

Country Report ROMANIA

1) Overview of the National Further Education System

Providers of further education:

Since 2007, when Romania joined the EU, the CVT and other ALE measures have become eligible under the **European Social Fund** in compliance with the **Sectorial Operational Plan Human Resources Development (SOP HRD)**. SOP HRD finances a substantial part of these projects with a consistent component of professional education for adults.

Adult vocational training has become a sector with increasing importance in Romania. It includes initial vocational training and continuing vocational training, organized in the national education system. **Initial adult vocational training** is designed to ensure the training necessary for the minimum professional competences needed for obtaining a job. **Continuous vocational training** takes place after the initial training and either develops already existing professional competences or provides new ones. These professional competences can be obtained within formal, non-formal or informal pathways, as defined by this legislation:

- The formal is participation in a program organized by a training provider;
- The non-formal means to practice specific activities directly in the work place or with self-motivated study;
- The informal is to follow forms of training which are not institutionalized, not structured, or even not intended - for example through contact with different *sources of the socio-educational field, family, society or the work environment*.

There are not any statistics available regarding all the kinds of ALE providers. The accredited CVT providers are public institutions, private bodies and NGOs. Some of the initial VET schools are accredited as CVT providers. The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports has input within the development of teachers and trainers. In almost **all the public universities** there is a department for methodical and psycho-pedagogical studies, running **continuing training and specialized courses, with a market oriented offer**.

The **Centre of Professional Training Culture (CPTC)** is a public institution aiming to provide CVT courses incorporating the output from cultural institutions.

The National Agency for Employment is the one of the most important providers of vocational training for adult population, especially for unemployed people. The majority of the courses are provided by the local employment agencies through their own training centres or in co-operation with private training centres, with the costs of the courses covered from the unemployment fund.

If applicable - Legal requirements:

Concerning the legislative framework, there is a special part within the Law of Education 1/2011, dedicated to “permanent education”.

Lifelong learning is seen to represent all educational activities realized by each person within formal, non-formal and informal backgrounds for training purpose and for developing

competences including personal, civic, social, or labour competences. Lifelong learning therefore includes early education and compulsory education, superior education (high school), university, and continuing adult vocational training.

Course offers, databases and other sources of information about further education:

The key ministries responsible for the organization and accreditation of adult education are the **Ministry of Education Research and Innovation** (Previously the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth), the **Ministry of Labour Social Solidarity and Family**, and the **Minister of Culture and Cults** - depending on the type of the program provided.

Overall there are three different levels of governance. As well as the central governance from the Ministry, responsibility is divided between the **Regional, Municipal and Local levels**, particularly for the formal education system. The Ministry of Education has the overall responsibility for education in Romania, including **ALE (Adult Learning and Education)**. More specifically, they coordinate, monitor and evaluate institutions and the programs which provide educational and continuous training. Their main roles include:

- Providing **CVT (continuing vocational training)** through public education institutions (schools, colleges, universities);
- Continuous training for teachers in VET to provide training for adults, and to evaluate competencies for the recognition of informal and non-formal prior learning;
- Developing education and training based on the eight domains of key competences in order to ensure the basis for lifelong learning;
- Developing alternative forms of training such as distance education in order to increase access and participation;
- Supporting partnership structures at regional and local level in order to ensure the relevance of vocational training (from quantitative and qualitative approach);
- Developing the "second chance" programs run by public institutions and NGOs which provide alternative curricula for those who left school without a basic qualification level;
- Establishing the National Authority for Qualifications, in order to ensure the National Qualification Framework relates to the European Qualification Framework;
- Establishing the National Centre for VET (vocational education and training), developed to support coherence between initial (including HE) and continuing training.

The National Agency for Employment (NAE)

The National Agency for Employment (NAE) implements policies and strategies regarding **employment and vocational training** of jobseekers, and coordinates, guides and controls the activities of the subordinated county agencies, whose roles are regulated by law. They aim to increase employment opportunities for jobseekers and so provide (free of charge, from the Unemployment Insurance Fund) vocational training services for the unemployed or disadvantaged groups. This can include those who were unable to find employment after graduating, or after completing the compulsory military service; refugees, prisoners or those who have been unable to find work after being released from prison, those who are re-entering the job market after childcare or sick leave, and those in rural areas.

Financial support:

The Romanian state ensures and sustains (including financially) access to education and continuing professional training for:

- Young people and adults who have not completed compulsory education;
- Young people who left the educational system before obtaining a professional qualification;
- People with special educational needs;
- Young people and adults who return to the country after a period of working abroad;
- Young people and adults who are residents in economically and socially disadvantaged communities;
- Employed people over 40 years old with a low educational background with low qualification levels;
- Students with a high risk of school failure;
- Any citizen who wants to benefit from permanent education.

Lifelong learning education is financed from public and private funds through public or private partnerships, with financing and co-financing from employers, non-governmental organizations, etc.

According to law, lifelong learning focuses on the organization of these permanent education programs through educational institutions, particularly stating that they must ensure:

- compensatory education (a "second chance" route into education for adults who did not obtain the basic level of school qualifications);
- continuing vocational training;
- civic education and
- personal education designed to enable people to play an active role in society

This law's aim is to **create training opportunities for newly disadvantaged groups**, and stimulate employment. Many groups can be classed as 'disadvantaged', and therefore qualify for this public support, including the long term unemployed, women, the disabled, those returning to work after maternal or paternal leave, or after military service, single parents, and those in rural areas with a low income. This support is organized through the **National Agency for Employment**, which facilitated the access to these training programs.

Strengths :

- School has an important role in education and training of young generation;
- Mentality of the most Romanians „family, school and church” "are traditional values put the school in top;
- Compulsory education is free;
- The school offers the same opportunity to all students;
- The maximum number of 25 students per class offers opportunities for activities that meet the requirements of postmodern didactics: cooperative learning, differentiated treatment, individual, teamwork, etc.

Weaknesses:

- Inadequate curriculum requirements and interests of students of different ages;
- Content based on memorization, large notions, concepts, reduced capacity to adapt to the outside world;
- Handing understood, most often: I teach, you need to know;
- The lack of necessary equipment, auxiliary teachers to facilitate learning by doing;
- Teachers who are not qualified and do not have the power to inform and understand, hence the inertia and scepticism in addressing educational issues;
- Poor communication between theorists and practitioners;
- Low wages that do not attract capable individuals in the system;

Further/ individual comments:

The information provided would make us believe that with all of these institutions and this support in terms of employment and requalification and job-oriented market of guidance and education services, the rate of unemployment would be very low in Romania.

However, the reality is different.

And the differences vary from region to region and from county to county.

The question is why?

2) Vocation Education System

Career/Vocational Settings

Career counselling services are provided through government agencies, such as the NAE, and private practitioners. These services are generally oriented toward workforce entry. In addition to skills-based interventions (e.g., résumé writing consultation, job search skills development), counsellors sometimes conduct personality assessments and encourage client self-exploration to identify possible career paths.

Most common vocation education/ career paths (e.g. school- based, company- based training, college/ university)

Education and training for young people: A snapshot

- Postsecondary educational attainment² has increased significantly, from less than 9% in 2000 to 22% in 2012 (Eurostat, 2013a). It remains lower on average than OECD countries where nearly four upper-secondary students in five now expect to enter tertiary education during their life time (OECD, 2012c). University programmes, available in 49 public and eight private universities, enroll the majority of students seeking a postsecondary qualification, with many fewer students in postsecondary VET programmes. There are two main types of postsecondary vocational and training provision in Romania: the “post-high school system” programmes (*scoli postliceale*) – from one to three years – delivered in 268 schools, in a mix of service, commerce and technical areas, and the foreman programmes which deliver part-time courses for technicians in employment in 92 foreman schools (*scoli de maistri*).

Post-high schools

- Post-high schools offer a range of qualifications, mostly in two-year programmes. In 2011-2012, there were 214 public schools and 54 private schools³ offering such post-high school qualifications (NCTVETD, 2013a) in technical domains (such as electronic, mechanics, engineering, etc.), in services (tourism and food, commerce, healthcare) and in agriculture. They are open to students who have attended upper secondary education (either academic or technological) and also to those who have attended vocational schools (if they complete the two final years of upper secondary education in either an academic or technological school). A completed upper-secondary education is required for entry to post-high school programmes (but the bacalaureate is not mandatory).
- *Foreman schools*
In 2011-2012 there were 88 public and four private foreman schools (NCTVETD, 2013a). Their programmes, mostly in technical fields, are part-time, and they focus on people in employment with at least three years of relevant experience. The content of the programmes is decided jointly with the companies. Management courses represent about 15% of the coursework (the section on strengths below gives more information about these schools).
- *Upper secondary education in Romania* Education in Romania is free and compulsory for children aged 6-16, including one mandatory year of pre-primary education. Upper secondary education, which starts in grade 9, is composed of two consecutive two-year cycles. Upper secondary schools are operated and funded by central government, with municipalities contributing to some capital costs. Recent reforms mean that entry to vocational schools has been postponed by two years, as from 2012. Students can now choose to enter VET schools at the age of 15-16 (grade 9), after two years in comprehensive general lower secondary education (see Figure 3).

Students can attend four types of upper secondary school:

- *General academic schools*, leading to the university entrance examination (bacalaureate).
- ***Specialized academic schools (called vocational), in sports and arts***, that also lead to the bacalaureate.
- ***Technological schools (which grant the title of “technicians”)***. Students in these schools may also pursue the bacalaureate that grants the right to enter university. In 2010/2011 technological schools enrolled 535547 students, representing almost 60% of the cohort (NCDTVET Romania, 2013b).
- ***Vocational schools, that starts in grade 9, and prepares students for the labor market, without a bacalaureate.***

Figure 3 The Romanian education system

Age	Grade	National education system			Qualification level (COM 1985)	Reference level EQF			
>18		Higher education - doctoral studies (PhD)			5	8	Work based Apprenticeship	Recognition of non formal and informal learning	Continuous vocational education and training
		Higher education - master				7			
		Higher education - bachelor				4			
		Post high school education (Tertiary education - non university)			3 advanced TVET	5			
18	XII	General high school	Vocational high school (art, sport ...)	Technological high school	3	4			
17	XI				Practical stages (6 months)	Vocational school (2 years)			
16	X	General high school	Vocational high school (art, sport ...)	Technological high school	1	2			
15	IX								
3 - 14	0 - VIII	Gymnasium education				1			
		Primary education							
		Pre-school education							

Source: NCDTVET Romania (2013b), “The System of Education and Training in Romania”, PowerPoint presented by the NCDTVET Romania to the OECD review team on 3 April 2013, not published.

Vocational and technical education and training (VET) has a long tradition in Romania, partly inspired by models adopted by other communist regimes, with a tendency to favour technical and vocational schools over traditional high school education. At one point during the Ceaușescu period, for example, up to 92% of students were apparently in some kind of vocational training at secondary level.

Traditionally there has been a **strong tradition for schools to work with businesses** to provide **training opportunities and apprenticeships for students**, and then also **provide employment for the qualified student after the studies were completed**. **Companies have also provided teachers for practical skills trainings**, and have played a very important role in supporting the VET system in Romania.

The NAE (National Agency for Employment)

The National Agency for Employment is one of the most important providers of vocational training for adults. The majority of courses are provided by local employment agencies through **their own vocational training centres**; however they also work with private training centres. The agency functions under the authority of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities.

Universities

With the end of communist rule in 1989, Universities began major reforms in both programs and management within the framework of new education legislation, which is still evolving today. A boom in private Higher Education institutions led to the formation of an **Accreditation Council**,

regulated by the government, along with a competitive system of incentive grants for research and development activities.

Within this structure, the Romanian tertiary education sector consists of both private and public institutions of six types:

- **Universitate** (Universities) -The largest tertiary institutions which include a broad number of faculties and programmes, and award advanced scientific and professional degrees while combining teaching and research responsibilities.
- **Academie** (Academies) - A higher education institution training specialists, normally in a single general field (e.g. Academy of Music).
- **Universitate Politehnică** (Polytechnic Universities) - This name was given to former polytechnic institutions after 1990 for those providing programs which emphasize technical and practical fields of study.
- **Institut** (Institutions) - An institution that awards professional degrees based on study and professional experience in limited fields of specialization.
- **Colegiu Universitar** (University Colleges) - Institutions offering courses leading to a diploma, but which do not qualify graduates for admission to postgraduate study (these may either be part of a university or operate autonomously).
- **Postgraduate schools** independent from universities.

e-learning

As an example, **SREP** is a large supporter and provider of e-learning in Romania. An example of an e-learning project conducted through them is **'F@DO FOR ALL - E-learning for all based on empowerment of local networking'**. The methodology of the project was developed to provide equal training opportunities for people who are disadvantaged economically, socially and educationally, in order to increase social and professional skills for employment and ensure the access to the 'Information Society'. They provided training for Romanian teachers to further use the methodology, and aimed to develop and adapt new guidelines for further application of the methodology within Romania.

Score on VET indicators in Romania and in the EU, 2006, 2010 and 2011/12/13 updates (where available)

Indicator label	2006		2010		Last available year			Change 2010-last available year	
	RO	EU	RO	EU	RO	EU		RO	EU
Access, attractiveness and flexibility									
IVET-students as % of all upper secondary students	64.9	51.9	63.8	50.1	61.9	50.4	(2)	-1.9	0.3
IVET work-based students as % of upper secondary IVET		27.2		27.4		26.5	(2)		-0.9
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	17	33	18	38					
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	14	16	10	20					
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	1.3		1.3		2.0	10.5 ^(b)	(3)	0.7	
Enterprises providing training (%)	40	60	24	66					
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	57.6	46.5	56.0	44.4	53.5	45.0	(2)	-2.5	0.6
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			40.1	30.7					
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)					0.7	6.6 ^(b)	(3)		
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)					0.5	4.4 ^(b)	(3)		
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)			1.4 ^(u)		2.5	10.0 ^(b)	(3)	1.1	
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	8.5	14.2		9.5					
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)			81.7	80.2					
Skill development and labour market relevance									
IVET public expenditure (% of GDP)		0.67		0.71		0.68	(1)		-0.03
IVET public expenditure (EUR per student)		7 033		8 558		8 586	(1)		28
Enterprise expenditure on CVT courses as % of total labour cost	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.8					
Average number of foreign languages learned in IVET	1.4		1.8	1.2 ^(d)	2.0	1.2	(2)	0.2	0.0
STEM graduates from upper secondary IVET (% of total)	57.1	32.0	55.3	28.7		29.2	(2)		0.5
30-34 year-olds with tertiary VET attainment (%)	2.3	7.3	1.8	7.4	1.6	8.7	(3)	-0.2	1.3
Innovative enterprises with supportive training practices (%)	37.1	43.1	36.3	41.6					
Employment rate for IVET graduates (20-34 year-olds)			82.1	79.1					
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over general stream)			4.1	5.6					
Employment premium for IVET graduates (over low-educated)			15.1	17.4					
Workers helped to improve their work by training (%)			97.7	89.8					
Workers with skills matched to their duties (%)			40.3	55.2					
Overall transitions and labour market trends									
Early leavers from education and training (%)	17.9	15.4	18.4	13.9	17.3	11.9	(3)	-1.1	-2.0
30-34 year-olds with tertiary attainment (%)	12.4	28.8	18.1	33.4	22.8	36.8	(3)	4.7	3.4
NEET rate for 18-24 year-olds (%)	18.2	15.1	20.0	16.6	21.2	17.0	(3)	1.2	0.4
Unemployment rate for 20-34 year-olds (%)	10.1	10.6	10.9	13.1	11.6	15.1	(3)	0.7	2.0
Employment rate of recent graduates (age group 20-34) (%)	74.7	79.0	71.2	77.4	66.8	75.4	(3)	-4.4	-2.0
Adults with lower level of educational attainment (%)	25.8	30.0	25.7	27.3	23.7	24.8	(3)	-2.0	-2.5
Employment rate for 20-64 year-olds (%)	64.8	68.9	63.3	68.5	63.9	68.3	(3)	0.6	-0.2
Medium/high-qualified employment in 2020 (% of total)					78.8	82.3			

NB: b = break in series. When break in series occurs data cannot be compared. Consequently, when break in series occurs from 2011 onwards, data in the column 'Last available year' are not comparable with previous years. Also, when the break is before 2011 (i.e. any year between 2006 and 2010 included), the 2006 figure is not shown; d = change in definition. Data are treated in a similar way to breaks in series. When the change in definition is in 2006 or 2010, these data are also not presented because comparability over time is affected; u = unreliable; p = provisional; (1) = year of reference: 2011; (2) = year of reference: 2012; (3) = year of reference: 2013. A few indicators use other years to approximate the 2006 and 2010 baselines (see annex).

Labour market demands:

In Romania, owing to high replacement demand, most job opportunities, around 47% will be for skilled agricultural, forestry and fisheries workers, nearly eight times higher than the 6% forecast for this occupation for the EU as a whole (Figure 3). In contrast, the proportion of job opportunities for craft and related trades workers, in Romania, around 0%, is significantly below the 5% forecast for the EU as a whole.

Strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- The inclusiveness of the system: a serious effort is being made to create avenues between different levels of learning, and between vocational and more academic tracks, to raise the status of VET.
- The foreman schools offer attractive up skilling opportunities for people in employment. Their programs provide team Management and pedagogical skills and higher technical skills to technicians.
- All postsecondary programs are required to include valuable work placements, which provide a strong learning environment, a powerful means of transitioning young people into the labor market, and guide the mix of provision.
- The mix of provision is adjusted to labour market needs both through mandatory work placements and through a systematic sequence of national, regional and local discussions involving institutions, employers and unions.
- Employers are very involved in the design of qualifications through 25 sectorial committees and through frequent reviews of the content of qualifications.
- The qualifications framework combines consistency across the country with local flexibility in response to adapt to the needs of local employers.

Weaknesses

- Romania may not provide sufficient short-cycle postsecondary VET to meet potential demand.
- There is a gap in provision for adults who want to re-enter the labour market and displaced workers. Programs are not usually offered part-time.
- Transitions between post-high school programs and university programs can be challenging and credits are not easily portable.
- Recent changes in initial teacher education requirements may not ensure a good balance between pedagogical skills and up-to-date industry experience for teachers in vocational subjects.
- There is no clear rationale determining the mix of fee-paying and free provision within the system.
- There are insufficient data to inform the system and to guide students.
- Uncertainties remain on how to develop an effective apprenticeship model.

3) Guidance and Coaching Services

TABLE 1
Key Events in Romanian Counseling
After the 1989 Revolution

Year	Key Event
1991	Romanian Constitution ratified
1995	Education Law 84/1995 established school counseling in public education
1996	School counseling course offered at University of Bucharest
1996	Counseling and guidance unit added to national school curriculum
1996	Master's degree program in school counseling introduced at University of Bucharest
1996	First doctoral degree in counseling completed (as an independent study)
1997	International Association for Vocational and Educational Guidance held counseling conference in Brasov
1998	Government clarified role of PPAC and ISPPAC counseling service centers
1998	National Employment Agency created
1999	National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance opened as part of the European Commission's Euroguidance Network
1999	Master's degree program in psychological counseling introduced at Babes-Bolyai University
2000	Counseling unit in national curriculum updated
2001	<i>Consilierea Carierei</i> (Jigau, 2001) career counseling handbook published
2002	Standards for the educational and vocational assessment of children introduced
2003	Master's degree program in career counseling introduced at Polytechnic University of Bucharest
2004	Ethical code for counseling developed by the Institute of Educational Sciences
2005	First Romanian-hosted international counseling conference took place
2005	First Romanian Global Career Development Facilitator certified
2007	NBCC Romania incorporated in Bucharest
2009	Romanian Counseling Association created

Note. Revolution = fall of Communism; PPAC = Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Center; ISPPAC = Inter-School Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Center; NBCC = National Board for Certified Counselors.

Providers:

Public bodies/institutions with responsibilities in the field of school and professional counselling/orientation at national level, school and professional counselling/orientation services are supplied, free of charge, especially by means of two public institutions:

- **The National Agency for Employment – NAE**, subordinated to the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social protection

The NAE services aim at the unemployed and the economic operators, whose main objective is the increase of the employment level and, implicitly, the decrease of the unemployment rate. The specific objectives aimed at within this institution are the following: the institutionalization of the social dialogue in the field of professional employment and training; the application of strategies in the field of professional employment and training; the application of the social protection measures for the unemployed people. (acc. to Law no. 145 on the 9th of July, 1998 regarding the setting-up, organization and operation of the **National Agency for Employment and Professional Training**).

ANOFM (Eng. NAE) organizes offers and finances professional training services for the unemployed persons and, at the same time, it mediates the relation between them and the employers in the country, with a view to achieving the balance between the demand and the offer on the internal employment market.

The services offered by ANOFM are oriented towards the persons who are in search of a job (pre-counselling services, career information and counselling, work mediation, training and retraining courses, consultancy to start up a business, adding-up to salary income, the employment of the graduates, stimulation of the mobility of the work force), as well as towards employers (professional training Programs for their own employees, subsidization of the work places, pupils' and students' employment during their holidays, employment of the young people aged between 16 and 25 who are in difficulty and face the risk of professional exclusion). **ANOFM manages: 41 county employment agencies (AJOFM), 88 local agencies and 156 working points.**

- **County centres of Psycho-pedagogical assistance - CJAP**

These are units connected to the pre-university education, which operate in each county, based of the Law of Education no. 84/1995 and are coordinated, monitored and evaluated by the county resource and educational assistance centres.

They are institutions which are subordinated organizationally to the County School Inspectorate (ISJ) and to the **County Centres of Educational Resources and Assistance (CJRAE)** and, from the methodologically point of view, to the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports, which coordinates the activities of the psycho-pedagogical assistance centres.

CJAP collaborates, within CJRAE, with education units and institutions, with county directorates for child's protection, with county agencies for professional employment and training, with other governmental and non-governmental organizations, with the county police inspectorate, as well as with other legal persons who have attributions in the field of education.

In the field of career counselling and orientation, CJAP's attributions are the following:

- Collaboration with speech therapist centres, with school mediators, with the personnel of the medical centres for hygiene and prophylaxis and with the personnel of the local professional employment and training agencies;
- the support and guaranteeing methodological assistance and counselling of educators, school teachers, elementary school teachers, teachers and class teachers;
- the development of some psycho-sociologic studies regarding the options of the students in the final years of study concerning the professional qualifications in the vocational and high-school education, as well as the types of schools within the network;

- The development of some recommendations for parents as concerns the consultation of other institutions

Regarding the problems that are outside the reference of CJAP (speech therapist centres, expertise

Commissions, consulting rooms, psychological centres etc.);

- provision of psycho pedagogic counselling and assistance services for the children with special education needs;

- coordination of some projects/programs, partnerships regarding the problem of counselling, school Orientation, professional orientation of the students, in partnership with the education authorities, local Authorities, associations and foundations with preoccupations in the field;

- monitoring special situations in the pre-university education units in the county (high level of school dropout, risk of drug consumption, behaviour disorders) in which, out of objective reasons, there could be no classes assigned in school offices, half-yearly reports being required in this case.

Private entities providing training and guidance

Counselling / orientation services are also offered by other public or private institutions (either in the Human Resources department, or by means of independent departments). The number of those who require their services is still quite low, which may indicate a **low level of awareness of the role these services have and especially of the benefits obtained by means of these services.**

In the **private area** there are NGO's, foundations and even SME's who provide trainings, guidance and counselling based on a fee or free of charge, for those financed from EU funded programs.

If applicable - Legal requirements:

Counselling and orientation services in Romania – legal aspects

At the time being, in Romania there is not a specific legislative framework, which should regulate the school and professional counselling/orientation activity.

The main normative acts a counsellor can rely on in his activity are:

- The Constitution of Romania;
- Law no. 705/2001 regarding the national system of social assistance;
- Law no. 213 on the 27th of May, 2004 regarding the practice of the profession of psychologist owning the right of free practice, the foundation, organization and functioning of the Psychologists' College in Romania;
- Law of Education 84/1995, republished and subsequently supplemented with Law no. 354/2004;
- Law 272/ 2004 regarding the protection and promotion of children's rights;
- Law no. 100/1998 regarding the public health assistance.

If applicable – special national programmes and/ or measures

In Romania, career counselling activity was first legitimated during the reforming process of the educational system, starting with the year 1991, at the pre-university education level. The issue was to develop a network of "Centres of information and professional guidance", oriented at providing services to young people involved in the educational system, but also to adults facing with problems of retraining and migration on the labour market.

According to the Law no. 1/2011, National Education Law, (Article 351): "The State ensures free access to counselling and career guidance to all students and people looking for a job".

In the context of this law, counselling and career guiding include the following activities (extract, Article 352):

- a) Career information and guiding oriented at obtaining and maintaining a particular job.
- b) Education on career, including: information about the labour market, developing skills for making choices about education, profession, life and career planning.
- c) Assistance in clarifying personal goals and aspirations, in understanding one's own educational profile and career management in key moments.
- d) Counselling for employment and development of necessary skills to search and obtain a job.
- e) Assistance and support in finding a job.

Financial support

Public bodies/institutions with responsibilities in the field of school and professional counselling/orientation at national level, school and professional counselling/orientation services are supplied, free of charge, especially by means of two public institutions:

- The National Agency for Employment – ANOFM, subordinated to the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social protection;
- County centres of Psycho-pedagogical assistance - CJAP
- NGO's, foundations can provide training classes either free of charge (if they are supported through an EU funded program such as POSDRU or POCU), or through a fee supported by the client.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Despite the fact that there is a real need for counselling services in universities, and this need is formally acknowledged by student representatives, we can observe a low level of student help-seeking and student involvement in career counselling and psychological counselling programs [8]. There certainly is a very limited tradition in our higher education system of complementing academic teaching with support and youth development non-academic services. Based on research on the motives for accessing counselling services in college students, it seems that one important factor for their intention to seek help in career counselling is their attitude towards career counselling.

One major concern for universities, also very important for the work and vision of the Career Guidance and Counselling Centres, is university level dropout, a phenomenon that puts young people at economic, social and emotional risk. There is limited data on the level of dropout in Romanian universities, however, two reports from 2011 show the following:

- The rate of graduation from upper-level education institutions for the academic year 2009-2010 was of 52% from the total population of youth aged 23 (the expected age of graduation).
- Only half of the students that reach their final year of studies at the undergraduate level manage to earn their degree in the theoretical interval of graduation (up to 23 years of age).
- 19.2% of students in the first year of university report being in the situation of dropping out of school, the most frequently mentioned reasons for this being financial issues (49% of cases), not seeing the utility of what they are learning (22.2% of cases), and family problems (21.1% of cases).

- The same report analyses the predictors of university level school dropout and mentions three independent factors as being the most relevant predictors: family income, the student's average after the last exam session, and the materialistic value orientation of the student.

Patterns of good practice

“Second Chance” pathways

The question of second chance pathways for adults who had not achieved the basic level of school education was high on the agenda during the early 2000s. A project was started by the Ministry of Education with ‘**Centre Education 2000+**’ which offered a **second chance for young adults between 14-25** years who did not complete compulsory education, where they were offered a ‘**basic education recovery**’ programme in parallel with an **apprenticeship type of training**. These apprenticeships deliberately combined traditional Roma professions with other, more "modern" professions to motivate student participation.

Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports supports both young people and adults who left school early or, who do not have any professional qualifications, through the educational programme "**The second chance**". This program is organised in partnership with Local Public Administration through school inspectorates.

Roma communities

Within Romania there are areas with a high Roma population, and there has been a policy to encourage more Roma people to become teachers, in order to serve as positive role models. In order to achieve this there are ‘**positive discrimination**’ programmes to attract young Roma students into teacher training, including a distance learning programme through the University of Bucharest, and a system which allocated special places for Roma students within all universities. The Centre Education 2000+", a member of **Soros Open Network (SON) Romania**, also supports Roma students with the condition that they work within their communities for some time after they graduate.

Innovative and transferable ideas

Roma/disadvantaged people integration process should start “from the bottom”, not from the state: everyone should look around in his/her own environment and start to open towards the others, get to know the people around and approach the others as single individuals in order to deconstruct his/her own stereotypes.

Abbreviations

- **SOP HRD** - Sectorial Operational Plan Human Resources Development
- **CPTC** - Centre of Professional Training Culture -
- **ALE** - Adult Learning and Education
- **CVT** - continuing vocational training

- **NAE** - National Agency for Employment
- **VET** - Vocational and technical education and training
- **CJAP** - County centres of Psycho-pedagogical assistance
- **CJRAE** - County Centres of Educational Resources and Assistance

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