



**National system overviews
on education systems
in Europe and ongoing reforms**

2010 Edition



ROMANIA

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1. Education population and language of instruction

On 1 July 2007, the number of persons aged 0-29 was 8 211 080 (38.13 % of the total population).

In 2009/10, total of enrolled population was 4 176 868 with the following distribution by level of education ⁽¹⁾:

Pre-school education	666 125	Vocational education	115 445
Primary education	845 679	Post-secondary education and foremen education	62 575
Secondary education	873 997	Higher education	775 319
High school	837 728		

The official language of instruction is Romanian but, for all levels, teaching is also given in the language of linguistic minorities (Bulgarian, Polish, Hungarian, German, Serbian, Ukrainian, Czech, Croatian, Turkish, Romany, Russian and Slovakian).

2. Administrative control and extent of public-sector funded education

In 2008/09, a percentage of 88.93 % of all pupils attend public schools funded by the State. Private educational establishments, administered and organised by non-governmental organisations, are more common at higher education level.

The education and training sector is managed at national level by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports.

The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports consists in several departments that are responsible for different tasks and education levels. The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports has the responsibility to establish and implement the national educational policy and has initiative and execution rights in financing and human resources policies in education.

⁽¹⁾ Source: *Romanian Statistical Yearbook – 2009*. National Institute of Statistics, Bucharest, 2010

In exercising its specific attributions, the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports cooperates at the central level with other Ministries and institutional structures subordinated to the Government.

The decision-making process at the national level is assisted by experts' bodies established by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports and by consultative bodies established by the law: the National Council for Education Reform, the National Council for Attesting Higher Education Titles, Diplomas and Certificates, the National Council for Financing Higher Education, the National Council for Scientific Research in Higher Education, the Libraries National Council, the National Council for Continuing Education and Training, the subject national commissions, and the management structures of the reform projects.

Pre-university education, including schools of all levels, extra-school activities and auxiliary units, is subordinated to the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports through the County School Inspectorates acting as regional level decentralised specialised bodies.

Each County School Inspectorate evaluates annually the education system at the county level and, based on this evaluation and the national educational policy, establishes the management plan for the next school year – detailing objectives, activities, resources and responsibilities. The management plan is discussed with the consultative bodies. After being approved by the administration council of the County School Inspectorate, the management plan becomes compulsory for all managerial structures of the education system at the county level. The Consultative Council of the County School Inspectorate comprises heads of schools, highly estimated teachers and professors, representatives of the parents, of the local public administration authorities, of the economic agents and of other social partners.

Considering that special attention is required in the consultation process for the projection and development of the technical and vocational education (TVET), Local Development Committees for Social Partnership in VET were established in each county through Ministerial Order. These are consultative bodies cooperating with the County School Inspectorates in projection of the educational network and pupils' enrolment quotas, local curriculum and educational offer, qualifications and specialisations offered etc.

Management of pre-tertiary educational institutions is ensured by heads of schools. When exercising their managerial duties, the heads of schools rely on the teachers' council and the administrative council. The teachers' council of the school (*Consiliul profesoral*) comprises all teaching staff of the school, regardless their specific employment status (permanent or substitute teachers), and is chaired by the head of school. The administration council of the school (*Consiliul de administrație*), with decision role in the administrative area, comprises 5 to 11 members and is chaired by the head of school.

As regards school inspection, head teachers and general inspectors must elaborate annual reports on the situation of education under their supervision. Each report is then submitted to local authorities and to the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports.

3. Pre-primary education

In 2009/10 school year, pre-primary education covered the 3 to 6 year-old age group. This type of education is provided in special institutions – Kindergartens (*grădinițe*), most of them public, organised in three types of programmes, offered in the same kindergarten or in different kindergartens: normal, extended and weekly programme. Attendance is optional and free of charge (according to the Education Law, Law 84/1995, republished, subsequently amended and completed); but for children

attending extended or weekly programmes, parents or legal guardians have to pay a fee which partially covers the costs of the meals and accommodation (compensation to the public subventions provided).

Both public and private kindergartens offer education activities through: normal programmes (5 hours per day), long-type programmes (10 hours per day) and weekly programmes (5 days per week). Pre-primary education is organised by age groups: 3- to 4-, 4- to 5-, 5- to 6-year-old age groups.

In recent years, the interest in and concern for early childhood education has significantly increased, a fact demonstrated by the existence of a National Strategy for Early Childhood Education (developed in 2003), an Early Childhood Education Reform Project 2006-2011 (co-funded by the Government of Romania and the Development Bank of the Council of Europe, amounting to €105 million), an Inclusive Early Childhood Education Project 2006-2011 (co-funded by the Government of Romania and the World Bank), as well as the development, with UNICEF support, of the Early Learning and Development Standards for children from birth to 7 year old (2007-2009) – a policy document that promotes an integral approach to education, care and protection services for children below the age of 7 and a child's global development.

4. Compulsory education

(i) Phases

	Age Group
<i>Școala primară</i> (primary level), ISCED 1	6-10 years
<i>Gimnaziul</i> (first phase of lower general secondary level), ISCED 2	10-14 years
<i>Liceul – ciclul inferior</i> (second phase of lower general or specialised secondary level), ISCED 2 or <i>Școala de Arte și Meserii</i> (lower vocational secondary level – is being wound up as from the 2009/10 school year), ISCED 2 & Level 1 of Vocational Qualification	14-16 years

Compulsory education lasts 10 years and is divided in three phases: primary education (4 years), first phase of lower secondary education – general (4 years) and second phase of lower secondary education, which provides general, specialised or vocational courses (2 years).

Beginning with 2003/04 school year, pupils start compulsory education at the age of 6 (instead of 7). However, pupils may begin compulsory education at the age of 7 provided that their parents or legal representatives put forward a written request. They may also start before the age of 6 if they will reach the age of 6 until the end of the year and their psychological development is adequate enough.

Starting from 2003/04 school year, duration of compulsory education is extended with two years after general lower secondary education and pupils may choose to continue their education either in the lower cycle of *Liceu*, which offers comprehensive education and includes pre-specialisation elements necessary for the guidance towards the continuation of studies in upper secondary education, or in *Școală de Arte și Meserii* (Arts and Trades School), which provides vocational education, corresponding to various occupational domains and leading to employment; in this case graduates should follow a completion year (*An de completare*) before entering in upper secondary education.

(ii) Admission criteria

The enrolment quotas for all education levels in public education are established yearly through Decision of the Government, based on the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports proposition. According to the Education Law (Law 84/1995, republished, subsequently amended and completed), the Ministry's proposition is preceded by a multi-step consultation-projection process

involving: local public authorities, County School Inspectorates, the Local Development Committees for Social Partnership in VET, teachers' unions, and other players. In each county the exact allocation of placements in public schools is established through Ministerial Order, according to the provisions of the Decision of the Government and the conclusions of the consultation process.

The admission requirements are established by education level as follows:

- In *Gymnaziu* (grades V to VIII; general education) are admitted all pupils that have completed primary education (grades I to IV);
- In *Liceu* – lower cycle and Arts and trades school (*Școala de arte și meserii*) (grades IX to X) (is being wound up as from the 2009/10 school year) are admitted graduates of gymnasium, according to the results obtained during this cycle and based on a selection and repartition procedure established by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports;

(iii) Length of the school day/week/year

The school year 2010/11 comprises 177 days (36 weeks) of teaching, divided in two semesters. Courses are distributed over five days a week. The number of periods (lasting 50 minutes) per week varies from 18/20, in the first years of primary education, to 24/30, in the last years of the first phase of general lower secondary education (*Gymnaziu*), and up to 30, in Arts and Trades School or 32 in the lower cycle of high school respectively (*Liceu*).

The minimum number of hours of teaching a year (calculated on basis of the number of periods per week, the number of weeks and the duration of a period) is 554 for primary school, 788 for *Gymnaziu* (first phase of general lower secondary school), 962 for Arts and Trades School, and 933 for lower cycle of the high school.

(iv) Class size/student grouping

In 2009/10, the number of pupils per teacher was 17 at primary school level and 11 at lower secondary level. The average class size was 20. The number of pupils per class required by law is between 10 and 30. The classes are co-educational and made up of pupils of the same age. In lower secondary education level, pupils who are two years (or more) older than the pupils in the corresponding year, can attend evening classes. In primary schools, subjects are taught only by one teacher (except for religion, foreign languages, physical education and music). At lower secondary level, a specialist teacher teaches each subject.

(v) Curricular control and content

The curriculum framework for primary and lower secondary education, set up by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, allows schools to design their own timetable schemes and includes: the core curriculum and the school-based curriculum. The core curriculum (*Trunchiul comun*) is the common and compulsory educational offer for all pupils, established at national level and made up of the same subjects, number of hours – for every year of study – to which the same curricula apply. The school-based curriculum (*Curriculumul la decizia școlii*) is a set of educational processes and learning experiences proposed by every school directly to a class of pupils within its own curricular offer.

In Romania, one of the objectives of the 2009-2012 Government Programme is 'the introduction of a school curriculum based on competences'. With a view to this objective, it was necessary to develop a curricular model of school subjects centred on competences, in relation with the eight key competences recommended by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union.

From the 2009/10 school year, the model of curriculum design centred on competences is applied across secondary education. This curriculum design model is something new only for *gimnaziu*

(grades 5-8) because the next segments of secondary education (grades 9-12/13) have applied the competence-centred curriculum design model since the 2000/01 school year.

Subjects are grouped according to 7 curricular areas: language and communication, mathematics and natural sciences, people and society, arts, physical education, technologies, counselling and guidance.

Teaching methods are not imposed by official regulations, but there are some recommendations concerning alternative textbooks, homework, and didactic use of ICT.

(vi) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Pupils are assessed by teachers throughout the school year. Pupils in difficulty can be made to repeat the year. At the end of primary school, pupils move automatically on to the next level (with no final examination). At the end of *Gymnaziu*, based on a selection and repartition procedure established by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, according to the results obtained during the four years of the first phase of general lower secondary education, pupils have to choose one of the two institutions for the continuation of lower secondary education: High school (*Liceu*) or Arts and Trades School (*Școală de Arte și Meserii*) respectively. There is no final examination at the end of lower secondary education (which coincides with the end of compulsory education stage).

Graduates of the lower cycle of High school (*Liceu*) are awarded a graduation certificate, a portfolio for further education and, on request, a copy of the record containing the marks received during compulsory education.

Graduates of the lower cycle of Arts and Trades School are awarded a graduation certificate, a portfolio for further education and, by request, a copy of the record containing the marks received during compulsory education. Besides, they may obtain, after successful passing the exam for certification of vocational skills, a level one vocational qualification certificate. In order to enter the upper secondary education, they have to attend the completion year (*Anul de completare*).

5. Post-compulsory education/upper secondary and post-secondary level

(i) Types of education

<i>Anul de completare</i> (upper vocational secondary) – is being wound up as from the 2009/10 school year Level 2 of Vocational Qualification	16-17 years of age
<i>Liceu – ciclul superior</i> (upper general and specialised secondary) ISCED 3 & Level 3 of Vocational Qualification	16-18/19 years of age
<i>Școală postliceală</i> (post-secondary non-tertiary education) ISCED 4 & Level 3 advanced of Vocational Qualification	18-20/21 years of age

The completion year offers the possibility to attain the necessary education level to participate in upper secondary education and to acquire a higher vocational qualification.

Upper secondary education (upper cycle of *Liceu*) provides general and specialised courses leading to the continuation of studies in postsecondary, or higher education.

Post-secondary education at *Școală postliceală* prepares students for a higher vocational qualification and should lead to employment.

(ii) Admission criteria

Admission in the completion year (*Anul de completare*) and in the upper cycle of Lyceum is based on the methodology defined by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, and announced a year prior the beginning of a new school year.

In post-secondary education, only medical post-secondary schools require the baccalaureate diploma, awarded at the end of *Liceu*. As a general rule, all the post-secondary schools organise entrance examinations.

(iii) Curricular control and content

In the completion year and general and specialised upper secondary education, the curriculum framework set up by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports covers 7 curricular areas: language and communication, mathematics and natural sciences, people and society, arts, physical education, technologies, counselling and guidance. The importance of each group of subjects varies according to the type of school. The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection set the curricula for post-secondary schools.

(iv) Assessment, progression and qualifications

Pupils are assessed by teachers continuously, in all subjects, during the whole school year. Teachers decide whether a pupil should repeat the year or not.

Graduates of completion year are awarded a graduation certificate, a portfolio for further education and, by request, a copy of the record containing the marks received. After facing a vocational examination, they may obtain a level two vocational qualification certificate. Graduates of completion year, who possess a graduation certificate and a level two vocational qualification certificate, may attend upper secondary education, following the methodology of the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports defined a year prior the beginning of each new school year.

There is a final examination (*examen de bacalaureat*) at the end of the upper cycle of *Liceu*. The diploma accompanying this examination (*diplomă de bacalaureat*) allows pupils to apply to take the entrance examination for higher education. Any pupil who completes upper secondary education, with or without a final leaving certificate, can apply to take the entrance examination for post-secondary education (however, medical post-secondary schools require the *diplomă de bacalaureat*). The post-secondary leaving certificate (*certificat de absolvire*) grants students access to the labour market.

6. Tertiary education

(i) Types of institution

In Romania, universities and other higher education institutions are autonomous and have the right to establish and implement their own development policies, within the general provisions of the in-force legislation. The university autonomy encompasses the domains of management, structuring and functioning of the higher education institutions, teaching and scientific research activities, administration and financing. From the financing point of view, the university autonomy is accomplished through the right to manage the funds from the state-budget and other sources, according to the provisions of the law and personal accountability. Public higher education is financed from the state budget based on financing contracts signed between the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports and the higher education institutions. The entire material basis of higher education is the property of and administrated by the higher education institutions.

Higher education is accomplished through educational institutions such as: universities (*Universitate*), academies (*Academie*) and postgraduate schools (*Școală de studii academice postuniversitare*). The mission of the higher education institutions is either education and research or only education. Higher education institutions usually include several faculties, university colleges departments, chairs and units for scientific research, design and micro-production

Since the 2005/06 academic year all higher education institutions, private and public, have been obliged by the Law no. 288/2004 to implement the three-cycle structure. The first (Bachelor's) cycle includes a minimum of 180 and a maximum of 240 transferable study credit equivalent with ECTS and lasts three to four years, depending on the field and area of specialisations. The second (Master's) cycle include a minimum of 90 and a maximum of 120 transferable study credit and lasts one or two years. Both cycles should enable the accumulation of at least 300 transferable study credits. Doctoral studies can be organised on a full- or part-time basis by higher education or research institutions. The length of doctoral courses corresponds to three years of full time work.

(ii) Access

According to the Education Law, only high school graduates holding a baccalaureate diploma – diploma de *bacalaureat* (or an equivalent certificate) can be admitted in higher education. The higher education institutions establish the admission methodology, according to the general criteria set by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports. The selection and admission procedure can rely on: the average mark obtained by the candidates at the national baccalaureate exam and at various subjects studied during high school, as well as in some cases the mark obtained at an entrance exam entirely organised by the higher education institution. In case an entrance exam is organised, the higher education institution has to take into consideration the approved alternative textbooks used in high school education. Candidates are allowed to undertake the entrance examination in the language they studied the respective subjects.

(iii) Qualifications

Finalisation of the bachelor's studies is accomplished through an exam – *examen de licență*, based on the general criteria established by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports. The content of the exams and the specific criteria are established by the university senates. Graduates passing the licence exam receive the title *licențiat* in the corresponding profile and specialisation, attested through a diploma issued by the higher education institution.

Successful students can go on to attend the second cycle of higher education, Master's. Master-degree studies end with a final exam and graduates receive a diploma de Master.

Doctoral studies are finalised through a thesis publicly defended and evaluated by a commission of specialists approved by the university senate. Graduates receive a diploma de Doctor.

7. Special needs

The policy of integration is currently being developed in Romania. Most children (27 654 pupils in 2008/09) with special educational needs attend the corresponding special schools. The structure of special education in these schools is very similar to that in the mainstream education.

According to the provisions of the Education Law (Law 84/1995, republished, subsequently amended and completed), special education is organised for children and pupils with deficiencies of the following nature: mental, physical, sensorial, language, socio-affective and behavioural, or associated deficiencies. Special education is provided according to the handicap/deficiency degree of the child.

School integration of the children with special educational needs is accomplished through the following forms of education: separated special education, partially integrated special education, and full integrated special education.

Special education is free and, as a general rule, is organised as day-schooling. Special education uses alternative frame curricula, syllabi, textbooks and teaching methods, adapted to the disability of the children and approved by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports.

The content of special education is structured in curriculum frameworks, syllabi and textbooks, as well as teaching aids elaborated according to the type and handicap-degree and approved by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports. The frame curricula include, for all levels of special education, compulsory and optional subjects, organised in curricular areas.

The syllabi are elaborated by education level and type of deficiency. The frame curricula and the corresponding syllabi and textbooks for mainstream education may also be used. The syllabi for special education include methodological guidelines for accomplishing the general objectives of the educational institution, distributed over the educational cycles and development levels, as well as modalities to evaluate pupils' learning progress.

8. Teachers

The Education Law (Law 84/1995, republished, subsequently amended and completed) establishes the categories of personnel and teaching staff working in education, the professional training requirements for teaching positions, the types of in-service teacher training programmes and the institutions authorised to provide such programmes.

The Teaching Staff Statute (*Statutul personalului didactic*) (Law 128/1997) represents the main legal framework for the teaching profession in Romania.

Teaching positions (also referred to as 'didactic functions') in Pre-tertiary education are established within the Teaching Staff Statute by education level: teacher in pre-primary education (educator, institutor); teacher in primary education (*învățător, institutor*); teacher in secondary education (lower and upper secondary education).

For higher education The Teaching Staff Statute establishes the following teaching positions: academic assistant (*preparator universitar*), assistant (*asistent universitar*), lecturer (*lector universitar/Șef de lucrări*), associate professor (*conferențiar universitar*), university professor (*profesor universitar*) and consultant professor (*profesor universitar consultant*).

The selection, recruitment and appointment process for all teaching positions in public Pre-tertiary education is based on annual national competitive examinations. The competitive examination has an open character, meaning that it is open to any person complying with the initial training conditions established within The Teaching Staff Statute. The competitive examination is based on written examinations and, for certain subjects, on eliminatory practical tests.

The selection, recruitment and appointment process for teaching positions in higher education is based on an open recruitment procedure. This means that the accredited or provisory authorised higher education institutions are fully responsible for organising and carrying on the entire selection, recruitment and appointment process for their teaching positions. Nevertheless, the process has to comply with the general provisions of The Education Law and The Teaching Staff Statute.

9. Ongoing reforms and policy initiatives

Romanian education system is under continuous changes and improvements in various domains and levels, according to economic, social, political and cultural changes identified within the society. The current priorities included the following main aspects ⁽²⁾:

A – Ongoing reforms and policy initiatives related to 'ET 2020' strategic framework

1. Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality

– Lifelong learning strategies

In recent years, Romania has included the principles of lifelong learning in policy documents as priorities in the area of education, continuous training and employment. Examples of such documents are the strategy Education and Research for the Knowledge Society and the draft National Education Law. Because Romania did not have a coherent and comprehensive lifelong learning strategy, the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports initiated in 2009 the development of a Lifelong Learning Strategy with the participation of specialists and all stakeholders. As a result of their activity, progress has been made in identifying strategic priorities and directions for action in the area of lifelong learning such as recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning, educational and vocational guidance and counselling throughout life and in-service learning systems.

With regard to the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning, among the important advances recently made, it is worth to refer to:

- assessment and certification of competences acquired in informal and non-formal learning contexts through the Centres for the Assessment and Certification of Professional Competences authorised by the National Adult Training Council;
- introduction in Romania of tools developed at European level, Europass and Youthpass (Europass Language Passport, Europass Mobility, Europass Diploma Supplement and Europass Certificate Supplement) that facilitate the voluntary recognition of competences and qualifications. The National Agency for EU Programmes in the Area of Education and Training acts as a National Europass and Youthpass Centre and manages the completion and issuance of the above mentioned documents together with the issuing bodies;
- implementation of systems that assess the competences of young people who wish to benefit from second chance programmes – a process initiated by the Ministry of Education with the implementation of the Phare Access to Education programmes.
- programmes of the National Employment Agency for the assessment and certification of competences of Romanian citizens who worked abroad and then returned to Romania.

– European Qualifications Framework

The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports and the National Council of Qualifications and Adult Training have established a nomenclature with the names of qualifications and titles provided within the Romanian higher education system, in compliance with the provisions of Law 288/2004 and the developments specific to the National Framework of Higher Education Qualifications. The objective is twofold: to regulate the qualifications and titles awarded to higher education graduates who have entered the higher education system since 2005; to ensure an appropriate wording of the

⁽²⁾ Source: *Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2009*, Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, 2009

study papers issued in higher education (Diploma Supplement), and the transparency required by the Bologna Process.

In the area of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), the National Qualifications Framework has been developed through a revision of TVET qualifications and curriculum. The objectives are the recognition of qualifications awarded in a particular context, in other learning or work contexts; revision of TVET qualifications based on reference levels and competence descriptors; improving the quality and efficiency of TVET; improving the relevance of vocational qualifications to the labour market and to learners; better involvement of social partners in the process of qualifications description and updating; developing the conditions for the implementation of the European credit transfer and accumulation system (ECVET) in accordance with the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 June 2009.

With the draft Lifelong Learning Strategy, the initiatives that have been mentioned are expected to be continued, promoted and developed through:

- an harmonisation of assessment and certification procedures at different levels and in institutions with responsibilities in this area (schools implementing second chance programmes, centres that certify competences, other assessment systems);
- the parallel implementation of the transferable credit system for key competences;
- promoting these systems among those who need them most (disadvantaged groups in the labour market, people living in isolated rural areas, young people and adults in difficulty etc.)
- initiating a national program to train competence assessors and career advisors who work in this area;
- improving the quality assurance mechanisms for this alternative certification in order to raise its credibility.

– Expanding learning mobility

The initiatives of the Agency for Credits and Scholarships (<http://www.roburse.ro/>) are: ensuring the compatibility of norms and laws with the current policy aimed at eliminating bureaucracy; maintaining the monthly amount of scholarships at their current level, while respecting the same budgetary limits, by finding convenient alternatives to pay for transportation; reconfiguring the teams of national assessors, divided in fields, with a view to make the standard-based assessment activities of applications efficient and select them based on a specific methodology; analysing together with the institutions concerned the situation of those who benefit from the programme Government of Romania Special Scholarship with a view to assign them to specific posts.

2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

– Language learning

There is a new regulation for the establishment and functioning of **classes and groups of students that study an internationally spoken language intensively and bilingually**. These classes with intensive or bilingual teaching will function based on the new statute as from the 2011/12 school year. The old statute allowed bilingual classes to function only for modern language L1 and at high-school level. By creating the new statute, the intention is to promote multilingualism, meaning an increase in the diversity of languages that are learned and better quality by encouraging local initiatives that adapt to existing resources. Based on the new statute, intensive and bilingual classes and groups can be established also for students who begin the study of a new language and these classes can function as bilingual classes from the 5th grade where the necessary human resources are available (teachers

able to teach non-language subjects in the foreign language). The expected impact and changes are to revive local initiatives that establish bilingual and intensive classes and study groups, especially for those languages that are less represented in those areas and for which there is a demand but it is only punctually satisfied. The changes will be very visible in cases where bilingual and intensive classes or groups are introduced at beginner level, considering the great demand for certain languages, not covered by an appropriate offer due to a lack of human resources.

Within the bilateral French-Romanian project "From bilingual education to francophone university pathways", a methodology for the **organisation of francophone bilingual classes/units** starting from the 2011/12 school year has been developed. There will be a regulation of provisions and practice standards for francophone bilingual high-schools that can award the special mention "francophone bilingual unit" of the baccalaureate. This will consist of teaching specific subjects, the number of hours distributed to courses, the recruitment of students and teachers and the evaluation of these high-schools.

A methodology concerning the **promotion of multilingualism in Romanian school education** has been carried. The intention is to have a regulation concerning the way modern language departments are established and dissolved, that takes into account the general interest of promoting linguistic diversity. As shown by European recommendations and the needs of the labour market, there is a need for people who speak more languages. Every citizen should speak at least two modern languages. It is desirable that these languages are not always the same, and a diversity of European languages should be learned. This would improve the prospects of every graduate of school education in the labour market and would cover a demand that is disproportionately big now compared to the existing offer. At present, in Romanian school education, about 94 % of the workloads of foreign language teachers are represented by only two languages (English and French), a situation which does not respond to the real demand in the labour market but to a practical reversed approach which goes from the available staff towards the creation of workloads that satisfy this "staff" offer. This situation has led to an increase in the number of private language schools that satisfy the demand not covered by the public system, which contravenes the principle of equal opportunities provided in the Education Law (not all parents can afford paying for "alternative" modern languages for their children). This will lead to a regulation for the establishment and dissolution of departments for modern languages that are underrepresented in a particular area, as well as a motivational framework for decision-makers that would slow down and reverse the current process concerning the disappearance of underrepresented language departments. Some steps have been taken in the previous school year with the introduction of the German language in combinations of two specialities in which competitions for teaching posts can be organised, but this measure alone is not sufficient and does not satisfy the interest of all underrepresented languages.

– Professional development of teachers and trainers

The diversity of learning contexts and of new teaching and managerial roles requires a regulation of the "new teaching professions", a diversification of the professional profiles of those who work at different levels of lifelong learning systems so as to include specialised roles and a legal statute associated to lifelong learning such as: mediator, assessor (for competences, institutional), learning facilitator, counsellor, tutor, mentor, online facilitator, human resources manager, curricular developer, educational expert in regional/ local administration etc. With a view to the regulation of this field, the most important initiative, this year, is the project of the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports for a **Law of National Education and Lifelong Learning**. Its provisions and methodologies that are to be developed will ensure a modern and more comprehensive approach to the development and diversification of the **profiles/statute of human resources involved in lifelong learning systems**.

The National Centre for the Development of Technical and Vocational Education is developing and testing a methodology for the implementation of the **European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF)** in the Romanian technical and vocational education and training. The objectives are:

- to improve the initial vocational education and training system through the development of tools and methodologies for the implementation of EQARF in vocational and technical education;
- to develop the operational framework for the implementation of EQARF;
- to test the methodology for the implementation of EQARF in a national context;
- to develop the strategy for the implementation of EQARF in vocational and technical education, at system level and at provider level.

The expected impact and changes are the improvement of quality and efficiency in TVET; development of a quality culture in the TVET schools and better correlation between the TVET offer and the demand in the labour market.

– Governance and funding

No specific national information available.

– Basic skills in reading, mathematics and sciences

The general objective is to improve basic skills in primary education by creating/testing/piloting and implementing an integrated educational programme with a view to increase the quality of education at system level. With the creation of a methodological framework the project intends **to restructure the framework of reference at national level with regard to the development of basic skills**. Identifying the children's reading needs and translating them into innovative teaching supports, which respect minorities' (Hungarian and German) cultural identity and the novelties of the reading-writing didactics, is a premise of ongoing learning and sustainable integration in the labour market. The development of professional competences for different staff categories that will be involved in the pilot phase is an essential condition in order to achieve the objective. A large range of professional categories will benefit – based on an analysis of their training needs – from training programmes that develop their skills in working with students in order to increase the quality of education.

Another important objective is to develop communication competence in Romanian. The current curriculum implies some conformity with the new legislative regulations, integrated into the European educational context. The following components shall be developed: communication in Romanian as official language, mother tongue and schooling language; knowledge of and approach to the Romanian literature in a universal context with a view to construct and develop a cultural competence; integration and social success through the development of the inter-relating component. The main reason for this initiative is to develop the European dimension of the discipline through the integration of graduates of school education in the European social and cultural area.

There is an ongoing project (ID 4713) on **norms related to the promotion of reading in order to stimulate basic skills in oral and written communication in Romanian**. The main objective is to improve the Romanian students' results in future international tests as well as methodologies that can stimulate the students' interest in reading, reflected in enhanced oral and written communication skills in Romanian. These actions are concerned with both activities at level of excellence (Olympiads and competitions), and classroom activities, both for the Romanian language, and other subjects, that will stimulate better literacy. Therefore, they will support the development of students' reading skills, reflected in future results in international tests. This project provides training for teachers of different specialties with a view to improve their skills in communicating with students, which would lead to a harmonious development of their personality and their successful social insertion.

In 2007, **the course Romanian Language, Culture and Civilisation has been approved** (based on the Government Decision 454/2008, the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation issued the Order 5351 of 28.09.2009 on the initiation of this optional interdisciplinary course for Romanian students that go to school in other EU countries.) Since 2007/08, the course has followed the structure of the school year in Spain, Italy and Belgium, countries with important Romanian communities to which this course is addressed. The reasons for having created this course are the following. Respecting the EU's multilingualism policy, the Institute of the Romanian Language initiated programmes for students from countries where Romanian communities live so that they can have good and real knowledge of Romanian linguistic and cultural values and general European values. In the 2007/08 school year, the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation and the Institute of the Romanian Language launched a project for teaching the Romanian Language, Culture and Civilisation course in schools from EU Member States. This project, currently implemented in Belgium, Italy and Spain, emphasises the use and preservation of Romanian in the Romanian communities living in other countries and is addressed both to students who are descendents of native speakers, and students of other nationalities who wish to learn Romanian. By cultivating the Romanian language in its standard form, speakers of school age maintain a connection with the Romanian spirit and are, in their turn, ambassadors of the Romanian language and culture in their life and work environments. The objectives of the project are:

- To teach the extracurricular course of Romanian Language, Culture and Civilisation in schools from EU Member States with relevant Romanian presence;
- To value the Romanian cultural identity promoted in the context of a multicultural and multilingual Europe;
- To preserve the cultural identity of Romanian children who live abroad, in the EU territory;
- To facilitate the reintegration of students in the Romanian education system when they return to Romania;
- To promote the Romanian language, culture and civilisation in the EU Member States.

The **review of school curricula for *gimnaziu*** (middle-school) aimed at the shift to the skill-based approach in the curricular design and teaching, learning and assessment. The new curricula entered into force in the 2009/10 school year. The *gimnaziu* curricula used to be based on objectives, unlike the high-school curricula that were designed based on skills in the past too. The objectives are twofold: to develop general and specific skills for curricula in grades 5 – 8 and to make the skills targeted in the initial learning path compatible with the advanced learning and conceptual development path in high-school.

The project “Digital tools to improve the quality of assessment in school education” funded by the Structural Funds (August 2010 - March 2011) aims at improving the quality of assessment in high-school education with the development of assessment items (an item bank for teachers). The objective is to develop a national item database for all subjects for the purpose of skill-based assessment using an integrated platform that can be accessed on the internet.

– “New skills for new jobs”

Since June 2008 the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport through The National Centre for Development of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCDTVET) piloted a methodology for surveys on the labour market needs in terms of skills and competencies in two regions with the support of EU funds from Phare TVET programs.

Starting January 2010 the NCDTVET implement the project '**Matching of the TVET supply to the labour market needs**', project co-financed from the European Social Fund through the Sectorial Operational Program for Development of Human Resources 2007 – 2013. The overall objective of the project is to increase the relevance of the initial vocational training offer provided through pre-university technical and vocational education and training (IVET) in relationship with the labour market needs and the requirements for economic and social development, from the perspective of the knowledge-based society, through the improvement of strategic planning documents in IVET at county and local level. In this perspective the project will revised methodologies and will realised studies based on revised methodologies for surveys and forecasts on labour market needs at the horizon of year 2013 and in the perspective of year 2020.

3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship

– Early school leavers from education and training

At European level, according to the Europe 2020 Strategy, the share of early leavers in the education and training system should be under 10 % by 2020. Romania intends to achieve the percentage of 11.3 % by 2020.

The objective of lowering the rate of early school leavers in the education and training system depends mainly on: a favourable evolution of the economy, with effects on the possibilities of socially and economically disadvantaged families to support participation in education; developing and diversifying educational opportunities to reintroduce young people who left school prematurely in the system (multiplying the second-change programmes, implementing Community Lifelong Learning Centres etc., provided by the draft Law of National Education); using the opportunities for the assessment and certification of non-formal and informal learning (lifelong learning portfolios, access to competence assessment and certification services etc.); efficient information and access to continuous training opportunities, in the workplace or in community.

Prognosis of the early school leavers rate for 18-24 years old ESLR (%)

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
ESLR (%)	16.3	15.8	15.3	14.8	14.3	13.8	13.3	12.8	12.3	11.8	11.3

The establishment of values of reference for 2013 took into consideration the description of national programmes and their funds (approved for 2010 and estimated for 2011, 2012, 2013), in compliance with the draft sector fiscal-budgetary strategy, that are related to: ensuring equal opportunities and facilitating access to quality education and training in school education; development of the administrative capacity of the institutions that coordinate the national education system and development of human capital in the education system through projects funded by European funds; ensuring a coherent and modern framework for the functioning of the national education system by implementing the key concepts provided in the draft national education law; improvement of school and university infrastructure; ensuring quality undergraduate and postgraduate university education; increasing the quality of the educational act with the modernisation and improvement of the functional parameters of the material basis.

The establishment of values of reference for 2015 and 2020 took into account the macroeconomic estimations of the National Commission of Prognosis.

The main actions envisaged by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports to attain the target are concerned with: ensuring equal access to education and training; quality assurance and increasing the efficiency of the national education system; ensuring a fair, stable, predictable and sustainable education system; encouraging lifelong learning; opening schools to community and businesses and developing partnerships with all stakeholders.

A **“Second Chance” Programme** has been organised and implemented in order to redress school drop out for people who are older than the legal school age for full-time education and have not completed compulsory education. This programme started within the PHARE Programme “Access to education for disadvantaged groups” (2001-2007) and was extended until now and at national level. The aims are to reduce phenomena related to non-participation in education and school drop-out and to facilitate access to education and the possibility of lifelong learning. The purpose of the programme is to support young people and adults aged over 14 who have abandoned for social reasons compulsory education and help them to complete basic education and vocational training corresponding to 1/2 level of qualification. In the 2009/10 school year, the programme was implemented in 267 schools, 290 classes – primary education for 3 527 learners and lower secondary education for 4 802 learners. Methodologies for the organisation and implementation of the programme have been developed, as well as educational materials for learners and teachers. Teachers who teach within the programme have been trained.

– Pre-primary Education

Reform of early education, focused on children aged between 0 and 6/7 years old for the period of 2006-2012. This reform aims at promoting the new curriculum for pre-school education (children aged between 3 and 6/7) as part of the 2006-2010 national strategy in the area of early childhood education. The role of pre-school education was reconsidered in relation to the other levels of education. This document defines the following goals of early childhood education (from birth to 6/7 years of age):

- the free, integral and harmonious development of children’s personalities based on their own rhythm and needs and support for their autonomous and creative formation;
- developing the capacity of interacting with other children, adults and their environment in order to gain new knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours; encouraging exploration, exercises, trials and experimentation as autonomous learning experiences;
- discovery by every child of their own identity, autonomy and development of a positive self-image;
- Supporting children to learn knowledge, capabilities, skills and attitudes necessary when they enter school and throughout life.

The new curriculum for pre-school education highlights several important elements, common with the trends in this area (at least) in Europe, namely: the existence of a child-centred educational programme; conciliation between a child’s development and the academic aspect; the educational programme is focused on cognitive and social development, early learning and socialising; emphasis, especially around the age of 5, on the development of basic skills: reading, writing and numeracy, for a successful advancement to the 1st grade; engaging the child in the assessment process/self-assessment; the teacher/educator plays the role of a guide.

– The concept of early childhood education – basis and development

This action is based on defining the basis and developing the concept of early childhood education for children below 3 years old. The establishment of a coherent early childhood education system in Romania is a necessity derived from the priorities of education at national and global levels.

Early learning facilitates learning opportunities later in life. Early skills and knowledge make it easier to develop new ones in the future. The early childhood education can be an essential lever in reducing social inequalities. The definition of early childhood education in the Romanian legislation will allow for the central and local authorities to concentrate funds on this area of education, and this long-term investment will lead to a decrease in the rate of early school leavers, an improvement of school

achievement along children's future educational path, the establishment of the foundation for lifelong learning and an increased rate of social and professional insertion.

– Migrants

Methodologies on the organisation and running of the course for initiation into the Romanian language addressed to foreign adults and their children who were given some form of protection or the right to stay in Romania, as well as to citizens of the EU Member States and the European Economic Area.

New regulations referring to **language initiation courses** provided by:

- *Order of the Education, Research and Innovation Minister 5924/12.11.2009* for the approval of the methodology on the organisation and running of the course for initiation into the Romanian language, the procedures for developing, approving and distributing the course curricula and textbooks and the procedures on the assessment of the participants in this course, for foreign adults who were given some form of protection or the right to stay in Romania, as well as for citizens of the EU Member States and the European Economic Area, published in the Official Journal of Romania 0858/09.12.2009
- *Order of the Education, Research and Innovation Minister 5925/12.11.2009* for the approval of the methodology on the organisation and running of the course for initiation into the Romanian language and the schooling of their children and the procedures for developing, approving and distributing the course curricula and textbooks for children of foreigners who were given some form of protection or the right to stay in Romania, as well as for children of citizens of the EU Member States and the European Economic Area, published in the Official Journal of Romania 0863/10.12.2009

Since the 2010/11 school year, the initiation courses for the Romanian language have been based on the methodologies mentioned above. Therefore, according to the documents that have been mentioned, it was necessary to develop a methodology that regulates the right to participation in the course for initiation into Romanian of different categories of foreign adults and, according to some legislative changes that intervened, a review of existing documents, developed by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, with a view to ensure access to education and participation in this course for different categories of minor foreign children.

The new regulations add to a set of regulations in this area that also includes:

- *Order of the Education and Research Minister 5335/18.11.2004* on the approval of the curriculum for Romanian Language – An Initiation Course for foreign adults who were given some form of protection in Romania
- *Order of the Education and Research Minister 4041/16.06.2004* on the approval of the curriculum of the Romanian Language – An Initiation Course for children of foreigners who were given the status of refugee in Romania and minor refugees who are not accompanied

With the adoption and application of the new methodologies, the organisation and running of courses for initiation into Romanian are expected to be more efficient, as part of the integration programmes that aim to support foreign citizens in the process of learning skills and knowledge necessary for their adaptation to the Romanian society.

In the 2010/11 school year, according to a forecast of the Romanian Office for Immigration that was sent to the Ministry of Education with the Note 2399390/06.07.2010, approximately 450 foreigners, out of which 150 children, will participate in courses for initiation into the Romanian language.

– Learners with special needs

A programme on access to education for disadvantaged groups has been launched. Its objectives are to improve educational conditions in special education as well as to prevent early school leaving and improve the rate of achievement for children with special education needs. The results of the PHARE projects, in almost 8 years since they were introduced and extended at national level, are: 42 county strategies to improve access to education that were developed in accordance with the requirements and the working materials provided during training courses; 850 trainer trainers (for themes such as: inclusive education, active and interactive teaching-learning methods, assessment in inclusive educational systems, the school-community relation, inclusive curriculum, learning difficulties); 550 head teachers and 7725 teachers from pilot schools completed training modules in the area of inclusive education, active learning methods, curriculum development etc.; remedial education programmes have been organised in all counties, with good participation; 36 Resource Centres for Inclusive Education have been established and work in the counties that participated in the projects; approximately 450 schools included in these projects carried out activities for parents, in accordance with their local plans.

4. Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

– Transversal key competences

- **Re-structuring the national curriculum.** An analysis of the implementation conditions. Development of a diagnosis referring to the situation of the Romanian curriculum and its components, with an identification of priority areas for intervention (seven major areas and possible actions to implement the curriculum, after the new education law has been adopted).
- **Developing a curriculum for training in the integration of key competences in the teaching process.** Supporting in-service teacher training with methodologies for the implementation of the national curriculum, the development of units that support the re-construction of the new curriculum, and the provision of some pragmatic basis. This curriculum is concerned with conceptual aspects derived from the description of key competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes), restructured at subject level, by including them in the conceptual network of a subject-specific teaching. The project involves the development of online learning communities for every component (teachers for primary education, mother tongue, foreign languages, history, chemistry, social sciences and humanities). The calendar of activities is for 2010.
- **Developing innovative teaching resources for the implementation of key competences in the curriculum.** Supporting in-service teacher training with methodologies for the implementation of the national curriculum by developing teaching resources (for subjects/themes) having the role to support the re-construction of the curriculum and provide a pragmatic basis. The expected impact and changes are related to the exploration of ways to develop key competences through methodological interventions at each school subject level, that promote integrated learning activities. The resources can be used in different training and self-training activities and the calendar of activities is for 2010.
- **National Impact Report on the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), Romania, 2007 – 2009.** Creating a strategic framework for European cooperation in the area of education and training based on a diagnosis on the situation of the training system. The impact consists of an analysis of the results so far, an identification of lessons that have been learned and good practices, as well as recommendations for improving the current programme in its remaining

period of implementation. The diagnosis will be used to provide data that will inform/prepare the future programme in the area of lifelong learning.

An ESF project: “Inclusive educational offers, extracurricular and outside school, to develop a healthy lifestyle and active citizenship for children from disadvantaged – mainly rural – communities in Romanian school education” (2008-2011) with the following specific objectives:

- To develop a healthy lifestyle in the spirit of active citizenship based on extracurricular and non-formal interventions by identifying the necessary educational approach,
- To initiate specific educational offers that promote a healthy lifestyle and active citizenship in order to support quality inclusive education for children from disadvantaged – mainly rural – communities by training the categories of decision-makers in the school education system,
- To increase awareness among local social actors with regard to the need to promote a healthy lifestyle and active citizenship in order to support inclusive education for children from disadvantaged – mainly rural – communities,
- To create and implement inclusive educational offers, extracurricular and non-formal, which develop a healthy lifestyle and active citizenship for children from disadvantaged – mainly rural – communities.

This project pursues the development of key competences such as: use of notions, concepts, laws and principles that are specific to health, investigation of and solutions to health-related problems and promotion of values and attitudes like the development of a healthy lifestyle, respect for private life, personal health and others' health, development of tolerance for and solidarity with people in difficulty, adopting “green” behaviours etc.

The project is necessary to connect the educational offers with current health issues at European level, in order to create educational offers that are specific to disadvantaged students by involving them in extracurricular and outside school activities such as competitions, exhibitions etc., as well as volunteer activities, introduced as a novelty in the school education system in order to prepare students from rural and urban disadvantaged areas to become responsible and active citizens in promoting a healthy lifestyle for future generations.

– Innovation-friendly institutions and partnerships

No specific national information available.

B – Other important ongoing reforms and policy initiatives at national level

The document *Raport asupra stării sistemului național de învățământ* 2009 (Report on the Situation of the National Education System 2009) issued by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation identifies the following priorities and directions for development in the period 2009-2012:

1. Achieving a stable, equitable, efficient and relevant education system.
2. An allocation of 6 % of the GDP to education.
3. Transforming early education in a public good.
4. Decentralising school education and increasing the autonomy of schools.
5. Introduction of a competence-based curriculum.
6. Promoting a performance-based salary system in accordance with teachers' status in society.

7. A legislative system which ensures the modernisation, the stability and the predictability of the education system, as well as guaranteeing the equality of opportunity with regard to access to education.
8. Quality assurance and encouraging excellence in public and private higher education.
9. Lifelong learning to acquire new qualifications, extended specialisation and advanced training.

For each of these priorities/directions for development, strategic objectives are provided and a series of measures are foreseen together with their expected impact.

Unrevised English

Information provided by the Romanian Eurydice Unit

For more detailed information on education systems in Europe, you may consult the EURYDICE data base, EURYBASE (http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en)