providing services in a richer variety of ways.

There is a clear trend across the 29 countries reviewed to expand guidance services vertically, across all grade levels of lower and upper secondary school, so that it is developmental in orientation.

The career education and guidance in the primary school are limited or non-existent. Young people need to make a smooth transition from primary to the initial years of secondary school. Career guidance needs to be part of the process that helps them to make a smooth transition.

Career education is increasingly present in the curriculum at the lower secondary school level, either as a separate subject or included in another subject.

At times, the curriculum seems to be designed to suit the organizational needs of the school rather than the career development needs of the student. Often career education has little connection to the wider school curriculum.

In lower secondary school personal career guidance frequently targets students at key decision-making points:

- § When they are choosing subjects
- § Prior to the end of compulsory schooling

§ At the transition to upper secondary level or to work.

However, often those who are targeted for personal interviews are not selected on the basis of well-defined need.

It is often assumed that upper secondary- school students have made their educational and career choices and that they do not need further support.

This assumption is especially made for students in vocational education pathways.

Lifelong learning in the Romanian context and career guidance as a support service have been a priority ever since the first Act on Unemployment Insurance has been passed in 1991. Employment services, at the time still a structure inside the Ministry of Labour, have started to develop special counselling and career guidance services, designed as a basic provision and conceived as an active labour market and employment policy capable of contributing to fast transition of the unemployed, mostly dislocated workers from state firms under restructuring, back into some form of employment or at least into a form of training that would lead to a future employment. Broadly speaking, all of the registered unemployed are eligible for such a service, which has been considered as a basic, fundamental provision of the PES. Regular training of the staff in counselling techniques and career guidance has been carried out. Vocational training provided by the Employment services in their own facilities has always included a career guidance module as mandatory component. Meanwhile, the PES, while contracting vocational training services for the unemployed with private training providers has always included as an integral part of the contractual provision, a module on career guidance and labour market counselling. This module is integrated into the course curricula submitted by training providers accessing, on a competitive basis of course, the PES funds. During the late nineties, with industrial restructuring and mass lay-offs in full swing, career guidance and counselling services have been contracted with private providers on a nationwide scale, using both national funds as well as a rather large World Bank loan aimed at alleviating the social impact of radical but much-needed reform. Mandatory job-placements targets, sometimes even deemed as excessive, have been assigned to all contractors providing services (active employment measures) to dislocated workers, including those providing career counselling services. This practice has been retained till now, with job-placements targets being assigned to career counselling services contracted with both private and public service providers.

Career guidance and counselling services have been further boosted starting with 1999, when the PSE have been re-organized into an autonomous public service, known as the National Agency for Employment-NAE. Counselling and career guidance services have been since considered an Active Labour Market Policy. Commencing with 2002, when a new law on unemployment insurance has been enacted, so as to replace to already outdated 1991 Act, budgets for active labour market policies have registered a constant increase, with vocational training and life-learning and their accompanying services becoming centre-stage. This has been especially the case after the start of the JAP (Joint Assessment Paper on Employment Policies Paper) Process in 2002, which has firmly stated that vocational training, lifelong learning and their accompanying services should be treated as a national priority and as way of both increasing productivity in Romania's economy as well as a way of increasing the employability of its labour force and the overall employment rate.

Meanwhile, since 2001, such services have received a further boost by the establishment of the National Adult Training Board-NATB, as a body under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour, with tripartite structure (Government, trade unions and employers' organizations), in charge with the overall supervision and regulation of the adult vocational training market. As such the NATB has concentrated upon the elaboration of several regulation aimed at creating incentives for the training providers to increase the quality of their service provision. A system of accreditation has been put into place, applying for state, private pro-profit and private non-profit entities. The specialized entities in the structure of NAE, which now includes both county as well as regional adult vocational training centres has thus been duly obliged to enter the accreditation procedure for the services which it provides. Counselling and career guidance services have thus received a most welcome re-enforcement as adult vocational training programs contracted by providers, either public or private with the NAE, have to include a mandatory career guidance and labour market

counselling module, as a prerequisite for their ability to provide graduates with nationally recognized diplomas or certificates.

Apart from career guidance services provided by various organizations under the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education currently provides such services for all students in compulsory education as well as for students in high-schools (lycee) as well as for students in vocational schools (known as “arts and trades schools” in Romania). Universities, both public and private, provide such services on an extensive scale. The provision of such services in primary and secondary education as well as in the alternative route of vocational education is compulsory, with more and more schools having own cabinets for career guidance, staffed with professionals. Nevertheless, while urban schools fare better in this respect, a lot needs to be done in the rural areas, where such outlets are a rare sight. In the meantime, one has to note that, while numbers are growing, quality, even in better faring urban areas, still leaves a lot of room for improvement. Lack of professional staff is sometimes acute as motivation packages in the public education system are not particularly attractive for young graduates with specialty studies. Same applies for the public employment services. It is worth mentioning that most of the private training providers contracting with the NAE and thus obliged to include career guidance modules in their programs do not have their own specialized staff and in most cases use staff from the NAE local branch offices. However, large multinationals that steadily increase their presence on the Romanian market are quite active in the field, with most of their in-house training programs having career guidance modules.

Career guidance activities and counselling services are also provided by a wealth of NGOs that operate on the market since the early nineties and are spread over the entire country. Some of them tend to specialize in disadvantaged groups such as the Roma population (gypsies), providing career guidance and counselling for children and youngsters from disadvantaged communities or for children at risk of economic exploitation. Gender dimension and the concept of equal opportunities are incorporated into all the approaches outlined above, irrespective of the nature of the entity providing such services.

An important impetus has been given by the Phare funds destined to the Development of Human Resources, which have prompted the emergence of new organizations and programs that have focused on career guidance and counselling services for particular target groups or for particular areas that have been heavily affected by industrial restructuring. The National Scientific Research Institute for Labour has been itself involved and has operated such a program, destined for women, in the Lower-Danube city port of Braila.

A more recent overture in the field, have been the services provided by micro-finance organizations active in Romania, a dynamic sector, benefiting from a recently enacted modern legislation. This normative body allows these entities to carry out such activities as an integral part of their services, thus formalizing an activity most of these organizations have been already undertaking on a large scale, especially in rural communities as part and parcel of their micro-lending activities.

As such, the panorama of career guidance and counselling services for lifelong learning in Romania includes:

- Services provided by the NAE, both through its own network of offices as well as via private providers with which the NAE contracts the provision of such services;
- Services provided by training providers, in the form of special dedicated modules as part of vocational training programs undertaken under the auspices and with the funding of the NAE and thus benefiting from nationally recognized diplomas and/or certificates;
- Services provided by schools and public universities under the authority of the Ministry of Education;



- Services provided by independent training providers or by companies, mainly large ones and multinationals through their own programs;
- Services provided by NGOs or by other entities, using both domestic and international financing, including EU financing;
- Services provided by micro-finance organizations;
- Services provided in the frame of research and innovation programs in the field of socio-economic and human resources management, co-financed by the Ministry of Education and Research, via competitive procedures.

### **Career guidance in schools-Issues that apply to all levels of schooling**

Those who provide career education and guidance in schools are often not career-guidance specialists. They often combine it with other roles:

§ teaching other school subjects

§ providing counseling & guidance for personal problems & study difficulties.

The number of people employed to provide career education & guidance in schools is often not enough to meet student need & demand.

Often services continue to be provided largely on an individual, face-to-face model. This reduces the capacity of the service to respond to all the learners' needs.

Often career-guidance staff does not have the resources it needs to do the job properly:

§ A private space for interviews

§ A library of up-to-date career information

§ A computer

§ Access to a telephone

§ Secretarial assistance.

Many school career guidance services have tenuous links with the world of work:

Teaching staff know little about the labour market & what is involved in different types of jobs

Little contact exists with the public-employment service

Students have very few or no opportunities to take part in work experience

Few employers are invited into the schools to talk to students

Parents have little involvement in the school's career program

### **The Quality of Career Guidance**

Because of the great disparity and lack of professionalisation of guidance workers, there is little regular and systematic evaluation of the quality of career guidance services in most countries.

Standards for the quality of services do not exist or are present in some sectors but not in others.

Where quality standards exist, they tend to be voluntary rather than mandatory.

Only occasionally do quality standards have checking procedures or sanctions attached to them.

There are no standards or control in private sector provision of career guidance services.

Career guidance policies are insufficiently guided by user feedback and by relevant evidence and data, including such basis of data as levels of usage and types of services accessed.

In the absence of quality frameworks, there is an over-reliance on staff qualifications or professional codes of practice to assure quality.

## **9.1 Funding for initial vocational education and training**

Since the school year 2001/02 the system of financing public pre-university education has seen quite a measure of dec-centralization with the several responsibilities related to the financing process passing from the national to the local level of administration. As such, local authorities have taken over: school budgeting, organising and controlling budgetary execution, as well as the administration of all schools.

Local councils now cover the running costs and capital expenditure (including equipment) of education units. Allocated funds were for maintenance, repairs and electricity and heating expenses. However, the MoER is still responsible for the largest part of the budget (that is, salaries, scholarships, teaching materials and books).

In 2003, the MoER announced plans to further accelerate decentralisation of the management of the education system to give school directors and boards more autonomy over the budget.

## **9.2 Funding for continuing vocational education and training and adult learning**

The Labour Code mandates employers to elaborate annual vocational training plans in cooperation with the trade unions, or, if possible, with the representatives of the employees; this is not done on a large scale, because employers want to reduce their expenditure in the workplace. This is the reason why the expenses regarding professional training are mostly covered by individuals.

One of the most important sources of finance concerning development of human resources and professional training remains the European Community projects. The European Community has started and financed many programs: Phare: RICOP, which is part of the Economic and Social Cohesion Phare Programs for Human Resources. Romania takes part in the communitarian programme Leonardo da Vinci, which follows the improvement of the quality, innovative character and the European dimension of the practice and of continuous professional training systems.

The expenditures covered from the unemployment fund, for vocational training and retraining of the unemployed rose from 9.4 million in 2001, 11.3 million in 2002, 14.7 million in 2003, 16.6 million in 2004 to 15.4 million in 2005.

The 2006 - 2008 short and medium-term Strategy for continuing vocational training, enacted through Government Decision no. 875/2005 states that: Continuous vocational training (CVT) is not properly supported in the manufacturing industry, with the exception of the big corporations, particularly the multinational ones.

No official data exist in respect of the individuals who funded their own training needs. Individually funded attendance of CVT courses is minimal due to unaffordable costs and due to the lack of a system of incentives or extra deductible costs for the persons who are willing to pay for their own training out of pocket.

The Tax Code has provisions designed to encourage vocational training:

- Vocational training activities performed by any entity, irrespective of such entity ownership status, shall be value added tax exempt;
- For the determination of the taxable income, the expenses incurred by an employer for the vocational training and professional upgrading of its staff shall be deemed deductible;
- For income earned from free lance activities, tax payers may also deduct from their and their employees earnings the amounts spent for participation in congresses and other events if professional by their nature.
- The unemployment fund provides free vocational training for the unemployed and disadvantaged persons.
- In addition to these categories of persons, the unemployment fund also provides funding for 50% of the vocational/professional training of maximum 20% of the employees of a company. Such

vocational/professional training programmes are devised to prevent unemployment, and the companies have to meet a number of requirements to qualify for them.

In Romania, the first two programmes financed from the European Social Fund, i.e. the Sectoral Operational Plan for the Development of Human Resources (SOPDHR), and the SOP for the Development of Administrative Capacity (SOPDAC), was launched on 15 February 2008.

EUROSTAT survey CVTS2 (2002), conducted in enterprises by the National Institute of Statistics with 1999 as the reference year, shows that, on an average, Romanian enterprises spent for each employee 3 times less than the EU member states average.

In many situations, the responsibility for training is “transferred” by the enterprise to the employee. No data are available with regard to the individuals’ contribution to their own training.

A similar survey, using EUROSTAT compatible methodology was completed in 2006, relying on the data collected in 2005. Results show that the discrepancy between Romania and EU27 remains approximately to the same level (average cost of CVT courses/by participant represented 0.3% from the average cost of CVT courses at EU27 level).

### **9.3 Funding for training for unemployed people and other groups excluded from the labour market**

The training of unemployed is funded out of the Unemployment Fund and organised by the National Agency for Employment (NAE), and partially delivered through its own training centres. Although there has not been any formal system of accreditation, the NAE has assisted CVT providers with methodological assistance to organise their programmes in line with legal requirements. Thus it has performed a quality assurance function for this segment of the training market. From 2004 onwards this role is taken over by the National Adult Training Board (NATB).

Each Regional Pact on Employment and Social Inclusion will be supported by a Permanent Technical Secretariat, set up as non-profit NGO, providing counselling to the Pact’s members in areas such as: elaborating and monitoring the Regional Action Plans on Employment and Social Inclusion and other relevant documents at regional level, supporting Pact’s members as project promoters for submitting eligible projects funded from Community funds. Permanent Technical Secretariats are to be financed in accordance with the Action Plan for the increasing the Structural and Cohesion Funds absorption rate, and is envisaged to be supported from the European Social Fund, in line with the Community regulations.

The National Agency for Employment (NAE) provides, free of charge, from the Unemployment Insurance Fund, vocational training courses for people who perform activities in rural areas and do not have any income or the income is lower than the unemployment benefit and are registered by NAE, in order to acquire the needed competences for facilitating their access on the labour market. Thus, in 2007, NAE organised vocational training programmes for 21.147 people who perform activities in rural areas (out of which 20.992 unemployed people).

In 2007, the allocation from UIF for implementing the National Vocational Training Plan was 42,215 thousand RON (approximately 11 Mil Euro). Until the end of the year the total expenditure for vocational training was 24,724 thousand RON (approximately 6.6 Mil Euro), representing 1.71% of the total expenditure from UIF.

According to the importance of the vocational training as an active measure against unemployment, in 2008, the budget allocated by NAE for the implementation of National Vocational Training Plan was of 44,639 thousand RON (approximately 12 Mil euro), approximately 6% higher than in the previous year.

As shown in the table below, the trend of UIF budget allocations destined for vocational training has been constantly on the rise.

Budget allocated from UIF for vocational training

Indicator *	2005	2006	2007	2008
The proportion of vocational training expenses for unemployed persons or for other categories of beneficiaries, according to Law no 76/2002 regarding the unemployment insurance system, of the total expenses made from unemployment insurance fund (this indicator shows the level of the funds allocated from the unemployment insurance fund for vocational training of the unemployed).	1.18%	1.64%	1.71%	2.42%

\* According to the Short and Medium Term Strategy for CVT 2005-2010

#### 9.4 General funding arrangements and mechanisms

In January 2004 the process of authorisation of the providers of adult professional training started. By 2005, there were 856 providers of professional training recognised for 2307 professional training programmes. From these 2307, 1887 licenses were for qualification trainings, 177 for initiation and 75 for specialisation. The reduction of the authorisation fee from three net wages to two minimum gross wages in October 2004 led to the increase in the authorised providers of professional training

Funding for vocational education and training is coming from several main sources:

- Initial VET is generally financed from the state budget, via general taxation. Although during recent years, ever increasing amounts have been earmarked for education, when expressed as % of the GDP, however it is hard to distinguish financing for what is basically IVET from the general expenditures of the Ministry of Education;
- Financing for continuing VET comes from a host of different sources with the foremost one being company budgets;
- Continuing vocational training for the unemployed is assumed by the National Agency for Employment which, for these purposes makes use of the sums collected from mandatory contributions to the unemployment insurance scheme as well as from state budget transfers, whenever the scheme goes into deficit.

Quarterly Statistical Bulletin on Labour and Social Protection -> The Unemployment Insurance Budget Execution from The State Budget Execution ->Expenditures of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities,

	<i>December 31, 2007</i>	<i>March 31, 2008</i>	<i>June 30, 2008</i>	-	<i>December 31, 2008</i>
<i>Transfers from the unemployment insurance budget to the state social insurance budget as work accidents and professional diseases insurance for unemployed persons during professional training)</i>	51.569 (lei RON)	13.699 (lei RON)	32.528 (lei RON)	-	59.733 (lei RON)
<i>Employers payments for employees professional training</i>	612.221 (lei RON)	51.364 (lei RON)	151.426 (lei RON)	-	742.212 (lei RON)

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#### Theme 10: National VET statistics – allocation of programmes

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## 10.1 Classification of national VET programmes

### 10.1.1 Main criteria used to allocate VET programmes

### 10.1.2 VET levels in the national educational system

Level	Equivalent in ISCED	Minimum duration	Maximum duration	Average duration	Typical starting age of pupils
Upper Secondary	3	3 years	4 years	3 years	16
Post Secondary	4	1 year	3 years	2 years	18
Higher Education	5b	3 years	3 years	3 years	18

## 10.2 Fields of education and training

### 10.3 Links between national qualifications and international qualifications or classifications

The Romanian national qualification framework (NQF) is not yet fully operational. Constituents of NQF have been subject to development over the last 10 years with the support of several EU programs.

In Romania, a national consultation on the Commission's proposal for a European Qualifications Framework took place in July-December 2005. Following the consultation, have been identified issues which need more focusing at European level, such as:

1. the coherence between the EQF and the qualification framework for higher education proposed within the Bologna process;
2. the importance of learning outcomes in setting up a future EQF
3. a clearer differentiation between skills, competences and knowledge.
4. Designate a national centre for supporting and coordinating the relationship between NQF and EQF coordinating EQF

At the end of 2005, about 30% of Romanian VET qualifications were learning outcomes based.

The Romanian NQF action plan includes, as priority, the qualification development based on learning outcomes, and the completion timeframe is three years from now. All developments will be assisted by Phare projects (Phare programming years 2004-2006). The validation of achieved results will take about 5- 8 years.

Correlation of vocational education and training and higher education is part of the above priority. At the same time, despite the clear aspiration in time to merge the Bologna EHEA framework and EQF, more agreements between the two will be at help.

Country	Has your country started to develop a NQF?	Will your NQF follow the structure of the EQF for EHEA? (main reasons / differences)	Which authorities are involved?	
			Authority in charge	Authorities involved in the project
Romania	Begin: 2006 Planned Completion: 2010	Yes, Romania has nor yet a NQF based on learning outcomes, but a national authority for HE named	National Agency for Qualifications in Higher	-Ministry of Education and Research

		<p>ACPART has been established in this purpose. ACPART intend to propose to the political decision bodies the choice of a NQF with 8 levels. The 6,7,8 levels will cover the academic qualifications as well as top vocational training and professional qualifications, using the Dublin descriptors developed by the Bologna context for the EHEA.</p>	<p>Education and Partnership with the Economic and Social Environment - ACPART</p>	<p>-Ministry of Labour, Family and Social</p> <p>-Solidarity National Adults Training Body</p> <p>-Institute for Education Sciences</p>
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### Chronological Steps towards The National Qualifications Framework(NQF)

- 8 June 2004 – Signing the Memorandum between the Ministry of education and the Ministry of labor approved by the Prime Minister of Romanian Government.
- 7 December 2004 – Transformation of the National Adult Training Board (NATB), autonomous and tripartite organization, into National Authority for Qualifications (by law) Minister of the Romanian Government.
- 23 February 2005 – Signing the Tripartite Accord for NQF between the Romanian Government and the national representative confederations of trade unions and employers Associations
- December 2005 – The end of the consultation process for the European Qualification Framework (EQF)
- December 2006 – present – Implementation of the multi-annual PHARE Program 2004-2006 “Establishment of the Romanian National Authority for Qualifications”

### Description Of The System Of National Qualifications In Romania

After the consultation process on EQF (finalized in December 2005), Romania decided to develop a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) correlated with EQF

#### Rationale:

- Facilitating the comparability of Romanian NQF with other NQFs
- Improving transparency, quality and relevance of Romanian qualifications
- Enabling more progression and mobility
  - between different learning systems through the recognition of prior learning
  - between different working areas (including migration) through the transparency of competences

### REFERENCE LEVELS

- § State of the art:  
5 qualification levels (VET: 1-3; HE: 4-5) described in G.D. no. 522/2003
- correlation between education levels, existing qualification levels and the 8 EQF reference levels proposed
- § Steps to be taken:
- National reference levels (8 in principle – VET: 1-5; HE: 6-8) defined
  - Each level defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to the award of a qualification (knowledge, skills, competences – autonomy and responsibility)
  - Current qualification levels correlated with the 8 EQF reference levels
  - Coherent set of national qualifications correlated to European reference levels developed and introduced in the National Register for Qualifications

## QUALIFICATION – HE

### State of the art:

- University studies organized in 3 cycles: *Bachelor degree, Master degree, Doctorate studies* according to Bologna Process and follow-up documents;
  - Study cycles organized based on the prior identification and definition of the general and specific knowledge and competences, and of the cognitive skills specific of the profession envisaged (*Law no. 288/2004 on the organization of university studies*)
  - Establishment of National Agency for Qualifications in Higher Education and Partnership with Economic and Social Environment – ACPART (*G.D. no. 1.357/2005*).
- § *ACPART, a specialty body subordinated to the Ministry of Education and Research, is the national authority for establishing and periodical up-dating of the national framework of qualifications in higher education.*

### Steps to be taken:

- Registering all qualifications certified by HE institutions in the NRQ-HE as well as its IT implementation and continuously up-dating
- Conceiving a flexible methodology for defining and permanently reviewing the national qualifications for HE correlated to the reference levels
- Description of the HE qualifications in terms of competences for each of the 3 cycles of study
- Elaboration of a mandatory legislation for qualifications

## CERTIFICATION – HE

- § State of the art:
- The *HE Diploma* is the legal entitlement to practice one or more occupations according to the specialization awarded.
  - A *Diploma Supplement* annexed to the HE Diploma (Bachelor and Master degrees) will be issued for HE graduates starting with the academic year 2006-2007.
  - Awarding bodies: MoER (Ministry of Education and Research) – authorized/accredited universities – awards are national.
- § Steps to be taken:
- Conceiving a set of validation procedures for certifying each qualification in HE.
  - All qualifications in HE, after being certified, included in the NRQ-HE.

## INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

### State of the art

NATB is acting as National Authority for Qualifications (NAQ) – autonomous tripartite body (including representatives of MoER, MoLSSF, other ministries, and Social Partners)

- Cooperation with NCDTVET (attributions in qualifications' development in IVET), and with ACPART (attributions in qualifications' development in HE)
- SCs involved in validation of qualifications

### Steps to be taken:

NATB/NAQ – methodological framework, format of qualifications and structure of NQR defined, with the consultation of ACPART, NCDTVET and other stakeholders

- SCs established as legal bodies
- Activity of the SCs co-financed by the Government and Social Partners (SPs)– a dedicated fund for E&T could be a solution
- Development of qualifications – qualifications developed by interested bodies (sectors, awarding bodies) and validated by the SCs – new qualifications and priorities for qualifications development approved by SCs – EU support through Phare Programme

## **NATIONAL BACKGROUND OF QUALIFICATION IN ROMANIA - CRITICAL POINTS-**

### § Social partners

- There is no full involvement, on the level of all sectors

### § Sectorial committees

- They are not fully operational

### § Insufficient human resources (experts) for:

- Occupational analysis and qualifications' development
- Training and assessing based on competences (especially within the Continuing Vocational Training - CVT)

### National Qualifications Framework Financing

- Financing the initial VET by state
- Financing higher education by state and students
- Financing the continuous education by:
  - state (through National Adult Training Board and the county commissions for authorization of training programs)
  - companies and training providers (through training programs organized or requested)
  - National Agency for Employment (through training programs requested for unemployed people)
  - trainees
  - sectoral committees (through occupational analyses and occupational standards)
- Financing the Competencies Assessment Centers by:
  - state (through National Adult Training Board for assessment and authorization process)
  - beneficiaries of the competencies assessment processes
  - sectoral committees (through occupational analyses and occupational standards, as basic instruments in non-formal education assessment)
- Financing of all components by other sources (Phare, sectoral, national and international programs)



## National Qualifications Framework in Romania – Strategy for 2007-2010

### A. National Level

Action/step	Step completed with an indication of timing	Step to be completed with an indication of timing
<b>1. Decision to start taken by the national body responsible for higher education</b>	<b>2005</b> Decision taken by the Ministry of Education	
<b>2. Setting the agenda: The purpose of the NQF</b>	Development, recognition and certification of qualifications, defined by means of <b>learning outcomes</b>	
<b>3. Organizing the process: Identifying stakeholders; setting up a committee/WG</b>	<b>2005:</b> According to Government Decision no 1357/November 11, 2005 APART turns into the <b>National Authority for Qualifications in Higher Education (ACPART)</b> <b>2006</b>  - <b>Rector's Conference</b> – presentation of EQF and discussion related to a possible development of a national qualifications framework in Romania  - <b>National conferences, regional workshops organised</b> in order to promote the concepts and principles of NQFHE through the academics and professionals;  - Establishment of a <b>Working Group</b> for designing the Methodology on NQFHE development; the Working Group is set up by ACPART, following consultation with higher education institutions.	
<b>4. Design Profile: Level structure, Level descriptors (learning outcomes), Credit ranges</b>	<b>2007</b> Design of the first draft methodology on NQFHE development – completed by ACPART + WG	
<b>5. Consultation National discussion and acceptance of design by stakeholders</b>	<b>2007</b> - First version of the Methodology on NQFHE subject to public debate for one year (during 2007), by workshops and seminars organised by ACPART with a view to consulting and having the feedback of the representatives of all universities, of important employers, sectoral committees, trade unions, professional associations, high schools and other beneficiaries (students, teachers, graduates);  - <b>Piloting the NQFHE Methodology by 10 study programmes</b> described in terms of competences, based on the grids of specific descriptors	
<b>6. Approval according to national tradition by Minister/ Government/ legislation</b>	The final version of the Methodology for NQFHE development submitted to the Ministry for approval	<b>2008</b> To be approved by Government decision
<b>7. Administrative set-up Division of tasks of</b>	<b>2008</b> Accomplished – provided through the methodology	

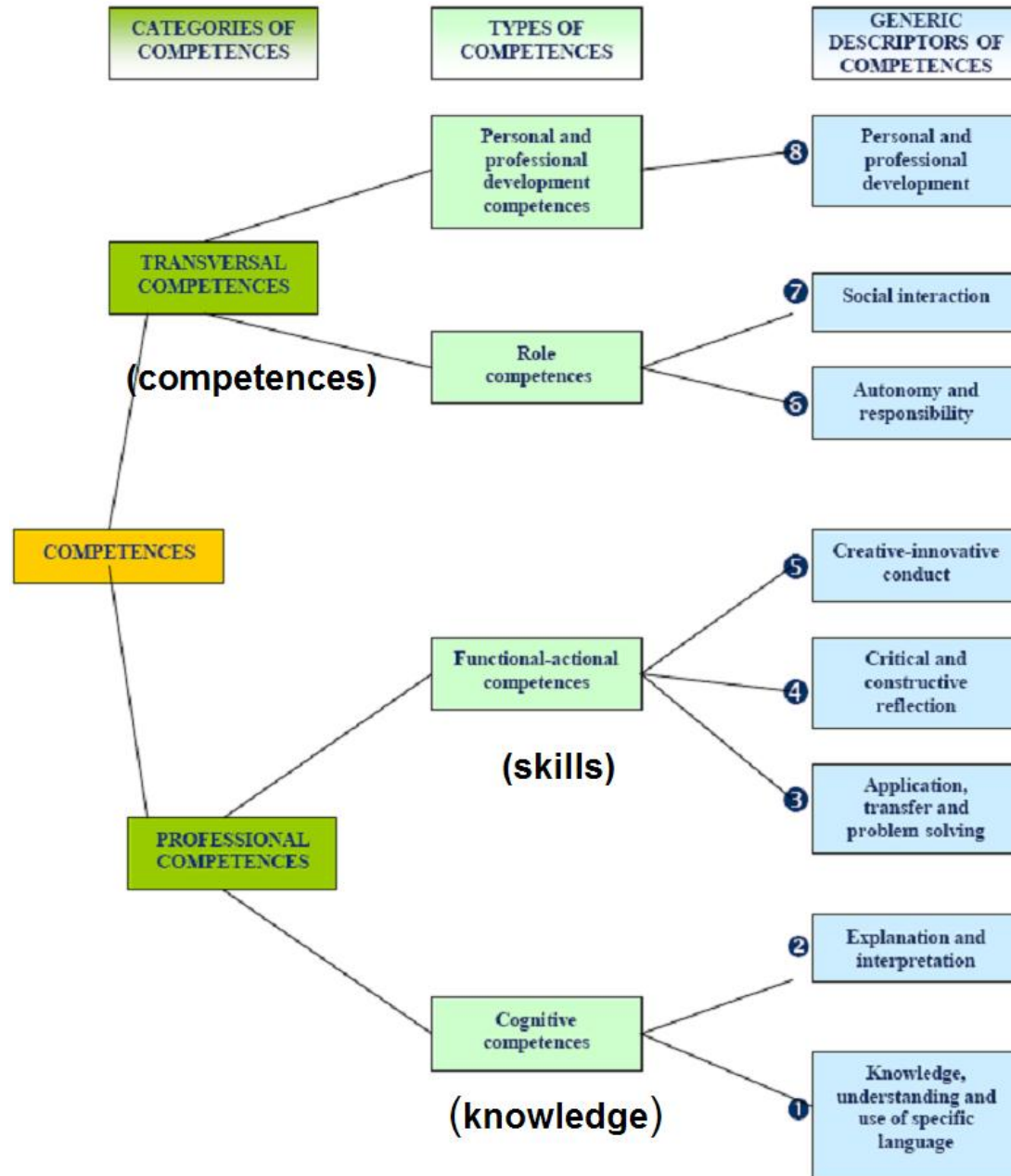
<b>implementation between HEI, QAA and other bodies</b>		
<b>8. Implementation at institutional/ programme level; Reformulation of individual study programmes to learning outcome based approach</b>		<b>2008-2010</b> The implementation phase of the NQFHE will be done under the European Social Fund by means of a three years project: “Development of an Operational System of the Higher Education Qualifications in Romania – DOCIS”. The overall objective of the project is to restructure and improve the higher education system by implementing the NQFHE and re-mapping the entire system according to the labour market requirements
<b>9. Inclusion of qualifications in the NQF; Accreditation or similar (cf. Berlin Communiqué)</b>		Validation of qualifications as provided for by the Methodology on NQFHE development: anticipated for 2010 under the ESF funded project
<b>10. Self-certification of compatibility with the EHEA framework (Alignment to Bologna cycles etc.)</b>	Alignment to the Bologna cycles accomplished – according to Law 288/2004.	<b>2010-2012</b> Self-certification of compatibility with the EHEA framework

# Romanian Model of NQF of HE

Competences can be classified in two categories:

n Professional competences;

n Transversal competences.



## ***B. International Level***

### **Harmonization of the Romanian NQF with EQF and with other countries the NQFs**

- The Leonardo da Vinci Project 2006-4607/001-001 LE2-707 EQF "Developing Key Methodological Units for the the Implementation of EQF by Means of NQFs – EQF by NQFs". Its development period is January 1st, 2007 – December 31st, 2008.

The general objective of the project is to exchange experiences and to develop and test modular grids of competences and key methodological units comprising principles, mechanisms and guidance tools for the elaboration of EQF and specific NQFs.

The project partners are: University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (France), Higher Education and Training Awards Council (Ireland), CROSS (Netherlands), The Ministry of Education and Research (Romania), The Association for Information Technology and Communication (Romania), University of Zaragoza (Spain), The National Recognition Information Centre (United Kingdom).

The Leonardo da Vinci Pilot Project FR/04/B/P/PP-151128 „European mechanism for distance information, orientation and validation of the jobs and qualifications in informatics and multimedia, from lifelong learning point of view” – EURO PORTIC promoted by the University of Versailles. Partner countries: France, Spain, Great Britain, Romania, Estonia.

The transnational cooperation project Socrates-Minerva 116530-CP-1-2004-1-FR-MINERVA-MPP „European programme of e-trainings and validation through competences in data-processing and multimedia” – e-FORMINFO promoted by the University of Versailles. Partner countries: France, Spain, Poland, Romania, Great Britain.

- § The Leonardo da Vinci Project RO/05/B/F/PP175012 “Virtual training for young entrepreneurs of innovating business” - eNOV, promoted by ACPART. Partner countries: Romania, France, Greece, Spain, Belgium, Poland and UK.
- § The Leonardo da Vinci Mobility Project RO/2006/97041/EX „Experts training in the field of quality assurance and qualifications in HE” – CALEX promoted by the ACPART Agency. Partner countries: France, Ireland , Spain.

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