



ROMANIA

Advisory Services Agreement on

Strengthening Planning and Budgeting Capacity and Supporting the
Introduction of Performance Budgeting

OUTPUT NO. 6

**Institutional Strategic Plan 2019-2022 for the Ministry of
National Education**

September 2019

Project co-financed from the European Social Fund through the Operational Programme for Administrative
Capacity 2014-2020



Copyright Statement

The material in this publication is copyrighted. Copying and/or transmitting portions of this work without permission may be a violation of applicable laws.

For permission to photocopy or reprint any part of this work, please send a request with the complete information to either: (i) the General Secretariat of the Government (1 Victoriei Square, Bucharest, Romania); or (ii) the World Bank Group Romania (Vasile Lascăr Street, No 31, Et 6, Sector 2, Bucharest, Romania).

This report has been delivered in July 2019 under the Advisory Services Agreement on *Strengthening Planning and Budgeting Capacity and Supporting the Introduction of Performance Budgeting* signed between the General Secretariat of the Government and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development on June 8, 2016. It corresponds to Output no. 6 under the above-mentioned agreement.

CONTENTS

Preamble	7
Foreword	8
Executive summary	12
Introduction	14
Foundation	14
Methodology.....	14
Stage of implementation of the ISP	15
2. Context	21
3. Mission and Vision	26
The Ministry's Vision	26
The Ministry's Mission	27
4. Strategic objectives, programmes, Measures and Indicators	29
Strategic Objective 1: Reduction and prevention of early school leaving, by promoting equal access to inclusive education and quality, at all the levels and forms of education	29
Programme 1.1: Ensuring that all children have access to education and to quality education	34
Programme 1.2: Improvement of participation in primary and secondary education and graduation of the mandatory education by all pupils.....	38
Programme 1.3: Reintegration of early school leavers in the education system	40
Strategic Objective 2: The development of tertiary education, able to propel economic development and to promote social cohesion by laying the foundations of a knowledge-based society	43
Programme 2.1: Improving the participation in tertiary education.....	47
Programme 2.2: Promoting high quality, flexible and labor market-linked study programmes	49
Programme 2.3: Strategic commitment to the economic sector.....	50
Strategic Objective 3: The development of a professional and technical education system, adapted to the labor market and direct beneficiaries' requirements; improvement of participation in lifelong learning	52
Programme 3.1: Enabling the access, improving the participation, developing the innovation and cooperation in the sector of vocational training.....	56
Programme 3.2: Improving the relevance and quality of vocational training	58
Programme 3.3: Access and incentives for participation in lifelong learning; quality and relevance; partnerships for improved promotion and awareness	60
Strategic Objective 4: Full use of human capital for a smart and sustainable development	62
Programme 4.1: Supporting pupils for an easier transition and access to higher education	65

Strategic Objective 5: Strengthening of the administrative capacity	67
Programme 5.1: Strengthening of the administrative capacity of sectoral policy management and implementation	70
Programme 5.2: Strengthening the ICT governance, cybernetic security and the reinforcement of ICT human resources in the educational sector; modernization and interoperability of national ICT systems	72
5. Arrangements regarding the implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of the ISP.....	74
6. Financial Resources	77
Annex 1.a: Objectives and Budgetary Programmes for 2019-2022	80
Annex 1.b: Year-based Education Budget Scheduling (2019-2022) and specific Measures.....	82
Annex 2: Institutional Strategic Plan (Summary Table)	90
Annex 3: Programmes and Measures thereof (Summary Table).....	98
Annex 4: Information on ISP components	140
Annex 4.1. Institutional Profile	140
Annex 4.2. Analysis of the External and Internal Environments.....	143
Annex 5. Draft Legislative Acts for 2019.....	161

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Organization of the strategic planning process in the MNE	7
Figure 2. Strategic Objective 1: Structure	31
Figure 3. Strategic Objective 1: Impacts and Results	32
Figure 4. Strategic Objective 2: Structure	45
Figure 5. Strategic Objective 2: Impacts and Results	46
Figure 6. Strategic Objective 3: Structure	54
Figure 7. Strategic Objective 3: Impacts and Results	55
Figure 8. Strategic Objective 4: Structure	64
Figure 9. Strategic Objective 4: Impacts and Results	64
Figure 10. Strategic Objective 5: Structure	68
Figure 11. Strategic Objective 5: Impacts and Results	69
Figure 12. Monitoring cycle for the Institutional Strategic Plan of the MNE	75
Figure 13. Programmes within the “School education” strategic path	155
Figure 14. Measures designed to support the programme for access to education.....	156
Figure 15. Measures supporting the programme for the provision of quality educational services	157
Figure 16. Programmes within the tertiary education strategic path	158
Figure 17. Measures intended to consolidate the competitiveness of Romanian universities and the quality of higher education.....	158

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Strategic Objective 1: Breakdown of financing by budget program	33
Table 2. Specific kindergarten enrolment rates according to the residence environment.....	34
Table 3. Strategic Objective 1: Measures of Program 1.1	37
Table 4. Strategic Objective 1: Measures of Program 1.2	40
Table 5. Strategic Objective 1: Measures of Program 1.3	42
Table 6. Strategic Objective 2: Breakdown of financing by budget program	47
Table 7. Strategic Objective 2: Measures of Program 2.1	48
Table 8. Strategic Objective 2: Measures of Program 2.2	50
Table 9. Strategic Objective 2: Measures of Program 2.3	51
Table 10. Employment rate of graduates from ISCED 3 vocational education, 1-3 years after graduation	53
Table 11. Strategic Objective 3: Breakdown of financing by budget program	56
Table 12. Strategic Objective 3: Measures of Program 3.1.	57
Table 13. Strategic Objective 3: Measures of Program 3.2	59
Table 14. Strategic Objective 3: Measures of Program 3.3	61
Table 15. Number and establishments of education per level of education and type of zone (2015-2017)	63

Table 16. Number of education establishments (with and without legal personality)	63
Table 17. Strategic Objective 4: Breakdown of financing by budget program	64
Table 18. Strategic Objective 4: Measures of Program 4.1	66
Table 19. Strategic Objective 5: Breakdown of financing by budget program	69
Table 20. Strategic Objective 5: Measures of Program 5.1	72
Table 21. Strategic Objective 5: Measures of Program 5.2	73
Table 22. Financial resources for the operationalisation of ISP 2019-2022 (thousands RON).....	77
Table 23. Breakdown of estimated financial resources, by year and by strategic objective (thousands RON)	79
Table 24. Rates of transition to upper secondary education (2009 - 2016) per education track and gender	151
Table 25. Rate of high school graduation with a passed baccalaureate exam.....	152
Table 26. Ministry of Education multiannual budget based on programmes	154
Table 27. The Ministry's main strategic paths upon negotiating the budget (% of the measures)	155
Table 28. Share of mentioning measures that support the programme for access to education (% of all the measures).....	156
Table 29. Share of mentioning measures that support the programme for the provision of quality educational services (% out of all the measures)	157
Table 30. Share of the measures the purpose of which is quality/competitiveness in higher education (% of all the measures)	159

LIST OF CHARTS

Chart 1. Evolution of the school dropout rate indicator in Romania and in the EU according to the urbanization degree.....	29
Chart 2. Evolution of the ESL indicator in Romania, by development regions	30
Chart 3. Evolution of the levels of tertiary education graduation in Romania and the EU	43
Chart 4. Levels of tertiary education graduation – European comparative data	43
Chart 5. Levels of tertiary education graduation in Romania, per region of development.....	44
Chart 6. Evolution of the participation rates in education and training in Romania and the EU	52
Chart 7. Comparative data regarding the participation rates in education and training - selection of European countries.....	53
Chart 8. Age group-based participation rates (6-23, shares of participants)	62
Chart 9. Participation rates by level of education and place of origin (school year 2014/15)	62
Chart 10. Structure of the ISP budget, by source of funding (% , 2019-2022)	78
Chart 11. Breakdown of estimated financial resources, by year and by strategic objective (2019-2022) .	78
Chart 12. The percentage of 15-year old students reaching the PISA minimum competence level (level 2 or higher)	147
Chart 13. The rate of participation in education and training (% of the 18-64 group age), selected countries (2009 - 2015).....	148
Chart 14. Enrolments in tertiary education during the 2009-2015 period (absolute figures)	152

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
EPTPTE	Education and Professional Training and Professional and Technical Education
ES	Education Sector
ESIF	European Social and Investment Funds
ESL	Early School Leaving
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GR	Government of Romania
GSG	General Secretariat of the Government
ISP	Institutional Strategic Plan
IT	Information Technology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MET	Ministry of Education and Training
MNE	Ministry of National Education
MPF	Ministry of Public Finance
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PPU	Public Policies Unit
RDITT	Research, Development, Innovation and Technology Transfer
ROSE	Romanian Secondary Education Project
TAS	Technical Assistance Services
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
WB	World Bank

PREAMBLE

Foundation

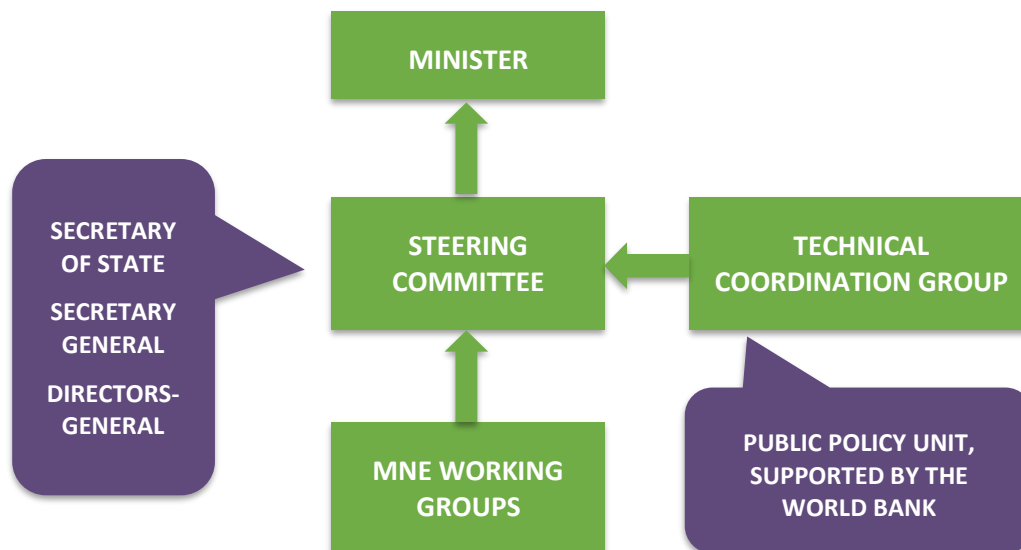
The General Secretariat of the Government (GSG) concluded with the World Bank (WB) an Agreement for Technical Assistance Services to consolidate the capacity of planning, budgeting and monitoring of policies in the GSG, the Ministry of Public Finance (MPF) and the selected line ministries. In order to improve public spending, technical assistance is focused on: (i) continued consolidation of the existing processes of development of the Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) under the guidance of the GSG; (ii) building intra-Government capacity of monitoring updates and implementing the ISP with the help of a common IT tool, developed with support from the Bank; and (iii) developing a central panel in the GSG for reporting with regard to the implementation of the major priorities of the ISP of the selected ministries.

The defined activities of the technical assistance result from the functional analyses of the Public Administration, which has emphasized the fact that the public sector needs a better connection between planning and budgeting, which leads to poor connections between the resources used and the results. Therefore, the Government of Romania has requested to the WB to help with the institutionalization of a process for monitoring the implementation of the policies, with clear roles and responsibilities for the GSG, the MPF and the line ministries, through the use of the methodologies, instruments and processes developed in accordance with these services. This will be an integral part of the budget reforms promoted by the Government of Romania. In order to make the strategic planning process mandatory for every ministry in Romania, the GSG wants the ISP to become a current product elaborated by every ministry.

In its capacity of selected line ministry, the Ministry of National Education (MNE) undertook to perform an ample reform program, which would cover both public policies and public administration.

Methodology

Figure 1. Organization of the strategic planning process in the MNE



FOREWORD

Education and training are key elements for a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth from the perspective of the Europe 2020 Strategy, generating progress in a knowledge society.

The governments of many countries make education a top priority in their programs, and the United Nations has included it in the central Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

In the perspective of 2030, the education of the future is built with the child, family, community and society at its center. The public education service in Romania will be built on the cooperation between the beneficiaries of education, the central and local administration, nongovernmental organizations and the social dialogue partners, aiming at modelling the child in order to become a responsible adult, socially and professionally integrated, who feels that he belongs equally to the Romanian nation and the European space, thinks and participates in the development of the society. The centering on the student will be achieved by: adapting the education to the learning and development needs of the child; the holistic development of the mind-body-soul triangle; professional orientation advice based on skills and talent; modeling of the teaching process according to the particularities of the student and providing flexible routes of the school course.

As regards the achievement of the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, Romania has made progress regarding the participation in tertiary education and the employment rate. The early school leaving rate reached a level of 16.4% (2018), i.e. the people who leave early the education and vocational training system (between the ages of 18 and 24), which is above the national target for 2020 (11.3 %).

In order to meet the strategic goals, it was found that the rural-urban gap represents the main challenge. This implies that the investments, in the coming years, will focus on programs / projects that support children, students and their families, as well as teachers and adults from rural areas, as well as those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Studies at national and international level show that creating well-being in schools and a working atmosphere that encourages the learning process and helps children overcome emotional, but also social, barriers is essential. Generalizing and improving the quality of early education will provide a better learning experience for children from an early age, and will lay solid foundations for their participation in lifelong learning activities. Increasing the quality of the initial and continuous training of teachers, as well as improving the management of the schools and increasing their autonomy are defining points on which future education should focus.

The 2018-2020 governance program states that “implementing the principle of equal opportunities in education, improving the educational performance, skills and competences of all children and young people, through access to a quality, relevant and inclusive education system are the key to growth and prosperity”. Improving the individual planning of learning, the passing of students through the critical stages of the education system, as well as ensuring the basic needs for all students – from transportation and clothing to daily food - are strategic elements that support this desideratum. Investing in education is seen from the perspective of providing a fair education service, and increasing the use of digital tools will enable students to have the skills to cope with the challenges of a constantly changing learning environment.

In conclusion, in order to provide a systematic and continuous improvement of education and training, MNE will pursue the development of the following priority areas:

Early education sector: Improving the infrastructure of the early education system, improving the quality of the education offer and the professional development of the teachers, generalizing the early education in the age group 3-6 years, and improving participation and the retention level of the children in the age group 0-3 years, especially of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, by providing integrated socio-educational services. In order to achieve these objectives, MNE will work in

particular with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, and the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection.

Professionalization of the teaching career: Ensuring the quality and relevance of the initial training of teachers by introducing the obligation of a master's degree and of a teaching mentoring, ensuring the updating of the competences of the teachers regularly through training and mentoring between peers, the responsibility of the teachers in achieving performance objectives as part of their employment contract. It also aims to develop programs that attract specialists from other fields into the teaching profession. To achieve these objectives, MNE will work with universities, trade unions, the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice, the National Agency for Employment, and with the private and associative sectors.

Use of digital tools to improve student outcomes, administration and school services: Improve school connectivity (and other relevant actions under the National Digitization Plan), implement the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, implement the relevant actions set out in the Public Services Strategy (including eGovernment), by developing the digital strategy for public services through collaboration with the Ministry of Communications, the Special Telecommunications Service and the private and associative sectors.

Curriculum reform: Continuing to update curricula on levels and courses of study, elaborating national agendas for linguistic, numerical and digital literacy, taking into account the Education agenda for sustainable development. Collaboration with the research centers of the universities, with the library services within the local communities, with the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and the Ministry of Youth and Sport.

The institutional strategic plan of the Ministry of Education represents the synthesis document of the policies in the field of education and vocational training, which is the basis of the medium-term budgetary programs, presented as an annex to the budgets of the main authorizing officers. It provides a unitary approach to the operationalization of education strategies, by correlating the policy component with the budget component and the process of monitoring performance indicators. The ISP includes programs and cross-sectoral initiatives.

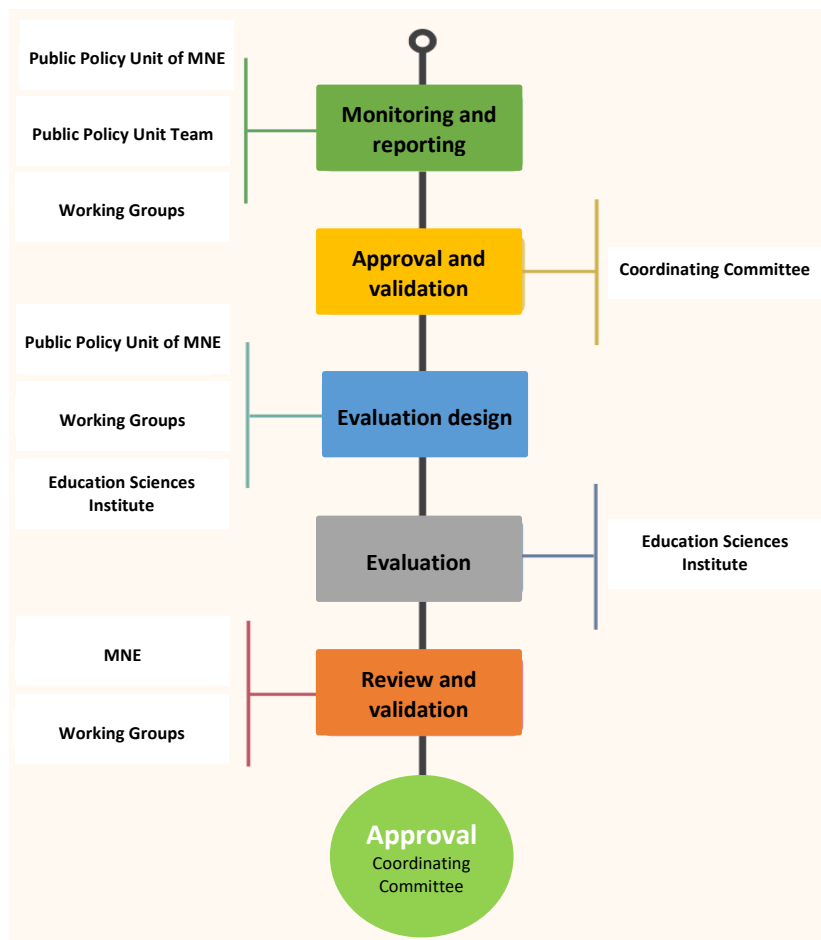
The Institutional Strategic Plans are monitored at the Government level, by the ministries and by the General Secretariat of the Government, which collaborates with the ministries for the reporting and evaluation of the results. As a priority, this process includes impact indicators associated with the strategic objectives and outcome indicators associated with the programs.

According to the agreed methodology, the performance monitoring system for the ISP MNE includes indicators (impact, outcome, output, input) and the tools for monitoring, evaluating and progress reporting, respectively (ISP MNE is included in the ISP IT tool).

The Education and Training Framework (ET 2020), the Governance Program, other European and national programmatic documents underpin the 4 sectoral strategies that the Ministry of National Education has elaborated in order to achieve the major objectives in the field of education and vocational training, and lifelong learning. MNE has designed the 4 strategies in a coherent way, thus achieving a strategic framework of vocational education and training in Romania in order to ensure the unity of vision and action. The sectoral strategies that make up this framework represent ex-ante conditionalities for accessing the European funds in the 2014-2020 budget year, established and assumed by Romania through the Partnership Agreement (August 2014).

For consistency and good organization, MNE has established a unitary framework for coordination of implementation and monitoring-evaluation of measures from the strategies, made up as a tripartite system of independent structures, with distinct attributions, consisting of 5 technical groups for coordinating the implementation of strategies (TG) and a support group, a monitoring committee (MC) and an evaluation body (EB).

The institutional arrangements for carrying out the implementation - monitoring - evaluation processes are presented in the figure below.



At the MNE level, the organizational structure for achieving the strategic planning and the elaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Institutional Strategic Plan consists of five sectoral working groups (one for each Strategic Objective). The sectoral groups are made up of technical experts.

In February 2019, the composition of the working groups was updated and the management structure of the Institutional Strategic Plan (area of competence - education and training) was established for the updating process. The 5 working groups (WG) for updating and monitoring the implementation, are coordinated by management-level employees for the following areas:

1. Pre-university education;
2. University education;
3. Lifelong learning and vocational and technical education (VET + LLL);
4. Transition and access to higher education;
5. Administrative capacity of the MNE.

The main tasks of the working groups are: elaborating and updating the policy component (setting objectives, adopting measures and initiatives under the programs), the budget component (multiannual budget of 1 + 3 years programs) and the ISP implementation plan, communication, monitoring and implementation. The final version is submitted to the state secretaries for endorsement and the minister for approval. Annually, once the institution's budget is drawn up, the ISP is revised.

The General Directorate for Strategic Management and Public Policies of MNE has the role of information, facilitation, mediation and integration, ensuring: technical coordination of the activity of the working groups; analysis and correlation of the materials made by the specialists from the working groups; management of the monitoring IT tool; and assignment of rights to the users of the application.

The Institutional Strategic Plan is reviewed and updated annually, keeping the 4-year budgetary planning and programming period in close correlation with the medium-term budgetary framework. The responsibility of the revision and updating rests with the main credit authorizing officer, who by this process estimates the necessary budgetary resources for which he/she will make the request during the preparation of the draft budget for the following year and whenever it is necessary to substantiate the budgetary rectifications.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The General Secretariat of the Government (SGG) is committed to streamlining public expenditure. By the drafting of institutional strategic plans starting with the budgetary cycle 2017 – 2020, in the Ministry of Public Finance and, initially, in ten line ministries (including also the Ministry of National Education), selected in the SIPOCA 28 Project, the SGG seeks to strengthen the budgeting, planning and monitoring capacity of the ministries. The project received the technical assistance of World Bank.

The Institutional Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education (ISP) focuses first of all on the ministry's steering function in the vocational education and training sector, as well as on the planning of public policies and of their components, in order to achieve the general objectives taken on under the Europe 2020 Strategy, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and by the ministry's sectoral strategies: Strategy for Reducing Early School Leaving; National Strategy for Tertiary Education 2015-2020; Lifelong Learning Strategy 2015-2020; Strategy of Vocational Education and Training in Romania 2016-2020. The plan also seeks to ensure the governance and efficient and transparent performance of the responsibilities adopted by the Ministry of National Education (MNE).

The plan is anchored in the strategic objectives relating to the sector of vocational education and training (VET), in the institutional priorities at which the MNE aims, based on the Programme of government and on the sectoral strategies. Furthermore, the ISP provides clear programmes and measures (including budgets) required to the medium-term objectives, as well as a firm framework for the assessment of performance, in order to evaluate the progress of strategic objective achievement.

This Institutional Strategic Plan relates to the 2019-2022 budgetary period and it is a revision and an update of the 2017-2020 MNE ISP, ensuring a correlation of the strategic objectives and priorities with the regulatory act proposals entered by the MNE in the Government's Annual Work Plan, as well as the provision of the Order of the Government's General secretary no. 600/2018 for the approval of the internal managing control of public entities.

The first part of the Institutional Strategic Plan describes the context, the educational ideal and the vision of the Romanian school, the mission of the ministry and the values and principles promoted by them, as well as the institutional profile of the Ministry of National Education.

The second part describes the strategies objectives and offers details on the related programmes, defined measures and indicators. Thus, the ISP is organized in five strategic objectives of the VET sector, as follows:

SO1 – Reduction and prevention of early school leaving, by promoting the equal access to inclusive and quality education, at all the levels and forms of education

The three programmes supporting the attainment of this strategic objective are

Programme 1.1 – Ensuring that all children have access to education and to quality education

Programme 1.2 – Improving participation in primary and secondary education; all the pupils attending mandatory education should graduate

Programme 1.3 – Reintegration of early school leavers in the education system

SO2 – The development of tertiary education, able to propel economic development and to promote social cohesion by laying the foundations of a knowledge-based society

The three programmes supporting the attainment of this strategic objective are:

Programme 2.1 – Improving the participation in the tertiary education

Programme 2.2 – Promoting high quality, flexible and labor market-linked study programmes

Programme 2.3 – Strategic commitment to the economic sector.

SO3 – The development of a professional and technical education system, adapted to the labor market and direct beneficiaries' requirements; improvement of participation in lifelong learning

The three programmes supporting the attainment of this strategic objective are:

Programme 3.1 – Enabling the access, improving the participation, developing the innovation and cooperation in the sector of vocational training

Programme 3.2 – Improving the relevance and quality of vocational training

Programme 3.3 – Access, facilities and incentives for participation in lifelong learning; quality and relevance; partnerships for improved promotion and awareness.

SO4 – Full use of the human capital for a smart and sustainable development

The programme supporting the attainment of this strategic objective is:

Programme 4.1 - Supporting pupils for an easier transition and access to higher education.

SO5 – Strengthening of the administrative capacity

The programme supporting the attainment of this strategic objective is:

Programme 5.1 – Strengthening of the administrative capacity of sectoral policy management and implementation;

Programme 5.2 – Strengthening of ICT governance, cybernetic security and reinforcing ICT human resources in the educational sector; modernization and interoperability of national ICT systems

The third part of the Plan refers to the implementation, monitoring and assessment of the ISP, as well as to the necessary financial resources.

The ISP annexes include: Budgetary programmes and financial resources 2019 - 2022; The budget according to programmes and measures 2019 - 2022; Year-based education budget scheduling and Specific measures; Objectives, programmes, indicators, targets; Programmes, specific measures, result indicators, targets; Analysis of the domestic and foreign environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Foundation

ISP MNE 2019-2022 represents a revision and update of the plan elaborated for the period 2017-2020 and then for the period 2018-2021, and continues the institutional objectives assumed in the previous variants.

Within the Institutional Strategic Plan, a description of the strategic objectives, programs, planned measures and indicators is made. Through the reviewing process, a correlation is made between programs, measures and the allocation of financial resources during the implementation period.

Methodology

The methodology for elaborating the Institutional Strategic Plan contains elements of the *Government Decision no. 1807/2006 for the approval of the Management Component within the Methodology regarding the medium-term strategic planning system of the public administration institutions at central level* and in the *Government Decision no. 158/2008 for the approval of the Budgetary programming component within the Methodology regarding the medium-term strategic planning system of the public administration institutions at central level*, as well as a new implementation component. By creating a coherent methodological ensemble made up of Policies, Budget and Implementation, the aim is to improve the coherence and clarity as well as the administrative feasibility at the level of the entire strategic planning approach. The Government Decision no. 158/2008 included a methodology for program budgeting in order to complete the strategic planning methodology approved in 2006. The Government Decision no. 155/2008 includes a budget program structure for the correlation with the strategic priorities of the Institutional Strategic Plan.

The budget of the initiatives / measures is expressed for the period of application of the initiative / measure within the Institutional Strategic Plan, i.e. for a maximum of four (4) years, broken down by years and by sources of financing (state budget, co-financing state budget, non-reimbursable external funds, other identified funds).

The Institutional Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education (MNE) reflects the objectives, programs, measures / initiatives at the level of the education and training sector that the MNE together with the entities it coordinates and those subordinated to it have planned for 2019-2022 and for which they allocated funds within the limits of the budget resources assigned to the sector through the annual budget, in order to implement them and obtain the expected results.

The process of ISP review follows a process similar to the elaboration of the strategic document. In the process, apart from the strategic objectives, programs, measures, indicators and targets set previously in the planned time horizon (4 years) can be reviewed, so as to update them in correlation with the 2019-2022 medium-term budgetary framework. The review consists of:

- analyzing the internal and external environment of the Ministry, in order to establish any significant changes that are necessary for the forecasts on which the current plan is based, respectively: national sectoral and inter-sectoral strategies in force or newly emerged since the last draft of the ISP, the governance program, strategic reviews (functional analyzes) and country-specific recommendations;
- adding a supplementary year to the plan¹;

¹ See the Methodology for the elaboration, monitoring and reporting of the Strategic Institutional Plans, and the program budget, the annex to the GD project for approving the methodology for the elaboration, monitoring and reporting of the Strategic Institutional Plans and the budget programs.

- reviewing and updating the programs and their objectives, the outcomes and the target values of the indicators;
- reviewing the measures, outputs and the target values of indicators;
- analyzing and reviewing the budget related to the measures (the cost of outputs) from the medium-term budgetary framework 2019-2022;
- updating the budget of the programs (sum of the budget of the measures).

During the update there were numerous meetings with the working groups, virtual collaborations and exchanges of opinions between the members of the working groups and the representatives of the World Bank.

Stage of implementation of the ISP

Section 1

Throughout the entire planning process, started with the ISP 2017-2020, Strategic Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the ISP MNE have been modified, while the Strategic Objective 5 has remained unchanged throughout the implementation.

In order to achieve a unitary approach between the process of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ISP and the process of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the ex-ante conditionality strategies in education, at the first revision of the ISP, the following programs were modified: P1.1, P1.3, P2.1, P2.2, P2.3, P3.1, P3.2 and P3.3.

As part of the 2018 review process and as a result of the discussions during the meetings with the working groups, it was established that the measures under the *Program 4.1. Capital investments in education* would be transferred, according to the pre-university and university education fields, to the Programs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1. Thus, as a result of the revision, the Strategic Objective 4 now has only one program. Also, following the changes brought by the Government Program 2018-2020, which gives an important place to the digitization of the educational processes, the Strategic Objective 5 now includes the Program 5.2 as well.

Therefore, during the planning process, structural changes took place within the programs of the five strategic objectives.

Section 2

Reporting the implementation of the ISP is not institutionalized, as there is no formal system for collecting, reporting and aggregating data.

During 2016-2019, the MNE carried out the project *Monitoring and evaluation of ex-ante conditionality strategies in education and improving the decision-making process by monitoring the institutional performance at central and local level*. Within the project, a coherent M&E framework of the four strategies was developed, as they have interconnected long-term goals and interdependent results. The methodology provides mechanisms for reporting the M&E of strategies, using unitary criteria for performance evaluation.

For the implementation of the strategies as well as of the ISP, similar management structures were formed, consisting of technical working groups. In the case of the ISP, the sectoral strategic objectives correspond to the educational strategies to which a cross-cutting objective and one related to institutional capacity are added.

The pillars / programs / measures / indicators in the strategies are found identical or under different formulations in the ISP.

Havin in mind the above, within the working groups for the implementation of the strategies and for the elaboration / updating of the ISP, the same persons from the specialized departments or the institutions under the subordination / coordination of the MNE were nominated. Thus, the aim was to improve the WG activity and efficiency in the implementation-monitoring process.

The technical groups for coordinating the implementation of the 4 strategies are coordinated by employees with management positions within the specialized departments of the MNE or under the subordination / coordination of the MNE, depending on the area of specific competence, as follows:

1. Early education and pre-university education (coordination of the Strategy for Reducing Early School Leaving TG - ESL);
2. University education (coordination of the National Strategy for Tertiary Education 2015-2020 TG - TE);
3. Lifelong learning (coordination of the Lifelong Learning Strategy 2015-2020 TG - LLL);
4. Vocational and technical education (coordination of the Strategy for Vocational Education and Training in Romania 2016-2020 TG - VET).

The implementation of the ISP 2018 was done at the level of the specialized directions by carrying out the following activities: elaboration of the annual plan for implementing the strategies, based on the outcomes and achievements of the previous year; conducting the monitoring and evaluation activities of the data collected by the experts within the MNE project; elaboration of the annual progress report; making recommendations on actions, indicators and targets; presentation of the degree of achievement of the annual plan and the progress made towards reaching the final goals.

The budgeting methodology for programs has not yet been formalized by an administrative act, and the budget execution is not done following the ISP budget programs.

The main problems identified in the ISP implementation reporting are related to the existence of a functional information platform for data collection.

In the case of most of the strategies relevant to the field of vocational education and training, the year 2020 is the ending year for the life cycle of the current strategic framework, most of these strategies being in the revision stage for the subsequent period. Many of the targets of these strategies are assumed in the European context too, and no mechanisms have been found to extrapolate these targets beyond the strategy horizon.

Section 3

The Institutional Strategic Plan 2018-2021 consisted of 5 Strategic Objectives, 12 Programs, 101 Measures with the structure presented on page 13.

SO/P	Indicator	Target 2020 (%)	Achieved 2018 ² (%)	Achievement percentage
OS1	People who leave the education and training sector early	11.3	16.4	68.9%
OS1	Poor reading quota among students	30	39	76.92%
OS1	Graduation rate of upper secondary education	90	81.45	90%
P1.1.	Participation rate in early childhood education	92	85.5	92.93%
P1.1.	Rate of low-performing students in terms of reading from students who attended pre-primary education for more than one year	12740	N.A.	N.A.
P1.1.	Graduation rate of lower secondary education	90	80.7(2017)	89.66%
P1.1.	Rate of participation of high school graduates in the baccalaureate exam	87	79.3 (2017)	91.15%
P1.1.	Number of schools rehabilitated annually	1329	1327	99.84%
P1.1.	Number of laboratories upgraded annually	600	N.A.	N.A.
P1.2.	Gross enrollment rate in primary and lower secondary education (6-14 years)	95	88.3	92.92%
P1.2.	The gross enrollment rate of students between the ages of 15 and 18 years	90	85.3	92.94%
P1.2.	The graduation rate of the baccalaureate exam	65	44	67.69%
P1.3	Number of students included annually in the Second Chance program for primary education	N.A.	5832	N.A.
P1.3	Number of students between the ages of 16 and 24 years / school year, in the Second Chance program for lower secondary education	N.A.	10077	N.A.
OS2	The share of the population with higher education in the population aged 30-34 years	26.7	25.6	95.88%
OS2	The degree of employment of the graduates of tertiary education (the employment rate of the graduates aged 20-34 years, to 1/3 years after graduation, who participated in the tertiary education (ISCED 5-8), who no longer attend education courses and training)	85	77	90.58%
P2.1	The share of the population with higher education in the population aged 25-34 years	29	25.5	87.93%
P2.1	The share of the population living in rural areas and having completed tertiary education programs in the population aged 30-34 years	8.3	7.8	93.97%
P2.1	The share of the female population graduating from tertiary-level educational programs in the fields of science, mathematics and computer science	4.2	3.1	73.80%
P2.1	Number of student residential units / canteens built annually	12	N.A.	N.A.
P2.2	Improving the visibility of the research from the higher education institutions (the average Hirsch index for the academic staff from the state education institutions)	4	2	50%

² If there are no measurements, it is mentioned that there is no data available (n.a.).

P2.2.	Number of higher education programs ranked among the first 200 in international classifications (for example, World Classifications of QS Universities by Subject)	65	N.A.	N.A.
P2.3.	Employment rate of graduates aged 25-34 years, at 1/3 years after graduating from tertiary-level education	55	50.4	91.63%
OS3	Employment rate of young people aged 20-34, graduates who have participated in vocational education (employment rates of young people aged 20-34, vocational education graduates (ISCED 3-4), in the total population same age)	17	11-12	70.59%
OS3	Employment rate of young people aged 15-24, by education levels (the share of young people aged 15-24 employed in the total population of the same age)	15	24.5 (total-2017 Post- secondary 63.8 Professional 72.5 Secondary 29)	222.73% 425.33% 483.33% 193.33%
OS3	Adult participation rate in vocational education and training (share of persons between 25 and 64 years old participating in education and training)	10	0.9	0.9%
P3.1	Gross enrollment rate in vocational education (the share of people enrolled in vocational education in the total population aged 19-21)	25	14.1	56.4%
P3.1	The annual number of students enrolled in entrepreneurship programs	50.000	40.000	80%
P3.2	School dropout rate at technological and vocational high schools	2 %	3% (2017)	150%
P3.2	Baccalaureate examination passing rate for graduates from technological high schools	60	47.5	79.16%
P3.3	Transition rate in vocational education	22	17.1	77.72%
P3.3	Annual number of students enrolled in vocational education programs participating in international mobility internships	4.600	2.800	60.87%
OS4	Passing rate of the baccalaureate exam (the percentage of students who pass the baccalaureate exam in a given year relative to the number of participants in the exam)	73%	67.8%	92.87%
OS4	Enrollment rate in higher education (the ratio between the total population of students enrolled in higher education institutions from the total population between the ages of 19 and 23)	35	31	88.57%
P4.1	The average graduation rate in high schools supported by the project	91	86.9	95.49%
P4.2	The average pass rate of the baccalaureate examination in the high schools supported by the project	56	49.6	88.57%
P4.2	The average retention rate in the first year of tertiary education in the faculties supported by the project	83.5	82.3	98.56%
OS5	Internal and external confidence in the MNE and its actions	60%	N.A.	N.A.
OS5	The degree of absorption of the funds available for the national education and science sector through the EU Programs	50%	31%	62%

OS5	Degree of compliance with the state budget: the difference between the planned budget on January 1 and the planned and rectified budget on December 31, the current year	0.1 %	0.27%	2.7%
OS5	Degree of compliance with the state budget: the difference between the budget planned on January 1 and the budget execution on December 31	1.00%	2.57%	2.57%
P5.1	Number of annual changes in the functional structure	max.1	-	100%
P5.1	Penalties paid for: EAFRD, compared to total payments made in the previous year ESF, compared to the total payments made in the previous year	0.0001 0.0001	5.82% 2.7%	
P5.1	Number of budget changes at chapter level and negative rectifications of the state budget	20/an	30/year	150%
P5.1	Percentage of management expenses from the total annual MNE budget	14.70%	14.84%	100%
P5.1	MNE management expenses per employee	77.055	74.818	97.09%

Section 4

Thus, since the beginning of the planning process through the ISPs, there has been a wide participation of all structures, an increased interest and a clear accountability considering the results.

The effort to synthesize the complex activity of the ministry and the presentation of a relatively limited series of objectives, programs, results and measures were at times considerable, as was the establishment of indicators, developments and estimated targets.

The whole process was institutionally assumed through the setting up of the working groups and the changes in their composition, but the ISP of the MNE was not assumed by the ministry's management through order of the minister.

The ISP was also used as a management document by the ministry's leadership, being present on the file of all education ministers in the period 2017-2019, upon receiving / surrendering the mandate.

We consider that carrying out a procedure of elaboration/updating and internal approval can represent a fundamental instrument for its adoption and internalization as a central working tool.

The ISP can also be used as a tool for communication with the public and for the transparency of the ministry's activity, by publishing it on the MNE website (currently the 2017-2020 and 2018-2021 drafts are published at <https://sgg.gov.ro/new/planuri-strategice-institutionale/>).

A constant of the whole activity was represented by the involvement of the General Directorate of Strategic Management and Public Policies, having a coordinating role and being the responsible structure for the elaboration, updating, implementation and monitoring of such documents.

The activity of all MNE structures is guided by a very large number of commitments deriving from strategic documents - international, European, national, inter-sectoral or limited to a single sector, the Government Program, the National Reform Plan, the Annual Government Work Plan and other strategies, all of them having a very different degrees of aggregation and detail. The ISP thus naturally assumed the role of synthesizing and organizing the activity of the MNE and the subordinated or coordinated institutions.

Therefore, the document merges the most important objectives of the field with the current activity, maintains a high degree of compatibility with all strategies regarding the MNE and reflects all other current activities, and uses indicators and a reporting system that are easily adapted to other situations in which generating updated reports is required.

Therefore, the ISP has all the premises to be used as a source for substantiating public policy interventions and for the distribution of budgetary resources, as well as for different reports or presentations of the performance obtained in different sectors of the MNE activity or as a whole.

In order to further develop the instrument, it is necessary to internalize the ISP IT tool, to ensure an internal process of centralization and updating not only of the values of the indicators, but also of the methodology by which they are collected.

It is very important to consider starting an interactive and collaborative monitoring process and a working practice to analyze how the proposed targets were achieved or not and whether this was achieved within the proposed budgets. This exercise can provide very valuable information about the causes, solutions and key points of intervention.

An institutional procedure whereby targets would be set in the cases where they are not already set in the existing strategies could facilitate the achievement of the ISP over the considered period.

2. CONTEXT

The 2019-2022 Institutional Strategic Plan was created based on a methodology including elements laid down by Government Decisions no. 1807/2006 and no. 158/2008, as well as a new component regarding implementation and monitoring. Thus, a methodologically coherent framework is obtained, including policies, budget and implementation process. A single management framework brings together the fundamental elements of the strategic planning system, focusing on the improvement of the coherence and clarity of the whole strategic planning action, as well as the improvement of public expenditure efficiency. Strategic planning is the premise for the performance of the monitoring, assessment and annual revision of the deployed measures, based on the output, result and impact indicators. The periodic and summative assessment of the deployed measures and programmes adds to the improvement of responsibility when using public monies based on the results and efficiency of the accrued expenses from the perspective of the undertaken objectives. Based on the premise of the limited nature of public resources, no public sector expense should elude the systematic assessment of the efficiency and efficacy of allocation of the public revenues at sectoral level, for the achievement of the said objectives.

The World Bank provided technical assistance throughout the whole drafting and revision process, while the General Directorate for Strategic Management and Public Policies of the MNE, with the task of information, facilitation, intermediation and integration, ensuring: the analysis and correlation of the materials executed by the working group specialists; the management of the IT monitoring application and the awarding of rights to the application users.

For an inclusive, informative and participative approach, the World Bank organized a training session for the members of the working groups (including those dealing with the budget and human resources) between 12 and 15 March 2019, to update the strategic objectives, the plans of measures and the indicators.

The Institutional Strategic Plan for 2019 - 2022 is drafted by considering the objectives and deadlines described and undertaken in the 2018-2020 Programme of government, the 2019 Country Report for Romania, including an in-depth balance related to the prevention and correction of economic imbalances³, which accompanies the 2019 National Reform Program. Furthermore, the responsibilities ensuing therefrom are in line with Government Decision no. 26/2017 on the organization and functioning of the MNE, with further amendments. Last but not least, the ISP relating to 2019-2022, like the previous one, is based on the set of 4 sectoral strategies, ex-ante conditionalities for accessing European funds 2014 – 2020, approved by government decisions in 2015 – 2016, namely: Strategy on the reduction of early school leaving, approved by GD no. 417/2015, National strategy for tertiary education 2015 – 2020, approved by GD no. 565/2015, Strategy for lifelong learning 2015 – 2020, approved by GD no. 418/2015 and Strategy of vocational education and training in Romania in 2016 - 2020, approved by GD no. 317/2016. All these strategies were validated by the European Commission (COM). The national strategy on the modernization of the educational infrastructure is completed, and the endorsement of the approval GD is in progress.

The aforementioned strategies make a Strategic Framework of Vocational education and training in Romania, including major points of reference in the sector, consistent with the ET 2020 European Framework:

- promoting good governance; ensuring autonomy and assumption of public accountability;
- focusing on result-based management;
- equal chances of access and participation in school and higher education;

³ Annex D: Investment guidelines regarding the financing of the cohesion policy between 2021 and 2027 for Romania

- ensuring the quality of education and training at all the level of school and higher education;
- promoting a curriculum/study programmes and evaluation systems that allow the acquisition of labor market-relevant skills;
- anticipating needs in terms of skills and supporting transitions and labor market mobility;
- improving the initial and continuous training system for the human resources for vocational education and training;
- the corresponding funding of the system and the modernization of the infrastructure (including equipment and laboratories);
- development of innovative and effective teaching technologies (including digital manuals and interactive methods of learning – teaching – evaluation, access to the Internet, E-learning platforms);
- developing the professional and technical education (including the multiplication of the partnerships with the economic environment);
- recognizing the qualifications and skills acquired in all the learning and training contexts;
- stimulating the institutional performances and offering support to young people able to achieve performance;
- improving the professional guidance and advice services;
- encouraging the educational mobility and the European and international co-operations.

The education system of Romania has 7,312 education establishments with legal personality and 11,603 associated structures⁴, as well as 93 higher education institutions (accredited or temporarily authorized), of which 55 state higher education institutions and 38 private institutions⁵. More than 3 million pre-school children and pupils are currently attending school and more than 500 thousand students are registered in higher education institutions.

Romania, as Member State of the EU, seeks the four strategic objectives established by the Council of the European Commission of May 12, 2009, related to the strategic plan of European cooperation in the field of education and training (ET 2020⁶) until 2020: the realization in practice of lifelong learning and social mobility and civic spirit; the developing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

The analysis of the Romanian education system shows that there are **increasingly larger gaps among the areas of residence from the perspective of the European and world problems in the sector of education**, as well as other types of disparities with a negative effect on the chances of access to education.

Thus, only 1% of high-performance schools and approximately 83% of those with low performance are found in the rural area. Social and economic inequalities between the urban and rural areas will have long-term implications on human capital and the country's economic development.

According to the Human capital Index (HCI) project of the World Bank, which measures the volume of economic productivity losses caused by insufficient investments in people, Romania is on the last place in the EU and on the first to last in Europe⁷. HCI is made up of indicators from the fields of: survival, schooling and health. With regard to education, according to this index, in the EU the average learning period is of over 80% and in Romania it is of 72%. In Romania, of the 12.2 years of study, Romanians capitalize only 8.8. Therefore, approximately 3 years are lost both in terms of time and as financing and allocated resources. Following this study, it becomes necessary for all the institutions and

⁴ Data on April 8, 2019 obtained through interrogation of SIIIR

⁵ Report on The State of higher education in Romania in 2017-2018

⁶ Document no. 2009/C 119/02.

⁷ <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/human-capital-index>

organizations involved in the educational system to make a corresponding adjustment and allocation of resources and of the planning of the educational act.

Education, overall, continues to be underfunded, and the administrative capacities necessary for the modernization thereof must be consolidated. Investments in education are among the lowest in the EU (3.7% of the GDP compared to 7.4%). This gap is especially relevant for preschool and primary education⁸. Expenditures for preschool and primary education are very low compared to the EU average (0.7% compared to 1.5% of GDP for EU-28). Expenditures for secondary education are also lower (1.5% compared to 1.9% of GDP). Conversely, the proportion of expenditures for higher education is generally bigger, reflecting the political priorities at national level. Evidence shows that a large part of the inequality of revenues may be based on a start on unequal terms, especially in countries which invest less in education, especially in preschool education (WB, 2018).⁹

According to the Law of the State Budget for 2019, the education budget has a 47.40% increase compared to 2018 (30.98% for salary increases, meal allowances, holiday vouchers, court judgments and 7.62% for goods and services)¹⁰.

Romania is facing a fast demographic decline, as well as population aging. The number of children in pre-university education has dropped by 14% between 2007 and 2017 (this percentage does not include children in nurseries). The main challenge for the 2020 horizon of the education and professional training system is represented by the declining natality, since the prognoses indicate a drastic reduction of the young population (15-24 years) and a significant one in the case of the population aged 0 to 14 years.¹¹

These phenomena will have direct consequences on the labor force deficit, the decrease of school-aged population, implicitly on the necessary number of teachers, the restructuring of the school network or the decrease of access to education for rural and isolated communities.

Thus, it is necessary to modernize and optimize the school network. According to a recent analysis, 10% of schools are overcrowded, while 58% have excess capacities (46% in urban areas and 63% in rural areas). 38% of the schools from the rural area have outside toilets, no water or sewerage, compared to 7% in the urban area.¹²

Participation to preschool education of children aged between 4 years and the official age of registration for mandatory education is an European indicator whose target for 2020 is of 95%. Romania has recorded important increases of the indicator's value from 67.6% in 2000 to 88.2% in 2016¹³.

Pre-university education is facing big differences between the rate of early school leaving (ESL) in the rural area (25.4%) and the urban area (4.2 in municipalities and 14.9% in cities and suburbs)¹⁴. The data for 2018 indicate for Romania a value of the rate of early school leaving of 16.4%, decreasing compared to previous years, but still far from the target proposed for 2020.

The gender-based difference in relation to the education participation rate is favorable to girls. Rural areas are disadvantaged as compared with the urban areas, from the point of view of participation,

⁸ 2019 Country Report for Romania

⁹ Monitor of Education and Training in Romania for 2018

¹⁰ <https://www.edu.ro/3096926-milioane-de-lei-bugetul-ministerului-educa%C8%9Biei-pe-anul-2019-o-cre%C8%99tere-de-4740-fa%C8%9B%C4%83-de-anul>

¹¹ SYNTHESIS of the Performance audit report on the financing of pre-university education between 2014 and 2016, November 2018, Romanian Court of Accounts

¹² Idem 6

¹³ Ministry of National Education – Report on the State of Pre-university Education in Romania in 2017-2018.

¹⁴ Data for 2018 published by Eurostat online data code: edat_ifse_30

school infrastructure and human resources employed in the system, school dropout being, thus, a systemic phenomenon that affects all the levels and forms of education¹⁵.

The target of the tertiary education graduates (30-34 years) indicator is at 24.6% in 2018, decreasing by comparison to 25.6% in 2016, and, respectively, 26.3% in 2017 and recording the first decrease of the last 15 years¹⁶. The share of graduates of higher education had increased to 26.3% in 2017 (by 0.7 percentage points more than in 2016), almost reaching the national objective of 26.7% provided in the Europe 2020 Strategy, but the data for 2018 indicate an important decrease down to 24.6%.

The acquisition of basic¹⁷ and digital¹⁸ skills is facing various problems.

According to a report¹⁹ of the European Commission on the results of the Program for International Student Evaluation (PISA) 2015 at European level, Romania continues to be among the countries with the lowest scores in the EU registered by 15-year-old pupils at the international tests with regard to reading, math and science skills. In 2015, the results of the Program for International Student Evaluation (PISA) indicate that 1 of 4 Romanian pupils obtained results below the level 2, which is considered the basic level necessary to be reached by a young person up to 15 years of age until the completion of mandatory education, in order to function efficiently in the knowledge society, for all three tested fields: reading, math and science. Among the European countries, Romania's scores are better only than those of Cyprus and Bulgaria, thus being among the first 3 countries with the poorest performance with regard to the share of pupils with low performance in all the three fields tested by PISA 2015. The probability of having poor results is much bigger among the pupils from the rural areas and disadvantaged social and economic environment.

Low educational rates are accompanied by challenges related to equity. In Romania, the correlation between the social and economic status of the pupils and the school average was of 59% in 2015. This is problematic, because it suggests that the most part of learning is associated with the personal environment, on which school has a limited influence.

A comparison between Romania and the countries of the EU with the best results (for example, Estonia and Finland), indicates a difference of at least 30 points in the results obtained at the PISA science tests (the equivalent of one year of school), which is associated to a bigger degree of school segregation in Romania. A distribution of the scores obtained by Romania in Science between the urban and rural areas suggests that 10 gap points can be associated with a higher percentage of teachers involved more actively in pupils' education, in the urban areas.

The employment rate of youth aged 15 to 24 offers information about the degree of absorption thereof on the labor market. At the end of 2017, the employment rate of youth aged 15 to 24 registered an annual increase of 2.2%, from 22.3% at the end of 2016 to 24.5% at the end of Q4 of 2017. Thus, almost one quarter of the active population aged 15 to 24 has had the status of employed population at the end of 2017. Approximately twice as many young people from the rural area have performed income generating activities compared to those from the urban area. The highest employment rates are found

¹⁵ On the whole of primary and secondary education, the school dropout rate (indicator calculated on the basis of the "entry-exit" method) in the year 2016/2017 was of 1.6% (percentage which represents 27.6 thousand pupils). Compared to the previous year, the indicator's value is slightly decreasing. On resistance environments, the difference between the dropout rate in primary and secondary education in the urban and rural areas decreases to the disadvantage of the rural area (1.1% for the urban area and 2.3% for the rural area). With regard to dropout by gender, a larger frequency of cases of dropout is noted in the case of the masculine school population (2.2% for boys and 1.0% for girls).

¹⁶ Data provided by Eurostat online data code: t2020_41

¹⁷ In spite of the efforts of introduction of a skills-based school curriculum, almost 40% of teenagers do not have basic skills in reading, maths or science.

¹⁸ Measures have been adopted to improve digital skills in schools (European Commission, 2018e), but only 52% of the youth aged 16 to 19 have basic digital skills over this level.

¹⁹ *EU Commission Policy Note: PISA 2015: EU performance and initial conclusions regarding education policies in Europe* (https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/pisa-2015-eu-policy-note_en.pdf), 5 of December 2016.

in the case of vocationally trained youth (72.5%), as well as for those with post-secondary education (63.8%).²⁰

Analyzing the distribution of employed or unemployed individuals according to their education level it can be noted that higher education graduates have the highest chances of being employed. On the opposite end, the highest unemployment rate is found among the persons with no studies or with only primary education.

The employment rate of new graduates, per educational level (aged between 20 and 34 and who have finished the educational system 1 to 3 years before the reference year), continued to increase in 2017, being supported by strong economic growth. Being of 87.4%, the rate is one of the highest in the EU (EU-28: 84.9%). Nevertheless, there is a skills deficit for jobs with average and high qualifications from the fields of engineering, machines, information technology and services (EC, 2019).²¹

According to the data published in the Education and Training Monitor of 2018, the rate of adult participation of adults in the continuous learning process (ages between 25 and 64 years) was of 1.1% in 2017, much lower than the EU average of 10.9%.

The National Register of Professional Qualifications (component of the National Register of Qualifications - NRC) was approved at the end of 2018, through GD no. 917/2018.

²⁰ Ministry of National Education – Report on the State of Pre-university Education in Romania for 2017-2018.

²¹ Education and Training Monitor in Romania for 2018

3. MISSION AND VISION

The Ministry's vision

The educational ideal of the education system

The educational ideal of schools in Romania means the free, whole, comprehensive, and harmonious development of human individuality, the shaping of an autonomous personality and the espousing of a value system required for personal fulfilment and development, the development of entrepreneurship, active citizenship in the society, social inclusion and employment on the labor market. The main end of the children's, young people's and adults' education and training, described in the Law on national education no. 1/2011, with further amendments and completions, is the shaping of competences, skills/abilities and aptitudes required for:

- a) personal fulfilment by the achievement of their purposes in life, according to the individual's interests and goals and by a commitment to lifelong learning;
- b) social integration and active citizenship in the society;
- c) employment and participation in the functioning and development of a sustainable economy;
- d) development of a life concept based on scientific and humanistic values, on national and world culture and on the promotion of intercultural dialogue;
- e) development of a culture of dignity, tolerance and observance of fundamental human rights and freedoms;
- f) awareness of human problems, of moral and citizenship values and respect for nature and the natural, social, and cultural environment.

The education-related vision of the Romanian society relies on the necessities of a society of knowledge and on the impact of globalization, focused on viable traditional and cultural values, and the ministry is expected to sustain and strengthen an efficient, fair and inclusive national education system that should be able to use the human resources.

An efficient education means that Romania's human capital potential can be used fully, for economic and social development. It cannot be built without drafting and implementing adequate, coherent and stable public policies, which should obtain the consensus of as many stakeholders of vocational education and training as possible.

The support of the education sector of Romania is beneficial for the country and for the region. The quantification of such benefits shows that their value exceeds that of short- and long-term costs, which confirms the responsibility of drafting consistent and long-lasting public strategies and policies.

At the same time, a priority focus will be on the development of the administrative capacity for the implementation of data-based policies and for the absorption of EU funds for the educational policy objectives.

The Ministry's Mission

The Ministry of National Education, as specialty body of the central public administration, with legal personality, subordinated to the Government, drafts, substantiates policies and applies the strategies of education, vocational training and university scientific research, according to the Programme of government, based on the consultation with the other interested institutions and ministries.

The ministry's mission is to ensure the environments required for a fair, quality and inclusive education and to strengthen a national education system able to use, by training, the national human resource for the social and personal development of the citizens and for the improvement of economic competitiveness.

The ministry undertakes to steer the education, the vocational training and university scientific research, in line with the requirements resulting from Romania's membership in the EU, in the context of globalization.

The ministry monitors and assesses the measures of the national policies and strategies in the fields of reference, as well as various measures stemming from other national public strategies and policies. The ministry's priority is to draft and implement educational policies in order to ensure sustainable economic growth, competitiveness and social development.

The MNE is expected to develop and implement public policies, in the framework outlined by the European policies. This does not mean a passive adoption of the European policies; on the contrary, it is an active process promoting Romania's own solutions in the sector, able to meet the country's needs and which should be agreed with the partners of the MNE.

The Institutional Strategic Plan guides the management and executive staff with regard to the direction of the ministry as an organization and to the results to be obtained. The detailed planning of the activities at the departments is performed by the Annual Managing Programmes. The Managing Programmes correlate the positions and responsibilities of the Organization and Working Regulation (OWR) with the specific objectives and the internal operational objectives; they lay down deadlines, activities/ actions and responsibilities.

For the achievement of their objectives, the ministry works together and co-operates institutionally with the Parliament, the Presidential Administration and the other ministries, as well as with: the pupils' and students' representative associations; the teachers' representative associations; the parents' representative associative structures; the National Council of the Records; the associative structure of the universities and of the school education establishments; the representative education unions; the public administration authorities; the representative structures of the business environments; representative national and international professional and scientific authorities and associations; non-governmental organizations.

The mission relies on the commitment to develop an education system based on national and European values, creativity, knowledge, skills and abilities of personal development, entrepreneurship, active citizenship, social inclusion and professional growth. As institution of the central public administration, the ministry commits to being a trustworthy, transparent and responsible organization, servicing the Sector of Vocational education and training, the community of the education beneficiaries and the society in general.

The ministry strives to strengthen their administrative capacity and organizational performances, in order to be able to fulfil the important responsibilities entrusted to them. The ministry responds to the citizens' needs; they are interested in the latter's problems and opinions and they assess constantly the results of the taken measures, in order to adjust the activities according to the requirements.

Shared institutional values and principles promoted by the MNE

Shared values:

- Quality
- Accountability
- Efficiency
- Transparency
- Equity

Quality: the MNE is conducting their activity in line with high standard for the achievement of the proposed objectives for observance of the accepted common European level;

Accountability: the staff undertakes their tasks, understanding that the fulfilment of these tasks defines the good functioning of the whole educational and university research-innovation system;

Efficiency: obtaining an optimal ratio between the engaged efforts (by the adequate involvement of the human resource and the allocation of the material and financial resources) and the results of the activity;

Transparency: cooperation and inter-department and inter-institutional partnership in the approach and solutions for the problems encountered in the activity;

Equity: behavior based on the rigorously reciprocal observance of the staff's rights and obligations, on the equal satisfaction of individual interest, rights and obligations.

The principles governing the school and higher education system, as well as the lifelong learning in Romania are:

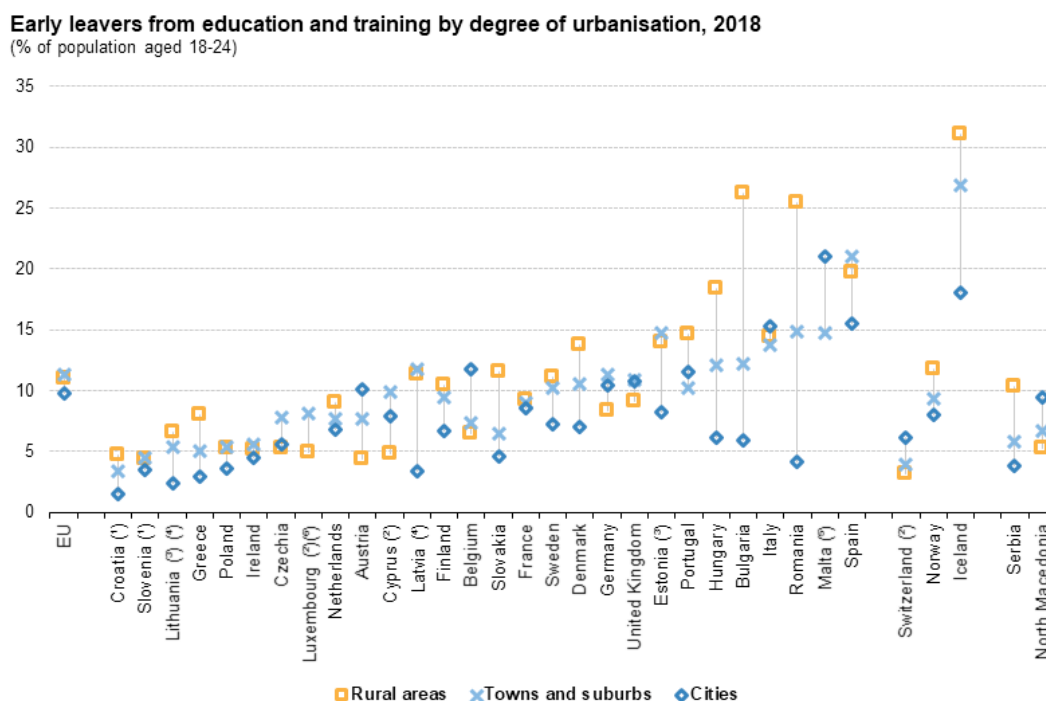
- the equity principle – according to which the access to learning occurs without discrimination;
- the quality principle – according to which the education activities refer to reference standards and to national and international good practices;
- the relevance principles – according to which the education responds to the personal development and socioeconomic needs;
- the efficiency principle – according to which maximum educational results are sought, by the management of the existing resources;
- the decentralization principle – according to which the main decisions are made by the players involved directly in the process;
- the public accountability principle – according to which the education establishments and institutions are publicly accountable for their performances;
- the principle of the recognition and guarantee of the rights of people who are members of national minorities, the right to the preservation, development and expression of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity;
- the equality of opportunity principle;
- the principle of university autonomy;
- the principle of academic freedom;
- the principle of transparency – seen in the total visibility of decision-making and of the results, by their regular and adequate communication;
- the social inclusion principle;
- the principle of focusing the education on its beneficiaries;
- the principle of founding the decisions on dialogue and consultation;
- the principle of observance of the pupil's/student's right to an opinion, as the direct beneficiary of the education system.

4. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, PROGRAMS, MEASURES AND INDICATORS

Strategic Objective 1: Reduction and prevention of early school leaving, by promoting equal access to inclusive education and quality, at all the levels and forms of education

Romania is facing real challenges with regard to the main Strategic Objective of school education, namely the reduction of the early school leaving rate – the share of 18-24 year old people who graduated at most the lower secondary education system (the equivalent of the eight grade) and who are not engaged in any other form of education or training.²²

Chart 1. Evolution of the school dropout rate indicator in Romania and in the EU according to the urbanization degree



Note: ranked on overall share of early leavers. Montenegro and Turkey not available.

(*) Low reliability.

(*) Rural areas: low reliability.

(*) Towns and suburbs: low reliability.

(*) Cities: low reliability.

(*) Rural areas: not available due to a very low reliability.

(*) Cities: not available due to a very low reliability.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: edat_ifse_30)

eurostat 

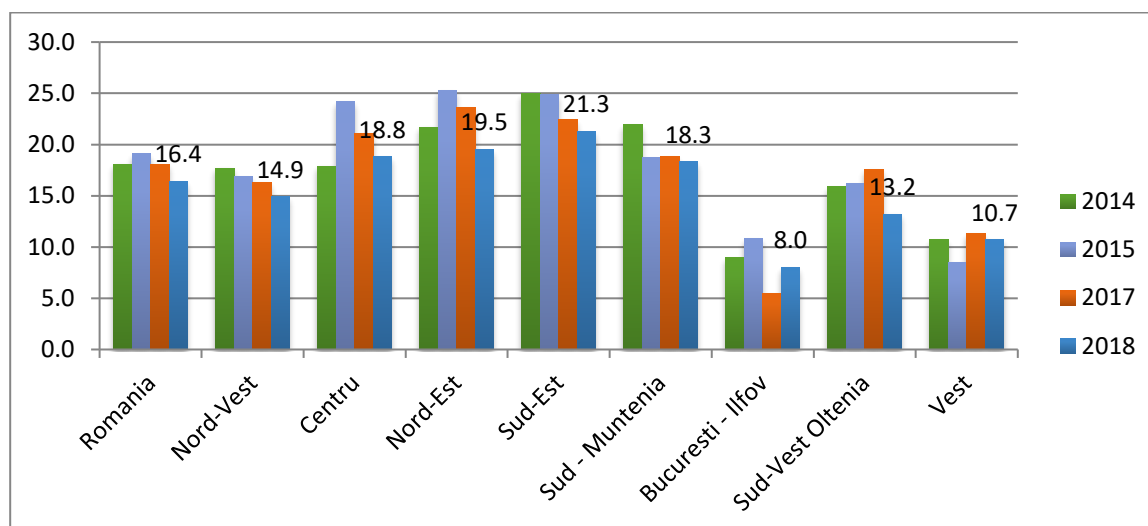
²²The statistical indicator of early leavers from education and training is calculated by the ratio between the number of early school and training leavers and the total population of the same age group, recorded in the Labour Force Survey – http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Early_leaver_from_education_and_training

The average European target is lower than 10% and the one set for Romania is 11.3%. The current value of this indicator (16.4% in 22.05.2019²³) hinders the attainment of this target by 2020.

By linking the information on the early school leaving rate, higher than 10%, with the absence of progress in 2011-2015, and then with oscillating evolutions between 2015 and 2018, we can see that there are several reasons of worry for our country.

In Romania, ESL records large differences between the country's regions, the central, North-Eastern and South-Eastern regions recording ESL rates of approximately 20%, while the Bucharest area records a percentage of 8% and the Western area of 10.7%.

Chart 2. Evolution of the ESL indicator in Romania, by development regions



Source: Eurostat 2018, indicator code edat_lfse_16

Additional to the inequalities between the regions and the socioeconomic disparities, Romania is facing a rapid decline of the school population, with approximately 3 million pupils in the pre-university education system, in 2017. The decline of the school population has been triggered by Romania's acute demographic crisis characterized by an aged labor force, a low birth rate and an increasingly higher number of young and well qualified emigrants.²⁴

In 2015, Romania adopted the *Strategy for the reduction of early school leaving*. Nevertheless, the implementation, monitoring of its results and actions run slow. For the performance of the measures resulting from the Country-Specific Recommendations²⁵ and from the country recommendations adopted by the European Council²⁶, additional to the state-funded annual social programmes, there are project proposals, to be financed from European funds.

The efficacy of the Romanian education system is measured according to the results obtained in various national and international exams and tests (PISA²⁷, TIMSS and PIRLS²⁸). According to the data

²³ http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=t2020_40&plugin=1 (accessed on 22.05.2019)

²⁴ Country Report SABER 2017 Romania Teachers, World Bank.

²⁵ Country Report Romania 2016; Brussels, 26.2.2016, SWD(2016) 91 final.

²⁶ Brussels, 13 June 2016 (OR. en) 9226/16.

²⁷ The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international survey conducted every three years and it seeks to assess the world education systems by testing the 15-year old students' skills and knowledge. The PISA survey is conducted by the OECD.

²⁸ TIMSS and PIRLS are international procedures of comparative testing, similar to PISA. They are conducted based on a comparative methodology by the International Evaluation Agency (IEA) of the Boston College, Lynch School of Education

published by the OECD²⁹ the number of pupils with poor performances is 24.3% of the 15-year old children enrolled in all the subject matters. Individually, in reading and sciences, the number of pupils with poor performances fluctuates at about 38.5- 38.7%, while mathematics sees the highest number of pupils, 39.9%.

The results³⁰ of the latest TIMSS and PIRLS tests for fourth and eighth graders from Romania in reading, mathematics and sciences show that approximately 73% of fourth graders manage to reach the lowest criterion for all three subject matters as compared with the pupils of the other participating countries.

*The Monitor of ET 2017*³¹ shows that the Romanian pupils' poor performance is influenced by their families' socioeconomic status (SES). Thus, in the 2015 PISA testing, 38.5 % of the 15-year old Romanians did not manage to obtain a minimum level of science knowledge (EU-28: 20.6 %), 38.7 % reading (EU-28: 19.7 %) and 39.9 % in mathematics (EU-28: 22.2 %). 24.3 % of pupils show poor results in all the three tested subject matters. While the share of pupils with poor performances is considerably high in the lower socioeconomic quartile, this is relatively high in the whole socioeconomic spectrum. This shows that the educational factors like teaching and education syllabi have an important impact on the educational results.

Pupils' participation to education and their learning results are influenced in Romania by their families' SES. The SES also influences the indicators on the graduation of tertiary education, employment, the adults' participation in lifelong learning.

The structure of the Strategic Objective 1 includes three (3) Programmes and twenty-eight (28) Measures corresponding to the expected results.

Figure 2. Strategic Objective 1: Structure

Strategic Objective 1. Reduction and prevention of early school leaving, by promoting equal access to inclusive and quality education, at all the levels and forms of education		
Program 1.1. Ensuring all the children's access to education and quality education	Program 1.2. Improving participation in primary and secondary education; all the pupils attending mandatory education should graduate	Program 1.3. Reintegration of early school leavers in the education system
<p>Measures of Program 1.1. Stimulating participation to early childhood education and care (ECEC) through counselling services offered to the parents, parental education and mentoring programs, addressed especially to parents from disadvantaged areas Ensuring financial incentives for kindergarten teachers and employment of child care specialists in rural/disadvantaged zones</p>	<p>Measures of Program 1.2. Basic funding of schools Meal subsidies for pupils with special educational needs, enrolled in education Social protection measures Scholarships for pupils from Moldova and for other Romanians living abroad Supply of methodology, ex-ante impact studies and legal framework for after school programmes</p>	<p>Measures of Program 1.3. Supporting the supply of the Second Chance programme (at all the levels, including lower secondary, with practice stages) available across the country, especially for groups at risk Creation of relevant and alternative teaching/learning materials, adapted to the profile of the Second Chance trainees Supporting the graduates of the Second Chance programme for</p>

²⁹ OECD (2018), PISA 2015 Results in Focus, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf> (accessed on 2.04. 2018)

³⁰ *Timss and pirls 2011: Relationships Among Reading, Mathematics, and Science Achievement at the Fourth Grade— Implications for Early Learning* (2013), available online: http://timss.bc.edu/timsspirs2011/downloads/TP11_Relationship_Report.pdf (accessed on 2.04.2018)

³¹ *Id.* 8 page 13

<p>Revision of the ECEC framework, to include also the 0-3-year-old age group and to improve the organization and functioning of the ECEC services</p> <p>The design of initial/conversion training programmes, as well as of continuous training programmes for the ECEC staff (pre-school education teachers, child care educators, school advisors, care and specialty staff, principals, inspectors)</p> <p>National assessment of all the schools</p> <p>School inspections</p> <p>Mentoring services</p> <p>Establishing a system of vocational training at the workplace</p> <p>School curriculum revision</p> <p>Supply of school handbooks</p> <p>Pupils' participation in the national evaluations and exams</p> <p>Pupils' participation in the PISA international evaluation</p> <p>Supporting excellence by the additional funding of accredited education institutions</p> <p>Supporting the construction of kindergartens</p>	<p>Supply of adequate after school programmes</p> <p>Development of the capacity to prevent and monitor segregation in schools</p> <p>Supply of training for teachers in the sphere of systems of early warning, prevention and intervention for the detection of children at risk of grade retention and dropout</p> <p>Completion and support of the existing guidance and social assistance initiatives for pupils in and outside the education system</p> <p>Supporting the construction of schools</p>	<p>the integration on the labour market or furtherance of education</p> <p>Drafting the mechanisms to encourage the adult trainees to participate in Second Chance programmes (vouchers, child care-supervision services, flexible time table, etc.)</p>
--	---	--

The Strategic Objective 1 focuses on long-term impacts on the education and it is based on the results generated by programmes, as described hereinafter:

Figure 3. Strategic Objective 1: Impacts and Results1

<p>Impacts</p>	<p>Rate of early leaving from the education system: 18-24-year-old population who finished at most the lower secondary education system (the equivalent of the eight grade) and who are not enrolled in the education and training system. 2022 target: 10%; 2019 target: 15%</p> <p>Share of pupils with weak reading performances. 2022 target: 25%; 2019 target: 35%</p> <p>Rate of graduation of upper secondary studies: Share of high school graduates, with or without the baccalaureate exam, in a specific year, of the total population of the theoretical age of graduation specific to this level of education. 2022 target - 87%</p>
<p>Results</p>	<p>(1.1.1) Improving the participation to pre-school education. The share of the 4-5-year-old population participating to education should increase from the current level of 85.5% to 95% by 2025. 23% gross enrollment rate for 0-2-year-old children in the ECEC services.</p> <p>(1.1.2) Improved quality of the early care and education of children. A complete framework for ECEC; 14500 staff from the ECEC sector (trainers, teachers, principals, inspectors, methodists, child care educators, care and specialty staff) trained; 143,609 parents involved in ECEC activities.</p> <p>(1.1.3) Improving the quality of education and of school management. The lower secondary education graduation rate (eighth grade) should increase to 92% by 2022, from the current reference level of 80.7% (2016-2017).</p>

(1.1.4) Increasing the rate of participation to the national exams and evaluations of pupils in primary and gymnasium education. The share of terminal grade high school pupils who participated to the baccalaureate exam, of the total graduates of the current year, should increase to 91% by 2022 from the current level of 79.3% (2016-2017).

(1.1.5) Construction, rehabilitation, modernization and fitting of nurseries, kindergartens and primary and lower secondary education institutions. Number of schools rehabilitated annually 700 in 2018 and 1200 in 2022.

(1.2.1) Increasing the participation to primary and secondary education. The gross rate of enrollment in primary and secondary education (6-14-year-old pupils) should increase to 95% from the current level of 88.3% (2017-2018) and the gross rate of enrollment of the 15-18-year-old pupils should increase from the current level of 85.3% (2017-2018) to 92% by 2022.

(1.2.2) Increase of education graduation levels. The rate of completion of the baccalaureate exam should increase from 71% (current level) to 73% by 2022.

(1.2.3) Construction, rehabilitation, modernization, extension and supply of equipment for infrastructure in technological secondary schools and vocational schools. Number of annually modernized laboratories 420 in 2018 up to 600 in 2022.

(1.3.1) Ensuring an adequate Second Chance (SC) educational programmes. The number of teachers trained for the implementation of the SC program for primary education: 142 in school year 2018-2019; number of schools which fulfill, independently or in partnership with other educational units, the requirements to offer the SC program for primary education: 238 in school year 2019-2019.

(1.3.2) Supporting the supply of Second Chance programmes (at both levels), available across the country, especially for disadvantaged groups. The number of persons included in the SC program for primary education: 5000 persons 16-24 years old/school year until 2022, who have not completed primary education, and, respectively, 9000 persons 16-24 years old/school year who have not completed secondary education.

The estimated necessary budgetary resources for the implementation of the measures and attainment of the results and impacts for 2019-2022 amount to 87,567,670 (000 RON).

Table 1. Strategic Objective 1: Breakdown of financing by budget program

Budget by programs for the Strategic Objective		Total (thousand RON)	Total value/year (thousand RON)			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
P 1.1	Ensuring that all children have access to education and to quality education	2,818,670	1,202,001	704,066	553,481	359,122
P 1.2	Improving participation in primary and secondary education; all the pupils attending mandatory education should graduate	84,513,210	21,876,433	20,301,829	20,839,831	21,495,117
P 1.3	Reintegration of early school leavers in the education system	235,790	151,576	52,263	31,951	0
Total SO 1		87,567,670	23,230,010	21,058,158	21,425,263	21,854,239

Programme 1.1: Ensuring that all children have access to education and to quality education

Justification: In Romania, the gross rate of enrolment in pre-school education, calculated for the school year 2017/2018 – meaning the share of children enrolled in kindergarten, of the total pre-school age group children – decreased slightly as compared with the previous year, with 0.2 percentage points, down to 91.4%³².

The indicator's values show decreases compared to the previous year for boys and in the rural area.

These discrepancies increased from 4.7 p.p. in 2009/2010 to 12.9 p.p. in the school year 2016/2017. The difference between the indicator values according to the two residence areas is, however, increasing as compared with the previous school year. The rural area continues to see pre-school education enrolment rates considerably lower than the urban one.

The analysis of the specific kindergarten enrolment rates in the last year reflects the reduction of the participation of 3-4-year-old children to pre-school education, with the exception of the 5 and 6-year-old children's group, where the increase is of 6.3 p.p. and 1.5 p.p., respectively.³³

By residence area, the rural environment continues to be at a disadvantage, even if there are increase of the indicator value for some ages. Like in the previous year, the differences by residence area are approximately 10 p.p. for 3-5-year-old children, in favor of the urban area.

Table 2. Specific kindergarten enrolment rates according to the residence environment

	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Total	78.4	78.8	78.4	90.2	87.4	90.1	90.9	91.6	91.4
Urban	80.7	80.9	81.0	93.2	90.3	97.7	97.8	97.4	97.4
Rural	76.0	76.6	75.5	86.7	83.9	81.8	83.4	85.0	84.5
F	78.7	79.1	78.8	90.5	87.7	90.2	90.9	91.5	91.5
M	78.1	78.5	78.0	89.9	87.1	89.9	90.9	91.6	91.2

Source: Data calculated based on NIS-provided information, 2010-2016.

The reasons of these differences include:

- the rate of the adults' employment in the urban area is higher than the rate of employment of the adults in the rural zone;
- in the rural area, parents are employed in jobs/activities that allow them to spend more time with their children, and the system of the extended family (grandparents, elder children, grandchildren, etc.) taking care of small children is better than in the urban zone;
- the socioeconomic status of rural families is lower, which leads to significant differences as compared with those in the urban area, with regard to the expenses that they can engage in the children's education (meal, educational materials, clothing and footwear, transport, etc.)
- distance from home (sometimes, in the rural area, the distances are longer than 2 km, which is inconceivable for a small child) and inadequate infrastructure (impracticable roads, hardly accessible roads during harsh winter, etc.)
- differences in the development of the school infrastructure/network between the rural and urban areas.

³² Report on the State of Pre-university Education in Romania for 2017-2018

³³ Idem 32.

In 2017-2018, the pre-school education activity was conducted in 1175 kindergartens and 9.966 sections (structures),³⁴ the latter operated attached to other levels education.

According to the Report on the State of Pre-university Education in Romania in 2017-2018, following the transition of 6-year old children to primary education, starting from the school year 2012-2013 (according to the Law on national education no.1/2011, with further amendments and completions), the number of children in pre-school education decreased significantly, down to 15.4% in 2017/2018. This was caused both by the demographic evolutions (according to NIS estimations, the gross birth rate has decreased in the last years, being lower than the EU indicator value, as well as by the phenomenon of the Romanian citizens' external migration.

Pre-school education participation of children with ages ranging between 4 years and the official age of enrolment in the mandatory education system is a European indicator and its target for 2020 is 95%. In 2011, the EU-27 average of this indicator was 93.2%, upward as compared with the previous years. The highest shares were seen in France and Spain (100%), Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, Germany, Portugal, Hungary. The countries with the lowest indicator values are: the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Greece, Finland, Croatia. In Romania, this indicator saw important increase, from 67.6% in 2000 to 82.8% in 2008, followed by slight drops in the last years.

Such data indicate the necessity of implementation of policies that support the participation in pre-school education, especially for children in the rural area.

At the same time, in Romania, nursery services for children younger than 3 years developed in the 1970s-1980s. Their expansion occurred in the 1980s, when there were 902 nurseries, counting 90,000 children (*Early Education in Romania*, UNICEF, 2002). Unfortunately, starting from 1995, the number of nurseries has decreased. In 2014, the statistics from NIS show that there are 303 nurseries with 16,587 children, 89% of them Romanian, 7% Hungarian, 3% Roma and 1% other nationalities.

Surveys and analyses conducted after 2001 (*Early Education in Romania*, UNICEF, 2002; *Goals and Effects of Introducing Early Education in the Romanian System of Education*, MNE, 2006; *Early education and its role in the socioeconomic development*, Univ. Bucharest, 2013) show that:

- especially average and low-income families send their children to nursery and, in some counties, local public authorities offer facilities/discounts to these categories of families (in particular to poverty-stricken families with at least two children in nursery/kindergarten);
- most of the parents who send their children to nursery work and cannot leave their job for the legal one-year maternal/paternal leave, on the one hand because the received amount is very small in relation to their needs and, on the other hand, because they could lose their jobs;
- many factors act on the Roma children's access to nurseries, namely: parents who are unemployed, poverty, distance from home and inadequate infrastructure, preconceptions and discriminating attitude of the majority.

The main problems with regard to ante-pre-school education (children younger than 3 years) and which require contemplation are:

- the Ministry of National Education is required to provide the initial training of the child care educator (the teacher working with children younger than 3), but his or her employment is left to the local public authorities, with consultation of the county school inspectorates;
- the necessity of a harmonization and revision of the general framework of organization and functioning of services meant for children younger than 3 years and of ensuring its coherence with the one focusing on 3-5/6-year-olds;
- in LNE no.1/2011, with further amendments and completions, chapter *Funding and material basis of school education*, all the provisions refer to pre-school children and pupils, ignoring ante-pre-school children. In this context, we cannot talk about the approval of the enrolment

³⁴ Report on the State of Pre-university Education in Romania for 2017-2018

rate for the ante-pre-school groups in nurseries or kindergarteners and, thus, nor can we talk about ensuring the payment of the teaching work force (the only category of teaching staff not paid by the MNE);

- unemployed parents cannot allow to send their children to nursery school; in this context, a considerable need of exploring the options for services as flexible as possible may be required at community or family level;
- there is still no system organized for the continuous training of the current nursery school staff, who are mostly medical personnel and who, at a rate of 50%, have not participated to any continuous training programme and, at present, do not master the basic notions of the concept promoted with the *Law on national education no.1/2011*, with further amendments and completions, namely: early education.

In this context, an important recommendation that became the specific measures in the Strategy for the reduction of early school leaving is to support a greater participation in the early care and education of children (from birth to when they are 6 years old). This is deemed to promote the equal conditions with regard to the chances of finishing and promoting the following levels of education. Evidence shows that the access to high quality education from a young age enables the development of key skills and that the ECEC increase the school success rate and decreases the risk of ESL, at a later stage³⁵. The programme refers specifically to the improvement of the access to the early childhood education and care (ECEC) and to quality education for all. Regardless of the volume of public financial allocations for schools, they remain inefficient in the absence of mechanism for the evaluation and promotion of quality, which should ensure the efficient use of public funding. At art. 107, Law on national education no. 1/2011 shows specifically that additional funds should be allocated to schools with high academic performances or schools that are very inclusive.

Thus, a high-quality level both in education and in the management of schools should promote inclusion. It is already known that stratification in school systems, the selection of students for specific “orientations” or classes are negatively linked with equity and have a negative effect on the students’ motivation.

Objectives: The purpose of Programme 1.1 is to attain the following specific objectives:

- (1.1.1): Increase of participation in pre-school education. *The share of the 4-5 year old population participating to education should increase from the current 85.5% to 95% by 2022; 23% - gross enrolment rate for 0-2 year old children in ECEC services.*
- (1.1.2): Higher quality of the early care and education of children. *A complete framework for the adopted ECEC; 12740 trained staff in ECEC (trainers, teachers, principals, inspectors, child care educators, care and specialty staff); 143,609 parents involved in activities.*
- (1.1.3): Improving the quality of education and school management. *The rate of lower secondary education graduation (eighth grade) should increase to 92% by 2022 from the current reference of 80.7% (2016-2017).*
- (1.1.4): Increase of the rate of participation in the national exams and evaluations of primary and secondary education pupils. *The share of pupils in terminal high school grades who took part in the baccalaureate exam, of the total graduates of the current year, should increase to 91% by 2022, from the current 79.3% (2016-2017).*
- (1.1.5): Construction, rehabilitation, modernization and equipping of nursery schools, kindergartens. *The number of education establishments, including nursery schools and kindergartens rehabilitated/built annually 700 in 2018 and 1200 in 2022.*

Description: Programme 1.1 focuses, on the one hand, on all the services of early care and education of children, covering the 0-6-year age group, before the age of beginning of mandatory primary school.

³⁵ Strategy for the decrease of early school leaving. Full text at: <http://edu.ro/strategia-privind-reducerea-p%C4%83r%C4%83sirii-timpurii-%C8%99colii-%C3%AEn-rom%C3%A2nia> (last accessed on 2.04. 2018).

This concerns both the programme beneficiaries, by stimulating the participation especially of children from socioeconomically disadvantaged families, and the suppliers, by the later development of the curriculum, by investments in teachers’ training, as well as by capital investments, in particular in rural areas.

The evaluation and delivery of quality focus specifically on the national evaluation of all the schools, including the external evaluation performed by an independent agency and the continuous delivery of quality via the Ministry-supervised network of School Inspectorates. The purpose is the supply of quality education services by the initial training of teachers through specific programmes (teaching master’s programmes), and the subsequent development of the national curriculum for fifth to eighth grades, measures that support the quality and efficient nature of education. Furthermore, it recognizes and signals exceptional results by prizes to students with such results in national or international school contests and competitions.

Success factors: In order to cope with the challenges regarding the participation of children from disadvantaged categories or of those from rural areas to the services of early care and education, direct financial incentives should be offered to families; such incentives include vouchers for kindergarten and nursery schools, for the decrease of the private costs of participation in education. At the same time, the development of the curricular framework, especially for 0-3-year-old children and the supply of teachers qualified by initial training are important measures for quality educational services in all the regions. The coordination with the key-ministries (Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration), local authorities and Regional Operational Programme, respectively the Programme for Competitiveness, will be important for the development of the pre-school infrastructure and of the ITC equipment of these schools and kindergartens, especially in the rural areas which are relatively poorly covered by such infrastructure.

Professional management, the professionalization of the teaching career and the active promotion of inclusion are key-factors of the success of this programme.

Measures: The main measures that will help to fulfil the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are shown in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets in Annex 3.

Table 3. Strategic Objective 1: Measures of Program 1.1

(1.1.1) Increase of the participation in pre-school education:
Measures focusing on participation:
<i>1 - Encouraging the participation in the children’s early care and education by guidance services provided to parents, parental education programmes and mentoring, targeting mainly parents from disadvantaged zones</i>
<i>2 - Ensuring financial incentives for kindergarten teachers and employment of child care specialists in rural/disadvantaged zones.</i>
(1.1.2) Improved quality of early childhood care and education services:
Measures focusing on the quality of the services:
<i>1 - Revision of the ECEC framework, to include also the 0-3-year-old age group and to improve the organization and functioning of ECEC services</i>
<i>2 - Design of initial/conversion training programmes, as well as of continuous training programmes for the ECEC staff (pre-school education teachers, child care educators, school advisors, care and specialty staff, principals, inspectors).</i>
(1.1.3) Improving the quality of education and of school management
<i>1- National assessment of all the schools</i>
<i>2- School inspections</i>

3- Mentoring services
4 - Establishing a system of vocational training at the workplace
5 - School curriculum revision
6- Supply of school handbooks
(1.1.4) Increasing the rate of participation in national exams and evaluation of students in primary and secondary education
1 - Pupils' participation in the national evaluations and exams
2 - Pupils' participation in the PISA international evaluation
3 - Supporting excellence by the additional funding of accredited education institutions
(1.1.5) Construction, rehabilitation, modernization and equipping of nursery schools, kindergartens
1 - Supporting the construction of kindergartens

Programme 1.2: Improvement of participation in primary and secondary education and graduation of the mandatory education by all pupils

Justification: Romania is facing important challenges with regard to the main Strategic Objective for pre-university education, i.e. the reduction of the rate of early school leaving – share of people in the age group 18-24 years, who completed lower secondary studies at most (the equivalent of the eight grade) and who were not involved in education or formal training³⁶. *The Education and Training Monitor 2017(ETM)* shows low values of the ESL indicator for Romania. By 2020, the average value of the indicator for Europe is under 10%, while for Romania it was established at 11.3%. The current value of the indicator (16.4%) hinders the attainment of the target.

In Romania, the ESL shows huge differences among the country's regions. In the central, north-east and south-east regions, the ESL is higher than 20%, while in the Bucharest region, only 10% of the children are in such situations. Except for the west region, all the other regions show a negative trend. Furthermore, the urban-rural disparities are worrisome, with the urban zones reaching the European target (lower than 10%), while the rural ones see surprising level of almost 30%.

ESL is closely linked with another indicator established by the 2020 European Agenda: basic skill poor performances. This was defined as the share of people with poor performances in the reading, mathematics and science skills at the international comparative tests, such as PISA. The objective laid down in 2009 is to decrease at lower than 15% the share of poor performance for the 15-year-old people. According to the latest data published by the OECD³⁷, the number of people with poor performances is at 24.3 % of 15-year-old children, enrolled in all subject matters. Individually, for mathematics, reading and sciences, the number of people with poor performances is higher and it fluctuates around 38%, with mathematics seeing the highest number of poorly skilled people, i.e. 39.9% of the pupils³⁸.

At present, in more than half of Romania's counties there is a significant discrepancy between the education demand and the current offer of educational spaces in schools. In 15 counties, the school age population exceeds the total number of classroom places with at least 10%, which shows that the existing educational infrastructure has an insufficient capacity of dealing with the current education

³⁶ The statistical indicator regarding "early leaving from education and training" is calculated by dividing the number of early leavers from school and training, as defined above, by the total population in the same age group, in the Labour force survey - [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Early leaver from education and training](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Early_leaver_from_education_and_training)

³⁷ OECD (2018), PISA 2015 Results in Focus, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf> (accessed on 2.04. 2018)

³⁸ *Id.* 22 https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2017-ro_ro.pdf (last accessed on 6.03.2018)

demand. In four counties (Giurgiu, Galați, Vaslui, and Ilfov), the school age population exceeds the total number of existing places with at least 30%, which shows a potential of overcrowding and intensive use of the educational infrastructure. On the other hand, in six counties, the reverse happens – the number of places exceeds the school age population with at least 10%. This excess capacity suggests that, in these counties, the investments in infrastructure should be better targeted and focused on the improvement of the quality of the existing learning environments rather than on the increase of the number of places.

With regard to the school capacity and to the pupils' performances, in more than 10 Romanian counties, there are both insufficient classrooms and a poor average of the results obtained in the baccalaureate exam, which points to the need of a deeper analysis of the potential influence of school infrastructure on the pupils' performances in these counties. Although the data do not indicate a clear conclusion regarding the connection between the insufficient capacity of the classrooms and the relatively low performances in the baccalaureate exam, they do point to a potential connection that would require an additional analysis, especially in relation to the quality of teaching. For example, the education demand in the counties Giurgiu and Ilfov exceeds with 30-40% the existing capacity of the classrooms, which suggests a significant overcrowding in some schools. At the same time, the average grades obtained in the baccalaureate exam in these counties are ranked among the poorest of the country. Overcrowding and its consequences (for example, learning in two shifts, insufficient time for training, classes with too many pupils) could be the important results of an inadequate school infrastructure, which requires a deeper analysis at the level of the localities and schools.

At the same time, there are significant differences as to the access to the educational structure, linked with the students' originating socioeconomic environment. The analysis of Romania's results in the 2012 PISA test shows that learning results are significantly linked with the perceived quality of educational resources and infrastructure. From the perspective of the pupils' originating socioeconomic environment, the differences in material resources have a significant impact on the learning results.

Objectives: The purpose of Programme 1.2 is given by the following specific objectives:

- (1.2.1) Improvement of participation in primary and secondary education. The gross rate of enrolment in primary and gymnasium education (6-14 years old) should increase to 95% from the current level of 88.3% (2017-2018) and the gross rate of enrolment of 15-18-year-old pupils (high school and vocational education) should increase from the current level of 85.3% (2017-2018) to 92% by 2022.
- (1.2.2) The increase of education graduation levels. The baccalaureate success rate should increase from 71% (current level) to 73% by 2022.
- (1.2.3): Construction, rehabilitation, modernization and equipping of primary and lower secondary education institutions. *Number of annually rehabilitated/built schools 700 in 2018 and 1200 in 2022.*

Description: The programme focuses on children with ages ranging from the age of beginning of the mandatory primary education and the official age for the finishing of high school, as well as on their families, teachers, school principals and advisors, for equal chances in primary and secondary education and for the overall guarantee of the level of graduation of mandatory education and the acquisition of basic skills.

Success factors: The strategy of reduction of early school leaving identifies demand- and offer-related factors that prompt early school leaving. Subsequently, the action on these two categories of factors could contribute to the **success** of the measures with regard to the reduction of the frequency of this phenomenon. The demand-related **success** factors concern the supply of direct financial incentives for the participation in education of the low-income families. The offer-related factors refer to the supply

of adequate education facilities across the country and especially in the disadvantaged zones, the supply of qualified teaching and management staff.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

Table 4. Strategic Objective 1: Measures of Program 1.2

(1.2.1) Improvement of participation in primary and secondary education:
1 - Basic funding of schools.
2 - Meal subsidies for pupils with special educational needs, enrolled in education.
3 - Social protection measures: Programme Bani de Liceu, Euro 200, Programme for educational materials, Romania's programme for schools in 2017-2023, Pilot-programme for the granting of meal support to pre-school children and pupils in 50 state education establishment (cooked meal), Reimbursement of commuting expenses.
4 - Scholarships for pupils from Moldova and for other Romanians living abroad.
(1.2.2) Improvement of the graduation level:
1 - Supply of methodology, ex-ante impact studies and legal framework for "after school" programmes.
2 - Supply of adequate after school programmes.
3 - Development of the capacity to prevent and monitor segregation in schools.
4 - Supply of training for teachers in the sphere of systems of early warning, prevention and intervention for the detection of children at risk of grade retention and dropout.
5 - Completion and support of existing guidance initiatives for pupils in and outside the education system.
(1.2.3) Construction, rehabilitation, modernization and equipping of primary and lower secondary education institutions
1- Supporting the construction of schools

Programme 1.3: Reintegration of early school leavers in the education system

Justification: The measure focuses on teenagers, young people, adults, from various social areas and of various ages, who did not attend or did not complete the primary and gymnasium education studies; it offers to these people the possibility to continue and complete the mandatory education cycle without having to suspend their potential professional or family activities in which they are engaged.

Objectives: The purpose of Programme 1.3 is to attain the following specific objectives:

- (1.3.1) Ensuring an adequate Second Chance (SC) educational programmes. Number of teachers trained for the implementation of the SC program for primary education: 142 in school year 2018-2019; number of schools that fulfil, either independently or in partnership with other educational units, the requirements to offer the SC program for primary education: 238 in school year 2018-2019.
- (1.3.2) Supporting the participation of adult trainees to Second Chance and integrating the graduates on the labor market. The number of persons included in the SC program for primary education – 5000 persons aged 16 to 24/school year until 2022, who have not completed primary education, respectively 9000 persons aged 16 to 24/school year who have not completed lower secondary education.

Description: The Programme is organized on two levels: *Second Chance*– primary education and *Second Chance* – lower secondary education – the latter also including a vocational training

component, without an upper age limit for those who seek to enroll in this programme. The SC Programme has been steered by the MNE ever since 2001 (with a focus on the 14-24 years age group, in order to support them in the completion of lower secondary education), and its application was later extended also to primary education. A new curriculum for the SC programme (primary and secondary cycle) was drafted and implemented in 2012 in the FSE project “Education, qualification, and enabling the transition to a work place for pupils and young people at risk, in a school dropout situation” (POSDRU/8/2.2./S/4, beneficiary Ministry of Education and Scientific Research). Until 2005, the SC programme was steered toward the support of the groups at risk, especially the Roma population; later, it was extended at country level, reaching approximately 9,000 end beneficiaries/year. SC programmes are only one of the ways by which these target-groups may complete a minimum level of education. Nevertheless, SC programmes are not equally distributed from a geographic point of view and they cannot cover the current demand. Additionally, detailed assessments showing the impact and success relating to the reintegration of the participants in the education and training systems or supporting them in finding a job have not been drafted.

In school year 2018-2019 was continued the implementation of the SC program for primary education. In September 2018 – March 2019, the values of the indicators of this program were: the number of trainees included yearly into the program – 5832 trainees; number of teachers trained for the program’s implementation – 142; number of schools which fulfil, either independently or in partnership with other educational units, the requirements to offer the SC program for primary education – 238; number of educational units which ensure free access to career counselling and guidance services for all pupils and for the youth who are searching for a job – 274.

Also, the SC program’s implementation continued for lower secondary education. In September 2018 – March 2019, the value of the indicators of this program were: number of trainees aged 16 to 24 included in the program/school year – 10077; number of teachers trained for the SC program’s implementation for lower secondary education – 224; number of schools which fulfil the requirements to offer the program, either independently or in partnership with other educational units – 148; number of educational units which ensure free access to career counselling and guidance services for all pupils and youth in search of a job – 274.

Success factors: There are challenges that require approach in the current programme: extension of the programmes, the evaluation of the results and added value of the SC programmes, specialized vocational training for teachers working with heterogeneous trainee populations, including children and adults with various levels of education.

The scope of the SC programmes and of the associated costs allowing the adequate capacity of absorption of the 92,000 pupils with ages ranging from 11 to 17 years, at risk of leaving school early, was designed and calculated. This measure focuses on access to SC programs, as well as post-program services. In terms of access, the focus will be placed on ensuring SC programs in all counties and implementing the support mechanism for elimination of obstacles that might prevent participation. Since some of the participants to these programmes will be adults, including those belonging to the Roma community, in some cases they could also be parents, or they may face various other problems; in this context, they may request support for children or special access facilities (especially in the case of people with disabilities). The SC programme should also include a post-programme service component helping the trainees to find an adequate job or to further their studies. In the absence of such a post-programme support, the graduates risk not identifying the appropriate route to the labor market.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the objectives and purposes of the measure are shown in Annex 3.

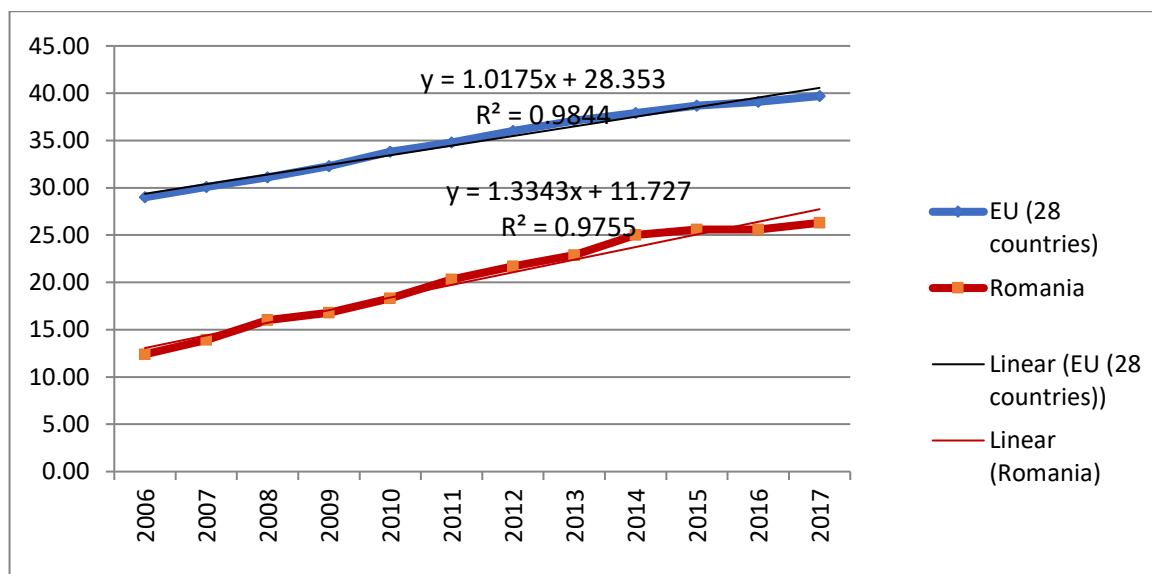
Table 5. Strategic Objective 1: Measures of Program 1.3

(1.3.1) Ensuring an adequate offer of Second Chance educational programmes (SC):
<i>1 - Supporting the supply of the Second Chance programme (at all levels, including lower secondary, with internship stages) available across the country, especially for groups at risk.</i>
<i>2 – Creation of relevant and alternative teaching/learning materials, adapted to the profile of the Second Chance trainees.</i>
(1.3.2) Supporting the participation of adult trainees to Second Chance and integrating the graduates on the labor market:
<i>1 – Supporting the graduates of the Second Chance programme for the integration on the labor market or furtherance of education.</i>
<i>2 – Drafting mechanisms for the encouragement of adult trainees to participate in SC programmes (vouchers, child care-supervision services, flexible time table, etc.).</i>

Strategic Objective 2: The development of tertiary education, able to propel economic development and to promote social cohesion by laying the foundations of a knowledge-based society

The graduation of tertiary education is the indicator for which Romania shows best results in the context of the ET 2020 strategy. Romania's progresses have been constant and above the EU average (see Chart 3), being close to reaching the 26.7% target regarding tertiary education graduates in the 30-34-year-old age group. Nevertheless, the last year has seen a decrease of two percentage points, the current value being of 24.6% in 2018, according to Eurostat, indicator code t2020_41. Unfortunately, this takes us away from reaching the target proposed for 2020, namely of 26.7%.

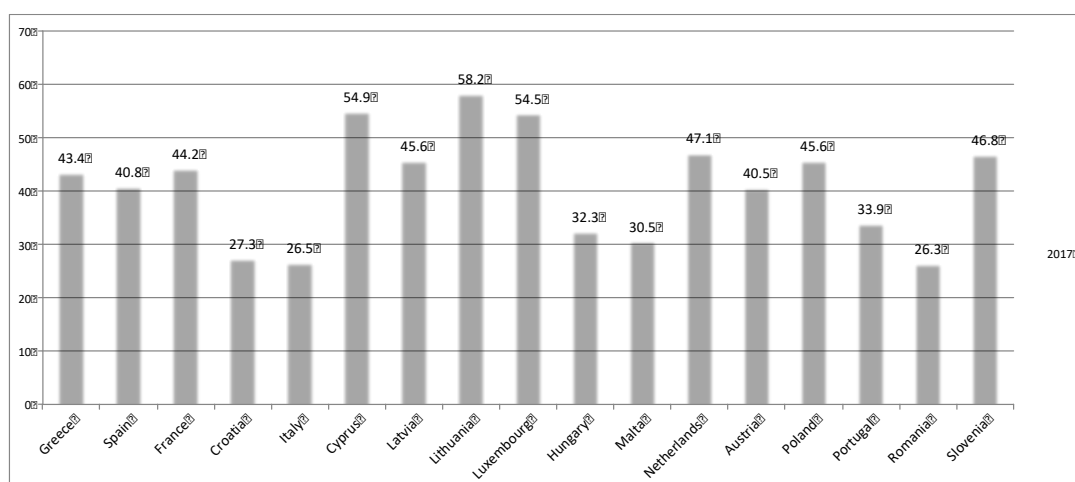
Chart 3. Evolution of the levels of tertiary education graduation in Romania and the EU



Source: Eurostat Code: t2020_41

Some of the EU Members States with the lowest tertiary education graduation rates are Italy, Malta, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic (see Chart 4), which have similar rates. The target set for Romania is relatively low as compared with the European one of 40% set as average for all the EU Member States. Therefore, the improvement of the participation in tertiary university and non-university education should be a priority for the long term.

Chart 4. Levels of tertiary education graduation – European comparative data

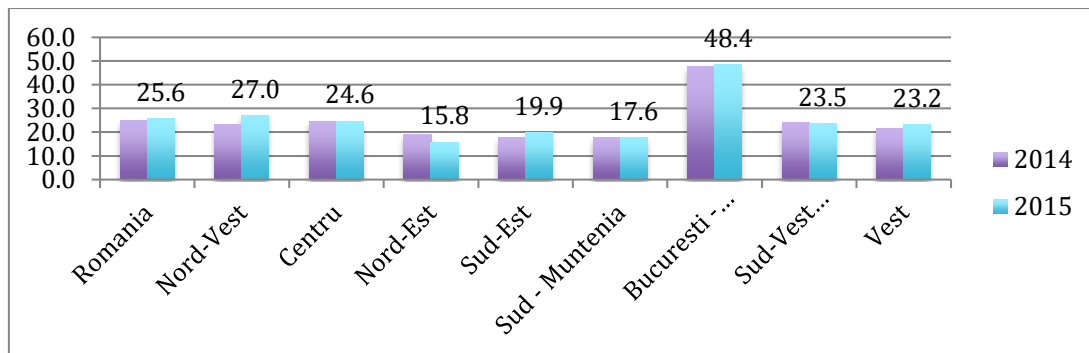


Source: Eurostat Code: t2020_41

At regional level, the various regions of development show a relatively heterogeneous situation, with considerable gaps between Bucharest or the western regions and the north-east or south-east ones; for the lower rate regions, specific policies should be implemented.

Nevertheless, the main challenge of the higher education programmes is not the nominal convergence, or the attainment of the target set for 2020, but the qualitative transformation of the study programmes and of the institutions, in order to ensure a more skilled, easily employable, efficient, and productive labor force to help to obtain knowledge economy. At the same time, the results of tertiary education and of university research should be more relevant internationally, in order to ensure the higher competitiveness of Romanian universities. The quality of the study programmes is, thus, the main challenge, as also pointed out in the Country Specific Recommendations and the National Reform Programme in Romania, for 2017: the tertiary education graduation rate is on an upward trend, but the quality and relevance of higher education on the labor market are limited.³⁹ Furthermore, the reduction of access barriers for disadvantaged groups and ensuring equal opportunities continue to be a significant challenge of the tertiary education sector.

Chart 5. Levels of tertiary education graduation in Romania, per region of development



Source: Eurostat indicator code edat_ifse_12

³⁹ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-european-semester-national-reform-programme-romania-en.pdf>

The structure of the strategic objective 2 includes three (3) Programmes and twenty-one (21) Measures corresponding to the targeted results.

Figure 4. Strategic Objective 2: Structure

Strategic Objective 2: Development of tertiary education, able to propel economic development and to promote social cohesion by laying the foundations of a knowledge-based society		
Program 2.1. Improving the participation in tertiary education	Program 2.2. Promoting high quality, flexible and labour market-linked study programmes	Program 2.3. Strategic commitment to the economic sector
<p>Measures of Program 2.1. Promotion of institutional diversity. Classification of the higher education institutions according to their social mission and roles. Providing financial incentives and budgetary allocations for each class (type) of university. Extension of dual training to the technical tertiary education system Supporting the exemption from the payment of school taxes for students with special results; grants for students who obtain the best results Supplementing the exemption from the payment of taxes for students, based on merit, with a programme for the support of those in need – social grants, especially at institutional level Extended social support measures – accommodation and meal subsidies - complementary funding Implementation of a student loan programme Encouraging the attraction of students from underrepresented groups and of those with non-traditional learning methods, including Romanian-born adults and people who live abroad Improvement of information transparency and provision of guidance with regard to educational opportunities and results, which should underlie the choice of the educational route and help to reduce school dropout Construction of dorms and canteens for the students</p>	<p>Measures of Program 2.2. Revision of the regulations regarding the evaluation (authorization/accreditation) of syllabi Assessment of doctoral studies Promoting excellence through the award of doctoral study grants Development of financial incentives for institutions deemed to have developed new programmes with very good potential for the learning of transversal and entrepreneurship skills</p>	<p>Measures of Program 2.3. Development of a national research programme for innovation and entrepreneurship, in order to encourage the dialogue between education and the sectors of economy. Curriculum revision, aimed at the focus on the labour market required skills and competences Institutional development fund Appointing a contact person with the business environment in every institution; universities and other post-secondary units develop plans to consolidate the connections with the business community Elaboration of an inter-institutional protocol with regard to the implementation of a traceability system between the educational system and the labor market Financial support for digitalization and development of ICT programmes</p>

Strategic Objective 2 focuses on long-term impacts on tertiary education and on the economy and it relies on the results generated by the following programmes:

Figure 5. Strategic Objective 2: Impacts and Results

<p>Impacts</p>	<p>Improving the level of tertiary education graduation: Share of 30-34-year-old people who graduated from a form of tertiary education). 2022 target: 28%</p> <p>Increasing the employability of tertiary education young graduates: Employment rate for tertiary education young graduates (ISCED 5-8), in the age group 20-34 years, who no longer attend education and training courses). 2022 target: 87%</p>
<p>Results</p>	<p>(2.1.1) Promotion of institutional diversity and of the students' participation to tertiary education, in particular those from disadvantaged environments: The share of higher education population among the 25-34-year-old population should reach 31% by 2022 from 25.5% current reference.</p> <p>(2.1.2.) Diversifying the financial support tools and policies for people enrolled in tertiary education: The share of rural population who completed tertiary education programmes, among the 30-34-year-old population, should reach 8.7% in 2022 from the current level of 7.8%.</p> <p>(2.1.3.) Improving the information transparency and supplying information with regard to educational opportunities, for informed options of the students and reduction of tertiary school dropout: The share of the female population graduating from tertiary education in science, mathematics and IT should reach 4.7% in 2022 from 3.1% the current reference.</p> <p>(2.1.4) Rehabilitation, modernization, extension and supply of equipment for the university infrastructure: Number of dormitories built annually from 8 in 2018 to 12 in 2022</p> <p>(2.2.1) Establishing of priority study fields and the commitment of the priority funding of these fields (art. 223 para. 4, Law on national education). A new methodological framework of funding will be drafted in 2019.</p> <p>(2.2.2) Promoting the principle of excellence-based funding, established in the additional funding of higher education institutions. Improving the international visibility of research of higher education institutions (average Hirsch-index for the academic staff in higher education institutions).</p> <p>(2.2.3) Ranking the study programmes, in accordance with the legal requirements; additional excellence-based funding. The number of university programmes (fields) ranked among the first 200 in international classifications (e.g. QS World University Rankings by Subject)</p> <p>(2.2.4) Revising the regulation on programme accreditation; drafting and adopting a new external assessment methodology. The new methodology will be drafted and adapted by the end of 2019.</p> <p>(2.2.5) Funding of multi-annual study grants (instead of offering budget funded places); the possibility of dividing the grants in order to enable greater institutional autonomy and flexibility with regard to enrolment-related policies. A new funding methodological framework and the associated methodology will be drafted in 2021.</p> <p>(2.3.1.) Improving the employability of tertiary education graduates: the rate of employment of 15-24-year-old graduates, in 1/3 years after graduating from tertiary education, should increase from 50.4% current reference level to 63%.</p>

The estimated budget resources required for the implementation of the measures and the attainment of the results and impacts for the period 2019-2022 amount to 19,809,106 (000 RON).

Table 6. Strategic Objective 2: Breakdown of financing by budget program

Budget by programs for the Strategic Objective		Total (thousand RON)	Total value/year (thousand RON)			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
P 2.1	Improving the participation in tertiary education	18,055,789	5,232,504	4,190,254	4,276,620	4,356,411
P 2.2	Promoting high quality, flexible and labor market-linked study programmes	1,325,409	585,664	241,227	245,514	253,004
P 2.3	Strategic commitment to the economic sector	427,908	60,290	119,950	122,004	125,664
Total SO 2		19,809,106	5,878,458	4,551,431	4,644,138	4,735,079

Programme 2.1: Improving the participation in tertiary education

Justification: Romania is nearing the target with regard to the level of education of the adult population, although it is still behind the EU average - 40% of the 30 and 34-year-old population with completed higher studies. The access to higher education becomes more and more difficult and it sees gaps in its increase, based on gender and on the area of residence. Moreover, huge regional differences occur; the completion of the studies exceeds 48% in Bucharest and it reaches 15% of the relevant population in the north-east zone.

The access to higher education is hindered by a number of factors; some of the most important ones are the rate of graduation from the upper secondary education system and the passing of the baccalaureate exam. Two of 10 high school graduates do not enroll for the baccalaureate exam and nearly half of the remaining 8 pass the exam; this is a severe obstacle for the access to tertiary education. Furthermore, the absence of alternative tertiary education routes reduces the number of the young people's options with regard to the furtherance of their educational development.

Regarding the higher education sector, young people from rural zones or from socioeconomically disadvantaged families continue to face significant hindrances. The development of the students' dormitory buildings and cafeteria infrastructure is a key-component of the policies that seek to stimulate the access to tertiary education and to reduce the regional disparities.

Objectives: Programme 2.1 seeks to attain the following specific objectives by 2020:

- (2.1.1): Promotion of institutional diversity and of the students' participation in tertiary education, especially for those coming from disadvantaged areas: *share of higher education population among the 25-34-year-old population should reach 31% by 2022 from 25.5% current reference.*
- (2.1.2.): Diversifying the financial support tools and policies for people enrolled in tertiary education: *the share of the population living in rural areas, who completed tertiary education programmes, among the 30-34-year-old population, should reach 8.7% in 2022 from the current level of 7.8%.*
- (2.1.3.): Increase of information transparency and supplying information on the educational opportunities for the students' informed choices and the reduction of tertiary education dropout: *the share of female population graduating from tertiary education in science, mathematics and ITC (ISCEDF13 - F05) should reach 4.7% in 2022 from 3.1% current reference.*

- (2.1.4) Rehabilitation, modernization, extension and supply of equipment for university infrastructure. *The number of annually constructed dormitory buildings from 8 in 2018 to 12 in 2022.*

Programme description: Programme 2.1 focuses on the whole tertiary level of the education system, which includes both the university entities and the non-university ones offering study programmes. The measures relate mainly to universities, because, traditionally, they are the best represented segment of this sector; the number of institutions offering vocational training in specialized fields such as medicine, education and various technical sectors is limited. The programme specific measures focus on the improvement of the access and they also support the participation in tertiary education programmes. The flexibility of the operational routes, the financial support and the tools relating to the increase of transparency could improve participation significantly and support the completion of these studies.

Success factors: The access to tertiary education should be more flexible. The improvement of the access to education and career development for people who cannot pass the baccalaureate exam may be obtained by the supply of alternative, vocationally-oriented non-university studies. At present, universities are facing major financial problems caused mainly by the existing funding mechanisms and by the decrease of the number of potential students; these institutions could also benefit from the new financial instruments and from the diversification of educational programmes. Furthermore, the legal framework is very important for the supply of tertiary education programmes with short study cycles, in a sustainable manner; for example, a specific quality assurance framework should be in place at this level, but a clear framework of the qualifications is also required. The coordination with the key-ministries (Ministry of Labor), with the local authorities and with the Regional Operational Programme, respectively with the Programme for Competitiveness, as well as with the National Authority for Qualifications, is an important factor for the programme specific targets.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

Table 7. Strategic Objective 2: Measures of Program 2.1

(2.1.1) Promotion of international diversity and of the students' participation in tertiary education
Measures focusing on the diversity of the educational offer:
<i>1 - Promotion of institutional diversity. Classification of higher education institutions according to their mission and social roles. Providing financial incentives and budgetary allocations for each type of university.</i>
<i>2 - Extension of dual training at the level of the technical tertiary education.</i>
(2.1.2) Measures focusing on the access and participation in tertiary education
<i>1 - Supporting the exemption from the payment of school taxes for students with special results; grants for students with the best results</i>
<i>2 - Supplementing the exemption from the payment of taxes for students, based on merit, with a programme for the support of those in need – social grants, especially at institutional level</i>
<i>3 - Extended social support measures – accommodation and meal subsidies - additional funding.</i>
<i>4 - Implementation of a student loan programme (ensuring funding, as well as national regulation.</i>
<i>5 - Encouraging the attraction of students from underrepresented groups and of those with non-traditional learning methods, including Romanian-born adults and people who live abroad.</i>
<i>6 - Improvement of information transparency and provision of guidance with regard to educational opportunities and results, which should underlie the choice of the educational route and help to reduce school dropout.</i>

(2.1.3) Measures focusing on the rehabilitation, modernization, extension and supply of equipment for university infrastructure

1 - Construction of student dormitory buildings and cafeterias

Programme 2.2: Promoting high quality, flexible and labor market-linked study programmes

Justification: The number of people enrolled in the university education system has decreased significantly in the last five years. Between 2009 and 2015, private universities saw a significant reduction in enrolment, of 81%. At the same time, the number of budget-subsidized places in the state universities remained constant, and the number of enrolments dropped, with a negative impact on the extra-budgetary expenses of public universities⁴⁰. Recently, a considerable share of upper secondary education graduates has chosen non-university tertiary education programmes. In 2011, the single evaluation at system level was performed by the Ministry of Education. From almost 110 evaluated public and private universities, only 12 are in the category of advanced education and research, and most of them were evaluated as institutions of education and scientific research. However, almost all the public universities have the right to have doctoral study programmes and to award doctoral degrees, and they receive funds to this end.

An important step toward the support of quality in university education is the amendment of the exiting methodology for the external assessment of quality, by GD no. 915/2017 on the amendment of the annex to the Government Decision no. 1.418/2006 for the approval of the Methodology of external evaluation, of the standards, of the reference standards and of the list of performance indicators from the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The quality standards and indicators laid down by the new methodology on external assurance of quality, the classification of higher education institutions and the ranking of their study programmes are the bases of the programme-based budget and of the higher funding of education.

Objectives: Programme 2.2 focuses on attaining the following specific objectives by 2020:

- (2.2.1) The establishment of priority study fields and the commitment of the priority funding of the same (art. 223 para. 4, Law on national education and OM no. 5376/2017). *A new methodological framework for funding will be drafted and adopted in 2019.*
- (2.2.2) The promotion of the principle of excellence-based funding, established in the additional funding of higher education institutions. The increase of the international visibility of research of higher education institutions (*average Hirsch-index for the academic staff in higher education institutions*)
- (2.2.3) The ranking of study programmes, in accordance with the legal requirements; additional excellence-based funding. *The number of university programmes (fields) ranked among the first 200 in the international classifications (e.g. QS World University Rankings by Subject)*
- (2.2.4) The revision of the regulations on the evaluation (authorization/accreditation) of the programmes; the drafting and adoption of a new external evaluation methodology. *The new methodology was drafted and adopted at the beginning of 2020.*
- (2.2.5): The funding of multi-annual study grants (instead of offering budget-funded places); the possibility of dividing the grants in order to enable greater institutional autonomy and flexibility with regard to the enrolment-related policies. *A new methodological framework of funding will be drafted in 2021.*

⁴⁰ Source: Annual report on the funding of public higher education, 2014, published by CNFIS, available online: http://www.cnfis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/CNFIS-Raport-public2013-2014-08-04_en_ultim.pdf. According to the official data, the share of students enrolled on paid places in the public universities dropped from 55% to below 40% in 2013.

Programme description: the programme focuses on the strengthening of an institutional framework allowing the universities to improve their educational services. The change of methodological frameworks for quality assurance, the correlation with instruments that use public financial resources and the establishment of clear funding priorities will allow the drafting of medium- and long-term organizational strategies at the level of every university. The concentration of resources for the creation of excellence poles in education, at the level of universities and scientific research, where the organizational capacity can be proven, is important for the shift in policies in the field of tertiary education.

Success factors: The National Strategy for Tertiary Education, 2015-2020, focuses on important measures, such as adequate funding, efficient governance, as well as conditions that enable monitoring and the drafting of evidence-based policies. Since the systems and sources of information have become significantly diverse in the last years, an important success factor for this programme is the use of the existing data and, at the same time, the focus on the constant gathering of relevant information from the system. The drafting of evidence-based policies is a key-factor for the development of this programme and, at the same time, of the whole tertiary education sector. Moreover, the promotion of performance improvement at sector level is important in order to ensure the authorities' commitment in the sense of quality rewarding and the focus of public resources on the high performance programmes and institutions.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

Table 8. Strategic Objective 2: Measures of Program 2.2

(2.2.1) Improving the quality and relevance of tertiary education services:
<i>1 - Revision of the regulations regarding the evaluation (authorization/accreditation) of syllabi</i>
<i>2 - Evaluation of doctoral studies</i>
<i>3 - Exercise of institutional reporting of data corresponding to quality indicators, by science branches, in order to allocate additional excellence financing</i>
<i>3 - Promotion of excellence by the awarding of doctoral study grants</i>
<i>4 - Development of financial incentives for institutions creating new programmes for the acquisition of transversal and entrepreneurship skills.</i>

Programme 2.3: Strategic commitment to the economic sector

Justification: The “knowledge triangle” concept – education, research and innovation – has a central spot in the European Commission’s 2020 Strategy for Education and Training (ET2020) and it is further promoted in the joint progress report on ET2020. The European Council has established that education and training are prior conditions for a functional knowledge triangle, since there are vital for the encouragement of the development and creation of jobs. The conclusions of the Council and of the Member State governments’ representatives on the strengthening of the education’s role in a functional knowledge triangle provide seven action priorities, including the pedagogical reform, partnerships with the business environment, the development of a culture of innovation in the higher education institutions, and new approaches of the quality assessment. The labor force employment rate among the 15-64-year-old population has increased in the last five years, from 57.4% in 2009 to 60.8% in 2014, rather reflecting improvements at the level of the economic sector after the 2009-2010 crisis. Nevertheless, the rate of employment of the young labor force points to a worrisome picture of the relevance of education and of the relation between education and the labor market. The rate of employment among the higher education young graduates (ISCED 5-8), in the 20-34 years age group, who do not attend an education or training programme, is 77% in 2015, while the EU average is 82.3%.

The improvement of the relevance of tertiary education programmes may help to reduce the unemployment rate, which is relatively high and increasing among the higher education graduates in Romania.

The unemployment rate provides additional arguments to support the idea that, in fact, there is no connection between the immediate results of the education systems, in terms of graduates and skills, and the existing needs on the labor market. The rate of unemployment among the young (15-24 years old) has increased in the last five years, from 20% in 2009 to 24% in 2014. This increase can be seen in almost all the graduated levels of education, even if, as a matter of fact, it seems to have affected more the people with primary and, respectively, tertiary-university studies. Once again, the graduates of vocational and technical study programmes seem to have a better position, considering that the level of unemployment among them has decreased.

Objectives: Programme 2.3 sees to attain the following specific objectives by 2020:

(2.3.1.) Improving the employability of tertiary level graduates: *the employment rate of the graduates, 15-24 years old, within 1/3 years after graduating from the tertiary education system should increase from 50.4% current reference level to 63% by 2022.*

Programme description: This programme seeks to strengthen and operationalize the existing links between tertiary education and the potential employers. The universities should not be the only ones involved; other types of organizations providing tertiary educational services should also be engaged. The surveys for the monitoring of graduates are an important source of information for the activities in this programme, and the existing know-how should be used, starting from the existing data, as a basis for the policies regarding the employment of the labor force.

Success factors: The drafting of evidence-based policies at government level, as well as the professional management at university levels are success factors for this programme. The coordination with other ministries, in particular with the Ministry of Labor, is extremely important for the attainment of the program's targets.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

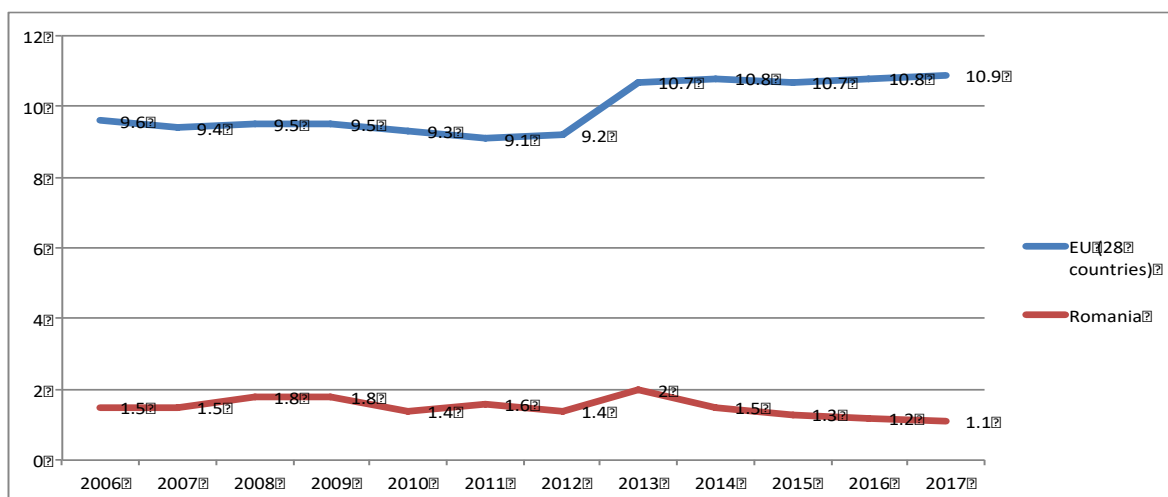
Table 9. Strategic Objective 2: Measures of Program 2.3

(2.3.1) Improving the employability of tertiary level graduates
<i>1 - Development of a national research programme for innovation and entrepreneurship, in order to encourage the dialogue between education and the sectors of economy.</i>
<i>2 - Curriculum revision, aimed at the focus on the labor market required skills and competences.</i>
<i>3 - Institutional development fund</i>
<i>4 - Appointment of a person of contact with the business environment in each institution; the universities and other post-secondary institutions develop plans for the strengthening of the connections with the business community.</i>
<i>5 - Elaboration of an inter-institutional protocol on the implementation of a traceability system between the educational system and the labor market</i>
<i>6 - Financial support for digitalization and development of ICT programmes</i>

Strategic Objective 3: The development of a professional and technical education system, adapted to the labor market and direct beneficiaries' requirements; improvement of participation in lifelong learning

Despite a number of concerns relating to how the assessment is performed, meaning that it may not reflect the whole actual situation, the rate of the adults' participation in education is extremely low in Romania. "Participation in education and training is a measure of lifelong learning. The participation rate in education and training covers participation in formal and non-formal education and training. The reference period for the participation in education and training is the four weeks prior to the interview"⁴¹.

Chart 6. Evolution of the participation rates in education and training in Romania and the EU



Source: Eurostat online data code (tsdsc440)

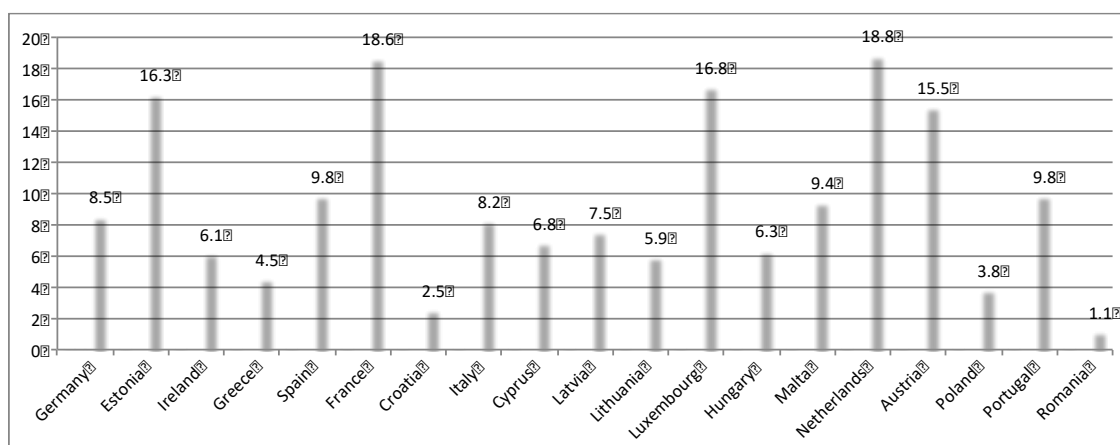
The adults' participation in formal education, in the continuous training programmes or other formal programmes, is one of the lowest ones in the EU, only comparable with the one in Bulgaria. With a participation rate at below 2% in the last 6 years for the 25-64-year-old population, Romania does not show signs of improvement, and the target set in the ET 2020 European Strategy is 10%. Although the adults' education is an important aspect in the European policies on education, as shown in the Education and Training Monitor for 2018⁴², Romania continues to struggle with an increasing gap as compared with its neighbors and with the EU average of the adults' participation in education.

The rate of participation in education and training is closely linked with the school graduation level. As shown by Eurostat data, the participation in lifelong education and training is closely linked with the level of the graduated studies (level of the initial training); those who graduated only from primary education or gymnasium have participation rates considerably lower than those who graduated from the upper level of secondary education, who, in turn, have participation rates much lower than the tertiary education graduates.

⁴¹ http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/trng_ifs_4w0_esms.htm

⁴² Additional details are available on pages 77-81 of the Education and Training Monitor.

Chart 7. Comparative data regarding the participation rates in education and training - selection of European countries



Source: Eurostat online data code (tsdsc440)

With regard to vocational and technical education, Romania is at a considerable higher level than the EU average rate of participation, of 50.4%, for the ISCED 3 population. Nevertheless, the efficiency and relevance of the vocational and technical education institutions and programmes are rather poor, since the share of students who chose the technological line and passed the baccalaureate exam is very low (in the school year 2013-2014, the pupils of technical secondary schools had the lowest rate of participation (63.72%) and the lowest success rate (slightly below 45%). Furthermore, the employment rate of ISCED 3 vocational graduates within 1-3 years after graduation continues to be low (59.6%) as compared with the EU average (72.8%). There are only a few countries, Greece, Spain and Italy with employment rates for these graduates below Romania's. Moreover, while in the aforementioned countries, the trend is positive, in Romania the situation for the last two years of Eurostat data was stationary.

Table 10. Employment rate of graduates from ISCED 3 vocational education, 1-3 years after graduation

COUNTRY / YEAR	2015	2016	COUNTRY / YEAR (cont.)	2015	2016
European Union (current composition)	70.9	72.8	Italy	37.5	40.9
Belgium	70	69.6	Hungary	75.0	77.0
Bulgaria	54.6	60.8	Holland	83.1	85.7
Czech Republic	81.6	87.2	Austria	85.0	83.4
Denmark	79.5	80.8	Poland	65.6	69.2
Greece	35.8	37.8	Portugal	61.3	67.8
Spain	54.9	56.8	Romania	55.6	58.9

Source: Eurostat

The structure of the strategic objective 3 includes three (3) Programmes and twenty-eight (28) Measures corresponding to the targeted results.

Figure 6. Strategic Objective 3: Structure

Strategic Objective 3: The development of a professional and technical education system, adapted to the labour market and direct beneficiaries' requirements; improvement of participation in lifelong learning		
Program 3.1. Enabling the access, improving the participation, developing the innovation and cooperation in the sector of vocational training	Program 3.2. Improving the relevance and quality of vocational training	Program 3.3. Access and incentives for the participation in lifelong learning; quality and relevance; partnerships for improved awareness
<p>Measures of Program 3.1.</p> <p>Supporting the participation in vocational education and training by the payment of grants for all pupils enrolled in this type of training (vocational grant)</p> <p>Support for the payment of accommodation and meal costs for young people from rural and disadvantaged areas, Roma people and people with disabilities enrolled in vocational training in school campuses/vocational and technical schools</p> <p>Development and implementation of a promotion and awareness strategy regarding the career development benefits, participation in initial and continuous vocational training and the recognition of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>Campaigns promoting the vocational training among fifth-eight graders, as well as development of working tools to define the profile of the lower secondary school graduate compatible with the option for initial vocational training</p> <p>Development of the coordination and co-operation of various stakeholders at national, regional and local levels</p> <p>Supply of training programmes for professionals with responsibilities relating to the provision of information, guidance and career advice</p> <p>Extending the learning methods which develop entrepreneurial skills of the participants to</p>	<p>Measures of Program 3.2.</p> <p>Updating/Drafting the occupational/vocational training standards</p> <p>Drafting of the curriculum and of the training curricular materials for every qualification field in the initial vocational training</p> <p>Performance of regular studies and research to anticipate the needs of qualifications and skills requested on the labor market and updating the strategic planning documents of the IPT</p> <p>Creation of a national mechanism for the monitoring of the labour insertion and retention for the graduates from the system of initial vocational education and training</p> <p>Development of a quality assurance mechanism for learning on the job, including through the monitoring of practical training agreements</p> <p>Development of a mechanism for the monitoring, assessment and revision of the quality of vocational and technical education and of the vocational training in dual system.</p> <p>Development of a quality assurance mechanism for initial vocational training</p> <p>Development of a mechanism for the certification of learning results in vocational and technical education</p> <p>Developing and offering continuous training programmes for trainers, teachers, external evaluators and practice tutors.</p>	<p>Measures of Program 3.3.</p> <p>Funding for the increase of demand in lifelong learning</p> <p>Founding of Community Centres for Permanent Learning (CCPL) for the implementation of lifelong learning at community level</p> <p>Developing the learning methods that help to develop entrepreneurship skills</p> <p>Developing a network of centres for the assessment and certification of earlier acquired knowledge</p> <p>Training the staff in charge of the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>Extension of reciprocal learning and of exchanges of good practice</p> <p>Supporting the participation in European mobility programmes</p>

training programs through the exercise company	<p>Developing and offering continuous training programmes for trainers, teachers and the personnel of economic operators involved in initial vocational training</p> <p>Development of mechanisms for the public and private funding as well as of the sectoral co-operation structures/partnerships in the field of initial vocational training</p> <p>Supporting the modernization of vocational and technical educational units and practice workshops</p>	
--	---	--

Strategic Objective 3 concerns long-term impact on the vocational and technical education and vocational training in dual system, as well as on the adults' participation in lifelong learning and it relies on the specific objectives, results and indicators of the programmes, described below:

Figure 7. Strategic Objective 3: Impacts and Results

Impacts	<p>Increasing the pupils' participation to vocational and technical education: Share of 15-17-year-old people participating in vocational education and training. 2022 target: 18%</p> <p>Increasing the employment rate of young people who graduated from vocational education and vocational education in dual system: Employment rate of vocational education graduates, age group 15-24, by levels of education (rate of employed people in the 15-24 age group from the total population of the same age). 2022 target: 27%</p> <p>Increasing the adults' participation to lifelong learning: Share of 25-64-year-old people participating in education and training courses). 2022 target: 12%</p>
Results	<p>(3.1.1.) Enabling the access of the young to vocational training programmes in the education system, with a focus on the disadvantaged groups. The gross rate of participation to vocational education should reach 28% in 2022 from 14.1% at present (2017-2018).</p> <p>(3.1.2.) Promoting vocational education. The rate of pupils in the 9th grade of vocational education (including the dual one) in the total of pupils in the 9th grade should reach 25% in 2022, from 19.1% in 2018. the rate of pupils in 9th grade in vocational and technical education (vocational education + technological high school education) should reach 60% in 2022 from 49.7% in 2018.</p> <p>(3.1.3) Development of the components regarding innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship in the vocational training programmes through the exercise company. The annual number of pupils enrolled in entrepreneurship and innovation programmes through the exercise company should increase to 50,000 from 40,000 (current reference).</p> <p>(3.2.1) Updating the tools used in the description of jobs and qualifications, curricula and related curricular materials, for better relevance on the labour market. The employment rate of youth in the 20-34 age group not enrolled in education and training, with ISCED 3 and 4 educational level should reach 70% by 2022, from 65.9% in 2017. The school dropout rate in the vocational education should be reduced to 1,7% in 2022 from 3.5% current level (2016-2017).</p> <p>(3.2.2) Improving the quality of VET. The school dropout rate in technological high school education and vocational education should reach 1,7% in 2022 from 3% (2016-2017). The baccalaureate success rate among technological high school graduates should reach 65% in 2022 from 47.5% current level (2017-2018).</p>

(3.2.3) Rehabilitation, modernization, extension of the infrastructure and fitting the vocational and technical educational units with equipment. The number of professional and technical educational units included in modernization programs should be of 420 in 2019 up to 600 in 2022.

(3.3.1.) Improvement of vocational guidance and career advice services. The rate of transition to vocational education should reach 25% in 2022 from 17.1% at present (2017-2018).

(3.3.2.) Development of international mobility in vocational and lifelong training. The annual number of pupils enrolled in vocational training programmes, participating in international mobility stages, should increase to 4,600 from 2,800 (current reference).

The estimated budget resources required for the implementation of the measures and the attainment of the results and impacts for the period 2017-2020 amount to 1,498,596 (000 RON).

Table 11. Strategic Objective 3: Breakdown of financing by budget program

Budget by programs for the Strategic Objective		Total (thousand RON)	Total value/year (thousand RON)			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
P 3.1	Enabling the access, improving the participation, developing the innovation and cooperation in the sector of vocational training	845,880	495,480	145,278	104,691	100,431
P 3.2	Improving the relevance and quality of vocational training	416,346	364,456	40,188	11,703	0
P 3.3	Access and incentives for participation in lifelong learning; quality and relevance; partnerships for improved awareness	236,370	195,416	28,432	12,522	0
Total SO 3		1,498,596	1,055,352	213,898	128,915	100,431

Programme 3.1: Enabling the access, improving the participation, developing the innovation and cooperation in the sector of vocational training

Justification: European education and training policies rely on a number of priorities indicated in the European Commission document called *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020')*⁴³. Four strategic objectives for education and training policies were laid down for the 2020 horizon: *the trainees' lifelong learning and mobility need to become a reality; the quality and efficiency of education and training need to be improved; equity, social cohesion and active citizenship need to be promoted; creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, should be encouraged at all levels of education and training.*

At the level of initial vocational and technical education, the rates of inclusion have significantly decreased in 2009-2011 (from 15.8% to 1.8%). In 2012-2014, the indicator's values have slightly increased, due to certain transitional measures of implementation of vocational education (internships for acquiring the level 2 professional qualification; organization of vocational education with a 2-year duration). The reorganization of vocational educational units, as of school year 2014/2015 has led in the last three years to a constant and significant increase of the gross inclusion rate, up to 14.1% in 2017/2018. The gender distribution of the indicator's values emphasizes a better inclusion in

⁴³ Document no. 2009/C 119/02.

vocational education of the masculine population compared to the feminine one, with a difference of almost 10 p.p. in the last school years.⁴⁴

Objectives: Programme 3.1 seeks to attain the following specific objectives by 2020:

- (3.1.1.): Enabling young people’s access to training programmes in the vocational and technical education system, with a focus on disadvantaged groups. *The gross rate of participation in post-secondary school vocational education and in foremen’s schools should reach 28% in 2022 from 14.1% at present.*
- (3.1.2.) Promoting vocational and technical education. *The rate of pupils included in the 9th grade of vocational education (including the dual one) in the total of pupils included in the 9th grade should reach 25% in 2022 from 19.1% in 2018. The rate of pupils included in the 9th grade of the vocational and technical education (vocational education + technological high school education) should reach 60% in 2022 from 49.7% in 2018.*
- (3.1.2.) Developing the components regarding innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship in the vocational training programmes through the exercise company. *The total annual number of pupils enrolled in entrepreneurship and innovation programmes should increase to 50,000 from 40,000 (current reference).*

Programme description: This program targets the increase of participation in vocational and technical education as a response to labor market needs, as well as the development of entrepreneurial skills of the graduates of vocational and technical education in order to increase employment among the youth.

Success factors: The success of this measures depends on the development and implementation of a strategy of promotion and awareness among the pupils and the parents thereof on the benefits of career development, of the participation to initial and continuous vocational training, as well as the implementation of support measures for the pupils enrolled in vocational education, with a focus on the disadvantaged groups. Also, the development of entrepreneurial skills among the pupils is a success factor for increasing employment among the youth.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

Table 12. Strategic Objective 3: Measures of Program 3.1.

(3.1.1) Enabling young people’s access to training programmes in the vocational and technical education system, with a focus on disadvantaged groups
<i>1 - Supporting the participation in vocational education and training by the payment of grants for all pupils enrolled in this type of training (vocational grant)</i>
<i>2 - Support for the payment of accommodation and meal costs for young people from rural and disadvantaged areas, Roma people and people with disabilities or belonging to other vulnerable groups enrolled in initial vocational training in school campuses/vocational and technical schools/educational units who offer education to pupils in dual system.</i>
(3.1.2) Promotion of vocational education
<i>1 - Development and implementation of a promotion and awareness strategy regarding the career development benefits, participation in initial and continuous vocational training and the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.</i>

⁴⁴ Report of the State of Pre-university Education in Romania for 2017-2018.

2 - Campaign promoting the vocational training among fifth to eighth graders, as well as the development of working tools to define the profile of the lower secondary school graduate compatible with the option for initial vocational training.

3 - Development of the coordination and co-operation of various stakeholders at national, regional and local levels.

4 - Supply of training programmes for professionals with responsibilities relating to the provision of information, guidance and career advice.

(3.1.3) Developing the components regarding innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship in the vocational training programmes through the exercise company

1 – Extending the learning methods which develop entrepreneurial skills of the participants to the training programs through the exercise company

Programme 3.2: Improving the relevance and quality of vocational training

Justification: The improvement of the access and the assurance of the participation in the vocational education and training systems, as well as to lifelong education, are a necessary aim of the public intervention; this aim will not be efficient unless the problem of quality and relevance for the labor market is considered. The rates of employment of the recent graduates (in the last 3 years from an ISCED 3-4 level) dropped from 69% in 2001 to 59% in 2015. In the last 3 years, an improvement of this indicator was found, from the lowest level, of 55% in 2013, to 57% in 2014 and 59.8% in 2015. It does continue to be rather low as compared with the nearly 71% European average.

The school dropout rate for vocational education and training, calculated based on the input/output ratio, is 2.5% for technological high school education and of 3.9% for vocational education (data for 2017/2018), high as compared with the average rate for upper secondary education, of 2.6%; this aspect shows problems linked with the students' motivation to attend the classes. And it becomes even more worrisome when we look at the baccalaureate success rate for the technological line, i.e. of 47.5%, as compared with 84.4% in theoretical upper secondary education (data for the school year 2017/2018).

An important step toward promoting quality in vocational education is the involvement of the social partners, given the good practices in the area of initial vocational training in dual system, where the involvement of the economic environment, with clear definition of responsibilities, as well as the involvement in the decision making process on the composition of the dual education, ensures a higher quality level. The coordination of the educational offer among suppliers, beneficiaries and employers is extremely important for the offer of educational programmes relevant for the labor market requirements. In this respect, the establishment of the National Authority for Vocational Training in Dual System from Romania will generate, on the basis of the role thereof defined by law, real support in the development of vocational education, through consultation and collaboration with already existent decisional factors. Moreover, professionalization and efficient co-operation in the sector, between the sectoral committees and the National Agency for Qualifications, is necessary for the development of qualifications and adequate training programmes. At present, the National Registry of Qualifications is not yet functional, and the standards and curriculum for occupational and vocational training are not fully developed and/or updated for all the jobs/qualifications. Furthermore, the methodology for the development, validation, approval and management of occupational standards has not yet been approved.

Objectives: Programme 3.2 seeks to attain the following specific objectives:

- (3.2.1) Updating the tools used in the description of jobs and qualifications, the curriculum and related curricular materials, in order to improve relevance on the labor market. *The employment rate of youth in the 20-34 age group not enrolled in education and training, with ISCED 3 and 4 education level should reach 70% by 2022, from 65.9% in 2017. The rate of school dropout in vocational education should decrease to 1,7% in 2022 from 3.5% current level (2016-2017).*

- (3.2.2) Improving the quality of vocational education and training. *The school dropout rate in technological high school education and vocational education should reach 1,7% in 2021 from 4.3% in technological high schools and 3.5% in vocational education in school year 2016-2017. baccalaureate success rate among technological secondary school graduates should reach 65% in 2022 from 47.5% current level (2017-2018).*
- (3.2.4): Rehabilitation, modernization, extension of the infrastructure and supply of equipment for technological and vocational educational units. *The number of vocational and technical educational units included in the modernization programs should be of 420 in 2019 up to 600 in 2022.*

Programme description: The programme focuses on quality and relevance aspects. At system level, the development of the framework for the assurance of quality and of the adequate tools describing the occupational standards and qualifications, as well as the capacity to draft the curriculum in close coordination with the social partners are all key-activities. Last but not least, the monitoring of the graduates' labor insertion and retention and the development of mechanisms for the identification of the skills needed on the labor market require the performance of system level actions.

Success factors: Success depends on the social partners' actual involvement in all the measures, the development of partnership of tools and methodologies, as well as on the orientation of the public and private employers to the institutional development of initial and continuous vocational education and training.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

Table 13. Strategic Objective 3: Measures of Program 3.2

(3.2.1) Updating the tools used in the description of jobs and qualifications, the curriculum and related curricular materials, in order to improve relevance for the labor market
<i>1 - Updating/Drafting new occupational standards/vocational training standards.</i>
<i>2 - Drafting of the curriculum and of the training curricular materials for every field of qualification in the initial vocational training system.</i>
<i>3 - Performance of regular studies and research to anticipate the needs of qualifications and skills required on the labor market and updating the strategic planning documents of the IPT.</i>
<i>4 - Creation of a national mechanism for the monitoring of the labor insertion and retention for the graduates from the system of initial vocational education and training</i>
(3.2.2) Improving the quality of vocational education and training (VET)
<i>1 - Development of a quality assurance mechanism for learning on the job, including through monitoring of practical training agreements.</i>
<i>2 - Development of a quality assurance mechanism for initial vocational training</i>
<i>3 - Development of a mechanism for the certification of learning results in vocational and technical education</i>
<i>4 - Development of a mechanism for the monitoring, assessment and revision of the quality of vocational and technical education and of education in dual system</i>
<i>5 - Founding and developing a national center for the continuous training of teachers, trainers, external evaluators and tutors</i>
<i>6 - Developing and offering continuous training programmes for trainers, teachers and the personnel of the economic operators involved in initial vocational training</i>
<i>7- Development of mechanisms for the public and private funding as well as of the sectoral co-operation structures/partnerships in the field of initial vocational training</i>

(3.2.3) Rehabilitation, modernization, extension of the infrastructure and supply of equipment for technological and vocational educational units

1 - Supporting the modernization of vocational and technical educational units and of workshops.

Programme 3.3: Access and incentives for participation in lifelong learning; quality and relevance; partnerships for improved promotion and awareness

Justification: Despite a number of concerns regarding the manner of conducting the evaluation, i.e. it may not reflect the whole actual situation, the rate of the adults' participation in education is extremely low in Romania

The rate of adults' participation in VET continues to be especially low, of 1.2% in 2016, given that the national target is of 10% in 2020.

In 2015, following interim reports, the European Commission has reformulated the priorities for education and training provided in 2009⁴⁵. *Transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications to facilitate learning and mobility of the labor force* remains a priority area, which should be targeted through different cooperation policies.

Nevertheless, international mobility in the field of professional training is low. A small part of the total participants to training are included in mobility programs. Professional training suppliers are not sufficiently informed on how to access European funds for mobility programs in the field (like, for example, ERASMUS+, the European Social Fund).

A reduced number of vocational training programs are supplied within cross-border cooperation programs.

Objectives: Programme 3.3 aims at the following specific objectives:

- (3.3.1.): Improving lifelong learning. *The rate of adults' participation in lifelong learning is getting close to the target undertaken by Romania, i.e. of 10% in 2020, from 1.2% in 2016 and should reach 12% in 2022..*
- (3.3.2.) Development of international mobility in the field of initial vocational and lifelong training. *The total annual number of pupils enrolled in vocational training programmes and participating in mobility stages should increase to 4,600 from 2,800 (current reference).*

Programme description:

The measures included in this programme should contribute significantly to the attainment of the major objective of the 2020 European Strategy for Education, i.e. the increase of the employment rate to 75%.

Success factors: The development of the National Registry of Qualifications and its efficient use as guidance tool for the training demand and offer could contribute significantly to the attainment of the objectives of this programme. Moreover, the legal framework for this type of education and training should be furthered revised, in order to create the premises for the development of an authentic market in the sector.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1, and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

⁴⁵ Common Report of the Council and the Commission regarding the implementation of the European strategic cooperation framework in the field of education and training (ET 2020) New European Cooperation priorities in the field of education and training (2015/C 417/04).

Table 14. Strategic Objective 3: Measures of Program 3.3

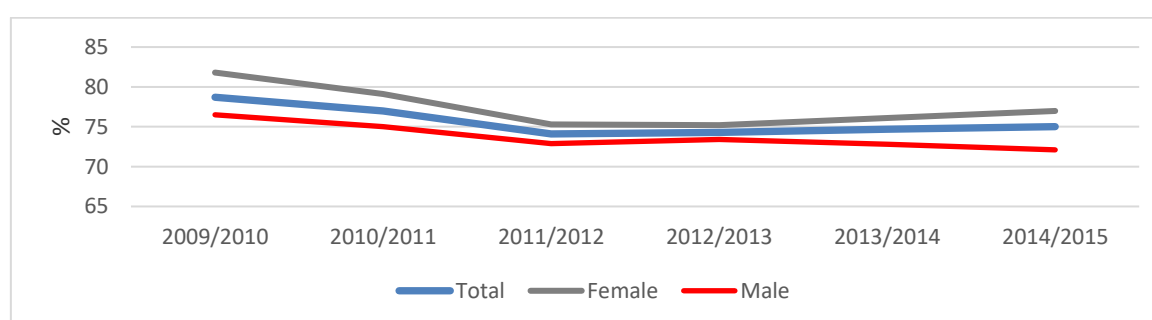
(3.3.1) Improving lifelong learning
<i>1 - Funding for the increase of demand in lifelong learning</i>
<i>2 - Founding of Community Centers for Permanent Learning (CCPL) for the implementation of lifelong learning at community level</i>
<i>3 - Development of learning methods to help develop entrepreneurial skills</i>
<i>4 - Development of quality assurance mechanisms for the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning</i>
<i>5 - Revising the methodology for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning</i>
<i>6 - Developing a network of centers for the assessment and certification of earlier acquired knowledge</i>
<i>7 - Training the staff in charge of the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning</i>
<i>8 - Extending mutual learning and exchange of good practices</i>
(3.3.2) Development of international mobility in vocational and lifelong training
<i>1 - Supporting the participation in European mobility programmes</i>

Strategic Objective 4: Full use of human capital for a smart and sustainable development

The Romanian educational system has 7,314 education establishments with legal personality and 11,606 related structures, as well as 93 higher education institutions. More than 3 million pre-school children and pupils are currently attending school and more than 500 thousand students are enrolled in the higher education institutions.

In the last 6 years, the participation in education has had a downward trend; nevertheless, the participation rates show signs of improvement. The participation rates for boys are lower than the girls'. The indicator is calculated for the whole educational system as share of pupils and students with ages up to 23 years of the total population of the 6-23 age group. The latest figures show that 75% of people in the relevant age group were enrolled in the formal education system in the school year 2014/2015.

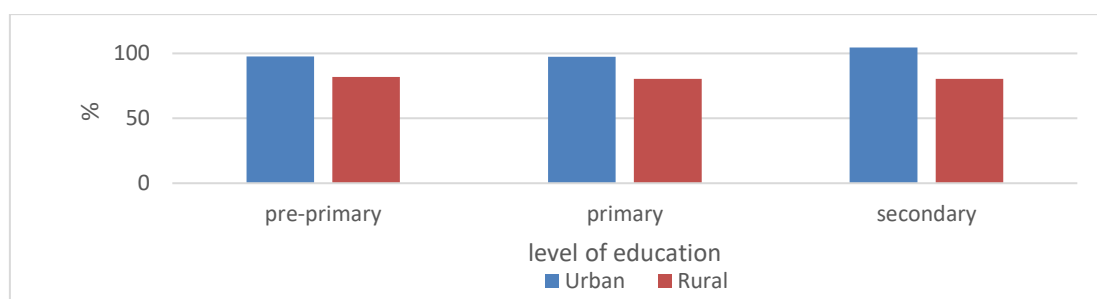
Chart 8. Age group-based participation rates (6-23, shares of participants)



Not only do girls have higher participation rates, but they also spend more time in the education system when compared with boys. The average expectancy of participation in education is 16.5 years for girls, as compared with 15.4 years for boys. The average one-year difference between girls and boys with regard to the participation in education is caused mainly by the girls' much better rate of participation in higher education.

Participation rates are different when a comparison according to the level of education and the area of origin of the pupils is approached. The participation in the primary and lower secondary education cycles is higher at those living in the urban area rather than those in the rural one. Figures show that, for the lower secondary level, there is a trend of migration from the rural to the urban zones, the participation rates for this level of education being higher than 100% in the urban zones.

Chart 9. Participation rates by level of education and place of origin (school year 2014/15)



The analysis of some statistical indicators may identify the main sources of inequalities in the education system. Thus, it has been found that: the difference of the participation rates between those living in the urban area and those in the rural one is kept constant for the pre-school and primary education; the migration of pupils from the rural schools to urban ones is linked with the financial resources allocated by families for their children's education.

At national level, 70% of the schools with primary and secondary level, are prevalent in the rural zones, kindergartens and upper secondary education institutions are almost exclusively in the urban zones. The data is to be read carefully, because schools in rural areas almost always have a sub-division, which is a kindergarten. The law on national education (no. 1/2011) provides that, in order to have legal personality, a school establishment should have at least 150 children enrolled for kindergarten or 300 children in the primary and lower secondary cycle, with some exceptions. Given that rural kindergartens hardly ever attract 150 children, they usually operate as sub-divisions of larger schools. Therefore, the participation rates linked with the number of available school establishments show that most of the children born in rural zones are enrolled in schools that also offer kindergarten (participation rates re 80% for the rural zones, in both levels of education). Some pupils manage to complete the gymnasium, but they do not have an actual chance of furthering their high school or vocational studies because of there is no upper secondary education institution nearby. Those who continue their studies are required to migrate to urban zones, if the families have adequate resources for such a movement (some children migrate earlier, during the lower secondary education cycle, according to the rates of participation in the lower secondary level in the urban zones).

Table 15. Number and establishments of education per level of education and type of zone (2015-2017)

Education establishments with legal personality		No. of establishments in 2015	No. of establishments in 2016	No. of establishments in 2017
Kindergartens	Urban	1097	1068	1100
	Rural	105	70	75
Primary and secondary schools	Urban	1128	1130	1140
	Rural	2815	2787	2790
Upper secondary schools (high schools and schools for PVET are included)	Urban	1322	1305	1297
	Rural	271	270	263

Source: NIS data, indicator SCL101D, 2019

Table 16. Number of education establishments (with and without legal personality)

Level of education	Number of education establishments		
	2015	2016	2017
Ante-pre-school	31	39	29
Pre-school	1202	1138	1175
Primary and gymnasium	3943	3917	3930
Special primary and gymnasium	94	95	97
High school	1566	1534	1497
Vocational schools	27	41	63
Post-secondary schools (including special education)	145	148	160
Public universities	56	56	56
Total	19.286	4.890	14.396

Source: NIS data, indicator SCL101C, 2019.

The structure of the Strategic Objective 4 includes two (2) Programmes and nine (9) Measures corresponding to the targeted results.

Figure 8. Strategic Objective 4: Structure

Strategic Objective 4. Full use of the human capital for a smart and sustainable development
Program 4.1. Supporting pupils for an easier transition and access to higher education
Measures of Program 4.1. Interventions at school - non-competitive grants awarded to high schools with poor performances Revision of school curricula for the upper secondary education Professional development for teachers and education establishment managers Revision of the evaluation items for national evaluation and baccalaureate exam Assessment of the pupils' learning results at the end of tenth grade Information and awareness campaigns on the importance of education Non-competitive grant scheme for universities Competitive grant scheme for universities - summer bridge programmes Competitive grant scheme for universities - learning centres

Strategic Objective 4 concerns long-term impacts on tertiary education and on economy and it relies on the results generated by the programme described below:

Figure 9. Strategic Objective 4: Impacts and Results

Impacts	Rate of enrolment in higher education: Ratio between the total population of students enrolled in higher education institutions and the total 19-23-year-old population. 2018 target: 33%; 2022 target: 37%.
Results	(4.1.1) Improving the quality of education in the upper secondary school system. Increasing the average graduation rate from 86.9% to 92% and of the average baccalaureate success rate from 49.6% to 57% in the secondary schools backed up by the ROSE project. (4.1.2) Improvement of motivation and of the access to quality education for students coming from disadvantaged environments. Increasing the average student retention rate in the first year of tertiary education from 82.3% to 85.5% in the faculties backed up by the ROSE project

The estimated budget resources required for the implementation of the measures and the attainment of the results and impacts for the period 2019-2022 amounts to 568,548 (000 RON).

Table 17. Strategic Objective 4: Breakdown of financing by budget program

Budget by programs for the Strategic Objective		Total (thousand RON)	Total value/year (thousand RON)			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
P 4.1	Supporting pupils for an easier transition and improved access to higher education	568,548	60,398	95,000	108,150	305,000
Total SO 4		723,956	568,548	60,398	95,000	108,150

Programme 4.1: Supporting pupils for an easier transition and access to higher education

Justification: Although the rate of enrolment in upper secondary education is high in Romania, the transition to tertiary education is prevented by the upward school dropout and by the poor results in the bacalaureate exam. On average, the bacalaureate success rate decreased from 78% to 58% between 2009 and 2013, with lower rates in the technological high schools (approximately 20% in some cases). Additionally, the number of students enrolled in tertiary education decreased with 35%, from 716,464 (in 2005/2006) to 464,592 (in 2012/2013).

The data shows that, in 2013/2014, approximately 100,000 pupils did not take or did not pass the bacalaureate exam, additional to the 20,000 students in the tertiary education system who are at risk of leaving in the first year of faculty.

This programme will have the support of ROSE – the Romanian Secondary Education Project, funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development with the amount of 200 million euro. The ROSE project focuses on the reduction of dropout in the upper secondary education system and the first years of the tertiary education and on the increase of the lifelong learning opportunities and of access to higher education; this is a fundamental aspect for Romania to be able to face the challenge of sustaining its economic growth, in the conditions of an aged and decreasing population. The proposed project is in line with the EU priorities and it complements them in several fields, which allows the Romanian government to use and to strengthen the effects of the European Structural and Investment Funds. The operational programmes prepared by the Government of Romania for 2014-2020 are to be implemented mainly in order to face the challenges encountered in primary, lower secondary and tertiary education. Although the Thematic Objective 10 of the Partnership Agreement with Romania allows investments in secondary education, these operational programmes do not include actions that answer to the challenges at the upper secondary education or of the transition to tertiary education. Since ROSE focuses on actions in these two fields, it will be complementary to the European funded programmes in the period 2014-2020.

Objectives: Programme 4.1. seeks to support the transition from upper secondary education to tertiary education and to increase the retention rate in the first year of tertiary education, in the beneficiary secondary schools and universities; it aims at attaining the following specific objectives:

- (4.1 .1) Improving the quality of education in the upper secondary school system, focusing on *the increase of the average graduation rate from 86.9% to 92% and of the average bacalaureate success rate from 49.6% to 57% in the secondary schools backed up by the ROSE project.*
- (4.1.2) Improvement of motivation and of the access to quality education for students coming from disadvantaged environments, in particular *increasing the average student retention rate in the first year of tertiary education from 82.3% to 85.5% in the faculties backed up by the ROSE project.*

Programme description: Programme 4.1. will be implemented for a seven-year period, between 2015 and 2022, and it will be funded by a loan of 200 million euro. The ROSE project, which ensures the funding of the programme, is organized in three components, the first two focusing on the approach of the academic and social aspects that lead to the poor performances of the pupils in the upper secondary school system and of the students in the first year of tertiary education. The third component covers project management aspects, the monitoring and evaluation of its impact.

According to the loan agreement no. 8481-RO, signed in Washington on 17 April 2015, between the Government of Romania and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), the Romanian Secondary Education Project (ROSE) entered into force on 14 October 2015, being implemented by the Ministry of National Education, through the Division of Management of the Externally Funded Projects (UMPFE).

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

Table 18. Strategic Objective 4: Measures of Program 4.1

(4.1.1) Measures aimed at the main factors preventing the transition of Romania's young people from the upper secondary school system to the tertiary one, including dropout, refusal of taking the bacalaureate exam or the poor grades obtained in this exam
Actions at school level:
<i>1 - Interventions at school level - non-competitive grants to poorly performing high schools</i>
Systemic actions:
<i>1 - Revision of school curricula for the upper secondary education</i>
<i>2 - Professional development for teachers and education establishment managers</i>
<i>3 - Revision of the evaluation items for national evaluation and bacalaureate exam</i>
<i>4 - Assessment of the pupils' learning results at the end of tenth grade</i>
<i>5 - Information and awareness campaigns on the importance of education</i>
Actions at the level of universities and summer bridge programmes:
<i>1 - Non-competitive grant scheme for universities</i>
<i>2 - Competitive grant scheme for universities – summer bridge programmes</i>
<i>3 - Competitive grant scheme for universities – learning centers</i>

Strategic Objective 5: Strengthening of the administrative capacity

The Ministry of National Education (MNE) – specialty body of the central public administration – plays a role of synthesis and coordination in the application of the strategic framework in the field of education, vocational training and university scientific research and the Government Program, chapter Policies in the Field of Education.

Additional to an important share of the state budget (3.1% of GDP in 2017, respectively 3.7% in 2018), the MNE also manages national programmes of development and strengthening of the administrative capacity, financed from the European Social and Investment Funds (ESIF). The MNE is required to meet the highest standards of responsibility with regard to the institutional strengthening and development.

The institutional reform expected by the parties involved in the education system, on a clear and predictable path, in line with the sector's vision and strategic objectives, should be at least as important as the adequate definition of the sector objectives and priorities or the adequate orientation of the policy measures. In the future, Romania will need a flexible, knowledge- and information-based administration of the education sector, able to help the market orientation and the sustainability of the Romanian education sector; this can be achieved by offering strong leadership in the pursuit of the sectoral objectives, in order to ensure the coordination of policies and programmes and to supply improved services to pupils, students, teachers, researchers, companies and citizens.

The priorities stemming from these institutional challenges relate to:

- (i) the optimization of the public policy and strategy drafting and coordination, including for cross-sector aspects;
- (ii) the institutional strengthening and the enabling of the resource, information and data flows in the whole administration of the ES;
- (iii) information and opinions delivered to pupils, students, teachers, researchers and organizations interested in the education sector;
- (iv) the effective and efficient use of the domestic (national) and foreign (European) financial resources for the ES sector and administration.

It relies on Programmes 5.1 and 5.2, which seek to develop a reliable, knowledge- and information-based administration, for the purpose of: (i) fulfilling more efficiently its strategic function (by improved mechanisms of ES policy framework formulation) and (ii) delivering sectoral policies and services more efficiently to its beneficiaries (through an improved institutional framework).

The Programme supports measures aimed at the development of the administrative capacity of management and implementation of sectoral policy, for better results obtained by the ministry and the structures it supervises or coordinates. Some of these are: (i) the refining of functional roles, of procedures and mechanisms for the drafting of Romania's strategy in the ES sector and for the delivery of the ISP; (ii) the elimination of the staff shortage; (iii) solutions to the deficient access to sectoral information and data; (iv) approaching the issue of the lack of instruments for the evaluation of the sector and staff performances; (v) improved coordination with other government agencies in the fields with a significant impact on the ES performances; (vi) increased transparency and greater commitment of those involved in the policy process.

The structure of the strategic objective 5 includes two (2) Programmes and sixteen (16) Measures corresponding to the targeted results.

Figure 10. Strategic Objective 5: Structure

Strategic Objective 5. Strengthening the administrative capacity	
Program 5.1. Strengthening the administrative capacity for the management and implementation of sectoral policies	Program 5.2. Strengthening the ICT governance, cybernetic security and reinforcement of ICT human resources in the educational sector; modernization and inter-operability of national ICT systems
<p style="text-align: center;">Measures of Program 5.1.</p> <p>Efficient and effective operation of the departments in the organizational structure of the MNE/Revision of organizational responsibilities and related procedures, to enable the improved drafting of the strategies and a problem-free implementation of the PSI</p> <p>Ensuring performant management in the MNE, in accordance with existing objectives and legal regulations, in order to ensure economic, efficient and effective management of public funds, through the application of the internal management control standards</p> <p>Ensuring management which targets the increase of efficiency in using the MNE’s budget/ Drafting of annual and multi-annual budget programmes for the whole use of the internal and external allocated funds</p> <p>Developing financial mechanisms to reduce the unpredictability of financing and increase the equitable distribution of financing on all geographical regions, in accordance with their specific needs</p> <p>Human resources management and adaptation to the organization’s needs</p> <p>Vocational training, learning and know-how for the ministry’s specialized staff</p> <p>Transparency in the decision-making, public policy and legal framework drafting process and free access to information of public interest</p> <p>Operationalisation of the public policy impact analyses and of the feedback loops in the drafting of ES policies</p> <p>Inter-institution cooperation and exchange of experience with relevant national and international organizations</p> <p>Effective and efficient operation of the institutions subordinated to and coordinated by the MNE (inspectorates, libraries, and so on)</p> <p>Development of the analysis capacities of existing data and monitoring the strategies in the field of education, in order to formulate specific and efficient evidence-based policies</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Measures of Program 5.2.</p> <p>Revision and implementation of the ICT governance, of the cybersecurity-related policies, as well as of the human resources policies for ICT experts</p> <p>Development of the ICT infrastructure</p> <p>Primary and evolutive maintenance for the communications infrastructure; primary infrastructure: office equipment and software; large infrastructure - basic data centre hardware and software (operating systems, virtualization, databases, etc.)</p> <p>Information System of Schooling Management</p> <p>National Education Portal – NEP – VL (Virtual School Library)</p>

Strategic Objective 5 concerns the long-term impact on the strengthening and institutional development of the MNE and it relies on the specific objectives and indicators of the programme, described hereinafter:

Figure 11. Strategic Objective 5: Impacts and Results

Impacts	<p>Increasing the degree of confidence in the institution and actions of the Ministry of National Education: Internal and external confidence in the MNE institution and actions. 2030 target: 65%; 2022 target: 60%.</p> <p>Rate of absorption of funds for the education, research and science sector in the European programmes: Degree of absorption of the funds available for the national education and science sector via the EU programmes. 2030 target: 90%. 2022 target: 60%.</p> <p>Observing the state budget planning (degree of compliance with the state budget):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difference between the budget planned on 1 January and the budget planned and rectified on 31 December, current year. 2030 target: 0.1%. 2022 target: 1.0%. - Difference between the budget planned on 1 January and the budgetary execution on 31 December. 2030 target: 0.50%. 2022 target: 1.00%.
Results	<p>(5.1.1) Strengthening the structural and functional stability of the MNE and of the supervised/coordinated institutions: Number of annual changes of the functional structure - maximum 1 per year from maximum 2 per year (current reference value) and maintaining the percentage index of the public sector employees actually employed in institutions/structures with functional responsibilities in education, university research and science (reference value - 2014) at 0.93% (current reference).</p> <p>(5.1.2) Increasing the efficacy of policy drafting in the ES sector, as well as in the implementation process: Penalties paid for FEADRS and FSE, in relation to the total payments made in the previous year, maximum 0.00001% from 5.82% respectively 2.7 % (current reference value); Number of chapter changes and negative impact on the state budget, down to 20/year, from 30/year (current reference value).</p> <p>(5.1.3) Increase of the efficiency of use of the MNE operational budget: The share of management expenses of the total annual budget of the MNE down to 14.70 % from 14.84 % (current reference value); management expenses per MNE employee up to 77,055 RON/individual from 74,818 RON /individual (current reference value).</p> <p>(5.2.1) Strengthening the ICT governance of the MNE and of the supervised/coordinated institutions.</p>

The estimated budget resources required for the implementation of the measures and the attainment of the results and impacts for the period 2019-2022 amounts to 1,927,207 (000 RON).

Table 19. Strategic Objective 5: Breakdown of financing by budget program

Budget by programs for the Strategic Objective		Total (thousand RON)	Total value/year (thousand RON)			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
P 5.1	Strengthening of the administrative capacity of sectoral policy management and implementation	1,545,131	375,249	374,108	390,098	405,676
P 5.2	Strengthening the ICT governance, cybernetic security and the reinforcement of ICT human resources in the educational sector; modernization and interoperability of national ICT systems	382,076	127,466	120,070	134,540	0
Total SO 5		1,927,207	502,715	494,178	524,638	405,676

Programme 5.1: Strengthening of the administrative capacity of sectoral policy management and implementation

Justification: The MNE is the central public authority coordinating the national sectoral strategies in education. Since the resources from European programmes ensure significant funds to the benefit of this sector, the priority of the MNE is to use the national resources for the modernization of the administration and for the increase of the efficiency and efficacy in the drafting of policies and services to pupils, students, and other beneficiaries.

The modernization of the public administration should be a major priority for the ministry. This objective is attainable by the promotion of efficient measures in the public administration system, for the strengthening of the modern technological solutions used by the ministry, for the development and strengthening of the relationships and collaboration with the social partners and with all the stakeholders in education, for the simplification of the legislative and administrative procedures in ES (decrease of the administrative burden) and for an improved organizational structure of the ministry.

At present, 3.6 million pupils and students and their families, i.e. more than 16% of Romania's population, are direct or indirect beneficiaries of the ministry's policies and actions. The increase of confidence in the ES sector institutions is an important measure of success. This applies especially to the following functions: i) drafting of ES strategies/policies; ii) regulation and drafting of the ES legal framework; iii) management of the state patrimony; iv) management of national and European funds in education; v) monitoring and control of implementation and compliance with the relevant sectoral regulations; vi) role of management authority for the national programmes in the ES sector; vii) payment of funds and delivery of programmes and services in the ES sector.

In view of all these, Romania needs a flexible, knowledge- and information-based administration in the ES sector, for the attainment of the following objectives: (i) the more efficient fulfilment of its strategic function (by better mechanisms for the making of the ES policy framework) and (ii) the more efficient delivery of sectoral policies to its target-beneficiaries (through a strengthened institutional framework).

The priority fields to be improved for 2018-2021 include: (i) the improvement of the functional roles, of the procedures and mechanisms for the drafting of Romania's ES strategies and for the delivery of the ISP; (ii) coverage of the human resources need (such as the deficit of economists and managers in the education field, involved in policy drafting, or of IT experts, who should approach the management of data in the MNE); (iii) solving the problems relating to the insufficient access to information and data in this sector; (iv) taking measures with regard to the absence of performance assessment tools for the sector and its staff; (v) improved coordination with other government agencies in sectors that have an important impact on the ES sector performances (for example, social protection, health, research and development, transport, environment).

The mission of the MNE is ambitious, but it can be completed by the following measures. For this purpose, the ministry will have to improve its own performances, by important changes that will be conducted in the ISP implementation period (and thereafter), covering fields of maximum importance, such as: i) organization stability; ii) public policy drafting; iii) efficient management of human, financial and material resources; iv) strategic planning; v) public partnerships and public relations.

Objectives: Programme 5.1 seeks to attain the following specific objectives by 2022:

- (5.1.1) Strengthening the structural and functional stability of the MNE and its supervised/coordinated institutions: *The number of annual amendments of the functional structure⁴⁶ - maximum 1 per year from maximum 2 per year (current reference value) and*

⁴⁶ The term amendment will be interpreted like any amendment to the GD on the reorganisation and functioning of the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research and of some supervised structures or like any legislative act that cancels and replaces this decision (including the regulatory act as such).

maintaining the percentage index of the public sector employees who are actually employed in institutions/structures with functional responsibilities in the Education, Research and Science Sector (reference year – 2014) at 0.93% (current reference value).

- (5.1.2) Increasing the efficiency of use of the MNE operational budget: *the share of management expenses of the total MNE annual budget down to 14.70 % from 14.84 % (current reference value); management expenses per MNE employee up to 77,055 RON /individual from 74,818 RON/individuals (current reference value).*
- (5.1.3) Increasing the efficacy of ES sector policy drafting, as well as of the implementation process: *Penalties paid for FEADRS and FSE, in relation to the total payments made in the previous year, maximum 0.00001% from 5.82% respectively 2.7% (current reference value); Number of chapter changes and the negative impact on the state budget, down to 20/year, from 30/year (current reference value).*

Programme description: For the success of the sectoral strategic objective implementation, the ES sector administration should be stable, functional, transparent, well-financed and publicly evaluated. Programme 5.1 supports the measures aimed at the strengthening of the administrative capacity of sectoral policy management and implementation, for the attainment of improved functional results at the level of the ministry and its supervised/coordinated structures. The programme has two categories of measures: i) specific measures, for a specific field or sub-sector of the administration, with a budget allocated during the implementation period; ii) non-specific (“soft”) measures, providing horizontal support to all the administration fields and functions, requiring permanent intra- and inter-institution cooperation; these measures do not have a directly allocated budget, but they are supported indirectly from the state budget, by the nature of the organization’s activity.

Programme 5.1 is dedicated to the MNE and to the supervised or coordinated structures. The success of the programme implementation will be seen in a greater stability at the ES administration, in the successful implementation of public sectoral policies and in the increase of the European fund absorption, as well as of the efficiency of their use. These results will be obtained provided that the beneficiaries and stakeholders request them and become involved in the implementation process.

Likewise, the administration decision-makers and specialists should take constant measures, for the purpose of: i) reducing the frequency of the functional structural changes; ii) reducing the specialized staff turnover and loss of skills; iii) making sure that public policies are drafted coherently, based on well-defined procedures and that they are adequately substantiated based on statistical data, analyses, forecasts, etc.; iv) ensuring the use of participatory and consultative methods for the drafting of public policies; v) enabling the access to information, by involving and consulting with the direct beneficiaries of the sectoral public policies; vi) showing openness toward local and international partnerships and collaboration; vii) computerizing the data, information and document flows; viii) using efficiently the ministry’s operational budget; ix) ensuring processes of regular monitoring & evaluation and annual revision of the implementation of the planned strategic measures, as well as the publication of the results.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

Table 20. Strategic Objective 5: Measures of Program 5.1

(5.1.1) Strengthening of the structural and functional stability of the MNE and of the supervised/coordinated institutions
Measures aiming at its institutional modernization; improvement of efficacy; strengthening of institutional processes and procedures
<i>1 - Efficient and effective operation of the departments in the organizational structure of the MNE/Revision of organizational responsibilities and related procedures, to enable the improved drafting of the strategies and a problem-free implementation of the PSI</i>
<i>2 - Ensuring performant management in the MNE, in accordance with existing objectives and legal regulations, in order to ensure economic, efficient and effective management of public funds, through the application of the internal management control standards</i>
(5.1.3) Measures aimed at the specialized staff of the ES sector
<i>3 - Human resources management and adaptation to the organization's needs</i>
<i>4 - Vocational training, learning and know-how for the ministry's specialized staff</i>
(5.1.4) Improving the efficacy of policy drafting in the ES sector, as well as of the implementation process
Measures referring to the elaboration, implementation of public policies and communication with the stakeholders:
<i>1 - Transparency in the decision-making, public policy and legal framework drafting process, and free access to information of public interest</i>
<i>2 - Operationalization of the public policy impact analyses and of the feedback loops in the drafting of ES policies</i>
<i>3 - Inter-institution cooperation and exchange of experience with relevant national and international organizations</i>
<i>4 - Effective and efficient operation of the institutions subordinated to and coordinated by the MNE (inspectorates, libraries, and so on)</i>
<i>5 - Development of the analysis capacities of existing data and monitoring the strategies in the field of education, in order to formulate specific and efficient evidence-based policies</i>

Programme 5.2: Strengthening the ICT governance, cybernetic security and the reinforcement of ICT human resources in the educational sector; modernization and interoperability of national ICT systems

Justification: Education is changing radically; these changes focus on the reorganization of the existing infrastructure of the future learning environments. The use of IT may have a key-role in the preservation and growth of the children's and young people's interest in books and libraries.

Given the three-dimensional approach of ICT in the school education system (subject matters, educational resources, environment for the strengthening of learning), the need to manage and collect the information regarding the school results and daily school activity in the school system was identified, in accordance with the vision of MNE on the efficient management of education.

Since young generations, mainly those at the school age, prefer, even in the learning process, to use increasingly more often the information technology, especially the communication and collaboration on smart mobile terminals, the creation of an adequate environment is necessary; this environment should answer, on the one hand, to the educational process specific requirements and needs, join the process of stimulation and amplification of the students' interest to the possibilities offered by a virtual school library and help in the cognitive development process; on the other hand, it should support the interaction of school aged people (interactions of children and young people), as well as their

interactions with the society, in a way that will help to reduce school dropout and secure an optimal integration in the society and on the future labor market.

Thus, the access to digital resources and services by the use of information and communication technology becomes a key-source in the teaching-learning process, possibly enabling the management of communication and of cooperation, the development of creativity and the access to information via mobile devices; benefits are seen in the improvement of the efficiency and efficacy of the overall educational process.

Objectives: Programme 5.2 seeks to attain the following specific objective by 2022:

- (5.2.1) Strengthening of ICT governance of the MNE and of the supervised/coordinated institutions.

Programme description: For the success of the sectoral strategic objective implementation, the management of the ES sector should be supported by ICT system corresponding to the level of complexity of the education sector.

According to the European and national priorities, the actions to be implemented with regard to education through ICT will also include the following categories, in line with the specificity of the learning process:

- Obtaining/using at national level integrated educational digital technologies/tools that should enable innovative management, both in the teaching – learning – evaluation process and in the institutional and leadership level)
- The creation of networks and platforms able to allow the exchange of knowledge, information, good practice and to drive innovation in education;
- In the education establishments, ensuring the infrastructure, the equipment, including the ICT sustainability, maintenance and support;
- The creation of a digital culture in the teaching – learning – evaluation process, of leadership and school management by the implementation of supporting information systems.”

Programme 5.2 is dedicated to the MNE and the structures they supervise or coordinate. The success of the programme implementation will be reflected in a higher stability at the level of the ES management, in the successful implementation of sectoral public policies, and in the increase of European fund absorption, as well as of the efficiency in using them. These results will be obtained provided that the beneficiaries and the stakeholders request them and get involved in the implementation process.

Measures: The main measures that will help to attain the specific programme objectives are listed below. The allocated budgets are indicated in Annex 1 and the measure-related objectives and targets are shown in Annex 3.

Table 21. Strategic Objective 5: Measures of Program 5.2

(5.2.1.) Strengthening of ICT governance of the MNE and of the supervised/coordinated institutions
1 - Development of the ICT infrastructure
2 - Primary and progressive maintenance for the communications infrastructure; primary infrastructure: office equipment and software; large infrastructure - basic data center hardware and software (operating systems, virtualization, databases, etc.)
3 - The Schooling Management Information System
4 - The National Education Portal – NEP – VL “Biblioteca Școlară Virtuală” (Virtual School Library)

5. ARRANGEMENTS REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE ISP

For the sake of relevance, an Institutional Strategic Plan should be linked with the government's priority policies and financial planning processes. It can be seen that, despite the fact that the budget includes three-year expenditure forecasts, it provides activity- and expense-related details for only one year. Nevertheless, it is expected that, throughout time, better attention will be paid to the second and third years.

Accountability: The implementation of the strategic plan begins after the approval of the state budget in the Parliament. Via the General Directorate Strategic Management and Public Policies and with support from the technical directorate, the MNE will prepare the annual operational plans for the implementation of the ISP. This activity is extremely important, because it allows the senior management to identify and solve beforehand the potential challenges.

Monitoring & Evaluation framework: The Monitoring & Evaluation framework is described in Annexes 2 and 3; it provides indicators for various levels of planning (see the table below). Annex 1 offers an overview of the financial resources. To the extent possible and in order to avoid the overloading of the MNE, the ISP monitoring framework was created in a way that will ensure its full integration in the Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (CMEF) whose application to the European programmes in 2018-2021 is mandatory.

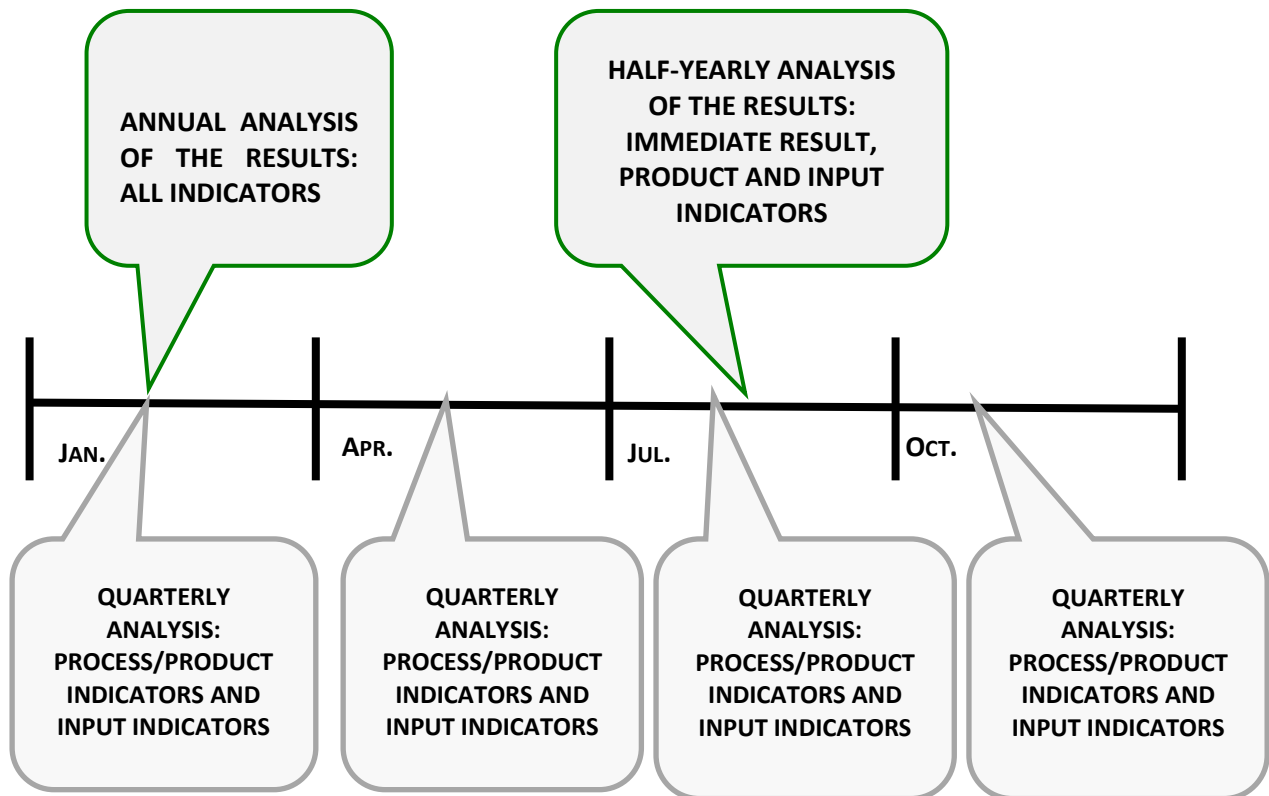
Data collection and management: A strategic planning and performance evaluation IT system was developed, following the format of the proposed ISP structure. The application will show key-functions of the ISP. The IT application with connected with the SGG and the MoPF, and the progress of the ISP implementation can be viewed at all the executive and management levels. The progress in relation to the indicators may be monitored by all the stakeholders, including the citizens, by an interface available to the general public.

Reporting: When a decision is made with regard to the aspects to be monitored and to the frequency of such monitoring, the avoidance of the overcrowding of the MNE's operational directorates is important. In general, the reporting calendar varies according to the performance indicators. Thus:

- Input and process/product indicators will be measured once a month or at least once every quarter
- Immediate result indicators will be measured every quarter
- Result indicators will be measured twice a year
- Impact indicators will be monitored annually

A chart of the MNE's ISP monitoring cycle is submitted below.

Figure 12. Monitoring cycle for the Institutional Strategic Plan of the MNE



An important aspect is the reporting of the progresses obtained with the planned results, in accordance with the performance indicators and defined targets, to the government, parliament, stakeholders and general public. Although at present annual progress reports are not being drafted, in the future the drafting and publication of these reports by the MNE will be very important.

Evaluation: Apart from the programmes that benefit from European funding, which are the subject matter of rigorous ex-ante, intermediate and ex-post evaluations, the MNE has not developed a formal approach of the ex-post evaluations of the other programmes and policies. This activity is set to provide important information in the future, for the performance of changes with regard to the delivery of the programmes and policies. These changes will not affect significantly the strategic plan.

The strengthening of the periodic evaluation of the whole programme portfolio managed by the MNE and included in the ISP will be advisable; its synchronization with the European programme evaluation schedule will also be advisable. This activity could be outsourced to the same evaluators who will approach the Operational Programme Human Capital, thus leading to synergies in the evaluation activity while holding a holistic view of the ES policy results.

Updating the ISP: A complete strategic planning exercise will be conducted every four years. In this time interval, the MNE will prepare an annual update, to see whether strategic plan changes are necessary. This update will mean three activities:

- comparing the previous year results with the planned ones; this comparison will also be made based on the targets laid down in the strategic and operational plans;
- performing an analysis of the environment, to see whether significant changes should be operated at the hypotheses underlying the current plan;
- adding one additional year to the plan.

Year	Laying down new targets
2019	for 2022
2020	for 2023
2021	for 2024

By making sure that the plan covers at least three years as of the year of the planning, the updated strategic plan may continue to be a basis for the annual budget requests which also require a three-year projection. Most frequently, the vision, the strategic objectives and the programme objectives continue unchanged, unless a major event occurs, such as an unforeseen economic crisis.

6. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The viability of ISP 2019-2022 is defined by the availability of the financial resources required for the implementation of the measures relating to each specific objective.

The accession to the EU has paved the way to extraordinary financial resources for the Romanian education sector.

Despite the generous package of European programmes, the guarantee of adequate funding has remained a challenge, with regard to the focus on the institutional reforms. Specific relevant fields and services, managed by the sector or included in the portfolio of other government agencies, continue to be under-funded. Another important aspect is that there are still many policy sectors that carry significant relevance and impact on education and are not funded from the MNE budget or for which an efficient complementarity between the MNE-managed resources and policies and those managed by other government agencies should be laid down (such as the local infrastructure for education, with a high impact on the quality of education in small towns and rural areas).

Both for the policy scopes and for the focus on the institutional reform priorities, the MNE could profit from a transition to programme-based budgeting. It would be useful for an improved coordination among the general sectoral objectives, the related action plans and the resources to be allocated.

Romania should also identify and set the clear priority, by field of policy, of an adequate balance of the public and private resources that should help to develop the education sector.

A budget draft summing up the strategic objectives and the main measures is submitted in Annex 1.

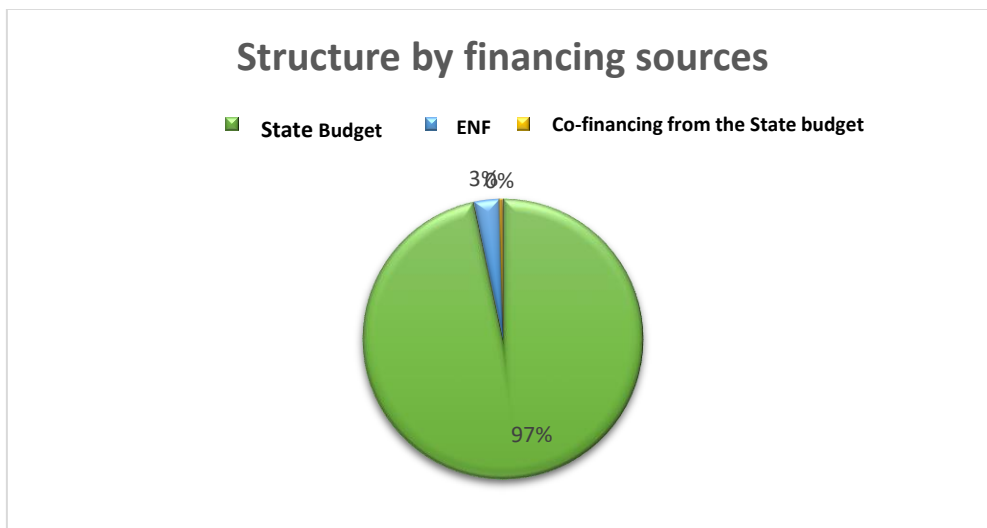
Table 9 shows the annual financial envelopes necessary for the operationalization of ISP in 2019-2022.

Table 22. Financial resources for the operationalisation of ISP 2019-2022 (thousands RON)

Year	Total	2019	2020	2021	2022
Estimated amounts	111,371,127	30,726,933	26,412,665	26,831,104	27,400,425

The financial resources were classified in three main categories: (i) state budget resources for national policies and administrative expenses, (ii) state budget resources for the co-funding of EU policies and (iii) EU budget resources. The chart below shows the ISP budget broken down by source of funding, more than three quarters being covered by the funding of European programmes.

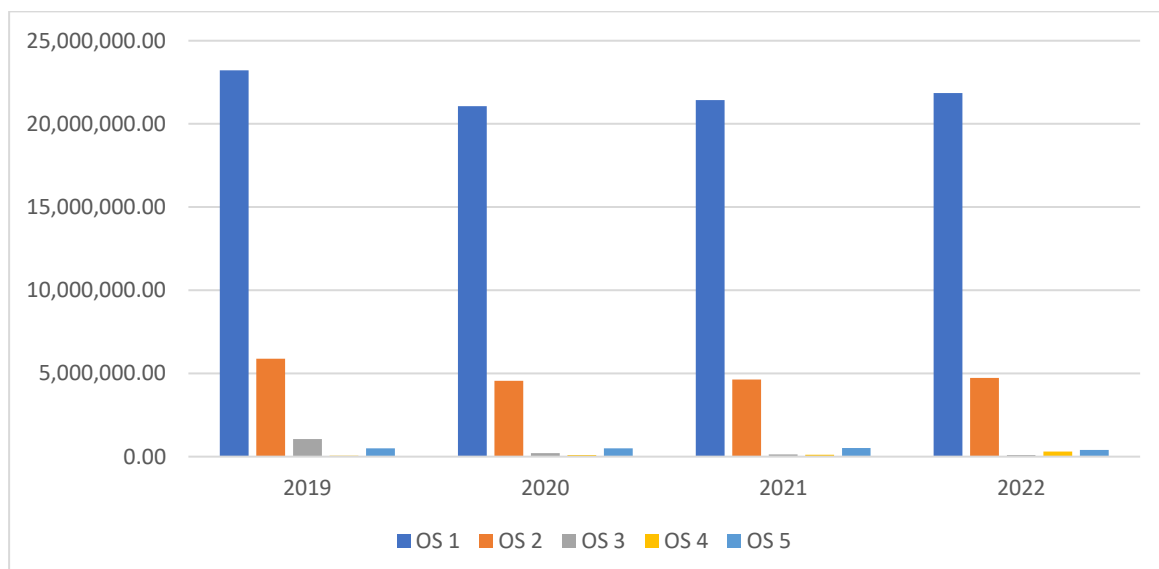
Chart 10. Structure of the ISP budget, by source of funding (% , 2019-2022)



The budget for the year 2019 and the 2019-2022 Budgetary Strategy were considered in the planning of the allocations from the state budget for the national policies and the co-funding of EU programmes. The defined ceilings were also considered both for co-funding and for the other types of expenses – classified in the category of state budget for national policies. The EUR-RON exchange rate is the one used for the substantiation of the budget for the year 2019.

The number of programmes remained the same as compared with the previous ISP. Despite its obvious complexity, this new ISP shows a higher degree of consistency in terms of programmes, and it enables the implementation and monitoring process.

Chart 11. Breakdown of estimated financial resources, by year and by strategic objective (2019-2022)



The previous chart illustrates the breakdown of the financial resources by strategic objective. More than 71% of the total sector-allocated resources are directed to the achievement of the strategic objective of decreasing the ESL rate, while more than 21% of the total resources are allocated to the strategic objective relating to tertiary education. Strategic Objectives 1 and 2 cover approximately 92%

of the total resources, while the other Strategic Objectives, corresponding to lifelong learning, VET and institutional activities have more than 8% of the total resources.

Table 23. Breakdown of estimated financial resources, by year and by strategic objective (thousands RON)

Strategic Objective	2019	2020	2021	2022
SO 1	23,230,010.07	21,058,158.16	21,425,262.77	21,854,239.00
SO 2	5,878,457.84	4,551,430.86	4,644,138.00	4,735,079.00
SO 3	1,055,352.11	213,897.99	128,915.23	100,431.00
SO 4	60,398.00	95,000.00	108,150.00	305,000.00
SO 5	502,714.97	494,178.00	524,638.00	405,676.00

A significant institutional challenge is the capacity to implement the ISP, including by the budgetary execution based on the defined programmes. From the point of view of the organization and management, this is the main challenge for the upcoming period – the transition from 3 programmes to 12, as well as the effort to implement them. The programme-based budgetary execution will also generate significant changes in the management of the MNE structures, namely the budget directorate.

ANNEX 1.A: OBJECTIVES AND BUDGETARY PROGRAMMES FOR 2019-2022

Strategic Objective/ Programme	Total amount thousands RON	Total scheduling per year - thousands RON			
		2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	111,371,127	30,726,933	26,412,665	26,831,104	27,400,425
Strategic Objective no. 1	87,567,670	23,230,010	21,058,158	21,425,263	21,854,239
Programme 1.1: Ensuring that all children have access to education and to quality education	2,818,670	1,202,001	704,066	553,481	359,122
Programme 1.2: Improving participation in primary and secondary education; all the pupils attending mandatory education should graduate	84,513,210	21,876,433	20,301,829	20,839,831	21,495,117
Programme 1.3: Reintegration of early school leavers in the education system	235,790	151,576	52,263	31,951	0
Strategic Objective No. 2	19,809,106	5,878,458	4,551,431	4,644,138	4,735,079
Programme 2.1: Improving the participation in the tertiary education	18,055,789	5,232,504	4,190,254	4,276,620	4,356,411
Programme 2.2: Promoting high quality, flexible and labor market-linked study programmes	1,325,409	585,664	241,227	245,514	253,004
Programme 2.3: Strategic commitment to the economic sector	427,908	60,290	119,950	122,004	125,664
Strategic Objective No. 3	1,498,596	1,055,352	213,898	128,915	100,431
Programme 3.1: Enabling the access, improving the participation, developing the innovation and cooperation in the sector of vocational training	845,880	495,480	145,278	104,691	100,431
Programme 3.2: Improvement of vocational training relevance and quality	416,346	364,456	40,188	11,703	0
Programme 3.3. Access and incentives for participation in lifelong learning; quality and relevance; partnerships for improved promotion and awareness	236,370	195,416	28,432	12,522	0

Strategic Objective/ Programme	Total amount thousands RON	Total scheduling per year - thousands RON			
		2019	2020	2021	2022
Strategic Objective No. 4	568,548	60,398	95,000	108,150	305,000
Programme 4.1: Supporting pupils for an easier transition and access to higher education	568,548	60,398	95,000	108,150	305,000
Strategic Objective No. 5:	1,927,207	502,715	494,178	524,638	405,676
Programme 5.1: Strengthening of the administrative capacity of sectoral policy management and implementation	1,545,131	375,249	374,108	390,098	405,676
Programme 5.2: Strengthening of ICT governance, cybernetic security and reinforcing ICT human resources in the educational sector; modernization and interoperability of national ICT systems	382,076	127,466	120,070	134,540	0

ANNEX 1.B: YEAR-BASED EDUCATION BUDGET SCHEDULING (2019-2022) AND SPECIFIC MEASURES

Code	Strategic objective/Programs/Specific objectives/Measures	Value - ,000 RON	Value/years - ,000 RON			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
1.	Strategic Objective No. 1	87,567,670	23,230,010	21,058,158	21,425,263	21,854,239
1.1.	Programme 1.1: Ensuring that all children have access to education and to quality education	2,818,670	1,202,001	704,066	553,481	359,122
1.1.1.1	Stimulation of participation to early child care and education by means of counselling services offered to parents, parental education and mentoring programmes, addressed predominantly to parents from underprivileged areas.	109,576	89,934	11,785	7,857	0
1.1.1.2	Ensuring financial incentives for teachers and placements of child-carers in rural/underprivileged areas.	13,308	10,923	1,431	954	0
1.1.2.1	Revision of the ECEC framework, to include also the 0-3-year-old age group and to improve the organization and functioning of ECEC services	4,600	4,600	0	0	0
1.1.2.2	Design of initial formation/conversion programmes, as well as continuous training programmes for the ECEC personnel (professors for pre-school education, child-care teachers, school counsellors, care and specialized personnel, directors, inspectors).	49,680	40,775	5,343	3,562	0
1.1.3.1	National evaluation of all schools	0	0	0	0	0
1.1.3.2	School inspections	1,014,609	242,520	249,795	257,288	265,006
1.1.3.3	Mentoring services	0	0	0	0	0
1.1.3.4	Establishing a system of vocational training at the workplace	147,079	132,620	7,575	4,152	2,732
1.1.3.5	School curriculum revision	21,337	5,100	5,253	5,411	5,573
1.1.3.6	Providing school manuals	505	125	125	125	130
1.1.4.1	Pupils' participation in the national evaluations and exams	349,088	87,550	90,176	85,681	85,681
1.1.4.2	Pupils' participation in the PISA international evaluation	7,200	0	0	7,200	0
1.1.4.3	Supporting excellence by means of additional funding of accredited educational institutions	762,114	320,431	260,432	181,251	0

Code	Strategic objective/Programs/Specific objectives/Measures	Value - ,000 RON	Value/years - ,000 RON			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
1.1.5.1	Supporting the construction of kindergartens (loan of 80.75mill. EUR)	339,574	267,423	72,151	0	0
1.2.	Programme 1.2: Improving participation in primary and secondary education; all the pupils attending mandatory education should graduate	84,513,210	21,876,433	20,301,829	20,839,831	21,495,117
1.2.1.1	Direct basic funding of schools	81,685,910	20,602,087	19,781,303	20,320,044	20,982,476
1.2.1.2	Meal subsidies for students with special educational needs enrolled in education	510	127	127	128	128
1.2.1.3	Social protection measures	1,630,378	890,000	241,283	246,832	252,263
1.2.1.4	Scholarships for students living in Moldova, as well as other Romanian living abroad	1,000	250	250	250	250
1.2.2.1	Supply of methodology, ex-ante impact studies and legal framework for "after school" programmes.	0	0	0	0	0
1.2.2.2	Providing adequate <i>school after school</i> -type programmes	133,392	109,481	14,346	9,564	0
1.2.2.3	Developing the prevention and monitoring capacity of segregation in schools	950,000	200,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
1.2.2.4	Providing training for professors in the scope of systems of prevention and intervention for the detection of children at risk of non-promotion and dropout	15,332	12,584	1,649	1,099	0
1.2.2.5	Completion and support of existing guidance initiatives for pupils in and outside the education system	26,688	21,904	2,870	1,914	0
1.2.3.1	Supporting the construction of schools	30,000	30,000	0	0	0
1.2.3.2	Supporting the modernization of school laboratories	40,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
1.3.	Programme 1.3: Reintegration of early school leavers in the education system	235,790	151,576	52,263	31,951	0
1.3.1.1	Supporting the provision of the Second Chance programme (at all levels, including inferior secondary, with traineeships), available nationally, especially for risk groups	71,584	69,884	1,500	200	0
1.3.1.2	Elaboration of certain relevant and alternative teaching/learning materials, adapted to the profile of SC students	94,434	24,427	43,259	26,748	0
1.3.2.1	Supporting the graduates of the Second Chance programme for the integration on the labor market or furtherance of education	0	0	0	0	0
1.3.2.2	Elaboration of mechanisms for the encouragement of adult students to participate to the Second Chance programmes (vouchers, child-care services, flexible schedules etc.)	69,772	57,265	7,504	5,003	0

Code	Strategic objective/Programs/Specific objectives/Measures	Value - ,000 RON	Value/years - ,000 RON			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
2.	Strategic Objective No. 2	19,809,106	5,878,458	4,551,431	4,644,138	4,735,079
2.1.	Programme 2.1: Improvement of participation in tertiary education	18,055,789	5,232,504	4,190,254	4,276,620	4,356,411
2.1.1.1	Promotion of institutional diversity. Classification of higher education establishments depending on their mission and social roles. Offering various financial incentives and budgetary allocations for each university (type) class.	0	0	0	0	0
2.1.1.2	Extension of dual training at the level of the technical tertiary education.	0	0	0	0	0
2.1.2.1	Supporting exempting honorary students from paying tuition fees; scholarships for students with the best results	6,983,203	1,886,770	1,664,548	1,699,942	1,731,943
2.1.2.2	Supplementing the exemption from the payment of taxes for students, based on merit, with a programme for the support of those in need – social grants, especially at institutional level	9,902,651	2,652,484	2,361,347	2,417,644	2,471,176
2.1.2.3	Extended social support measures – accommodation and meal subsidies - additional funding.	642,209	167,961	162,922	158,034	153,292
2.1.2.4	Implementing a program of loans for students (ensuring financing, as well as regulation at national level)	0	0	0	0	0
2.1.2.5	Encouraging the attraction of students from underrepresented groups (mature students, aged between 25-29 years, as well as ethnic Romanians living abroad, as well as underprivileged groups)	520,023	517,586	1,437	1,000	0
2.1.2.6	Increasing information transparency and offering guidance with regards to educational opportunities and results, which would be the basis of choosing the educational path and help reduce educational dropout	7,703	7,703	0	0	0
2.1.3.1	Construction of dorms and canteens for the students	0	0	0	0	0
2.2.	Programme 2.2: Promoting high quality, flexible and labor market-linked study programmes	1,325,409	585,664	241,227	245,514	253,004
2.2.1.1	Revision of regulations by the ministry and ARACIS, as body regulating the assessment of studies programmes	0	0	0	0	0
2.2.1.2	Evaluation of doctoral studies	37,569	37,569	0	0	0
2.2.1.3	The exercise of institutional reporting of data associated of quality indicators, based on branches of science, as to allocate additional excellency funding	50,000	15,000	10,000	12,000	13,000

Code	Strategic objective/Programs/Specific objectives/Measures	Value - ,000 RON	Value/years - ,000 RON			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
2.2.1.4	Promotion of excellence by the awarding of doctoral study grants	950,608	251,363	226,227	233,014	240,004
2.2.1.5	Development of financial incentives for institutions creating new programmes for the acquisition of transversal and entrepreneurship skills	287,232	281,732	5,000	500	0
2.3.	Programme 2.3: Strategic commitment to the economic sector	427,908	60,290	119,950	122,004	125,664
2.3.1.1	Development of a national research programme for innovation and entrepreneurship, in order to encourage the dialogue between education and the sectors of economy	1,290	1,290	0	0	0
2.3.1.2	Curriculum revision, aimed at the focus on the labor market required skills and competences	211,809	28,750	59,225	61,002	62,832
2.3.1.3	Institutional development fund	211,809	28,750	59,225	61,002	62,832
2.3.1.4	Appointment of a contact person for contact with the business environment at the level of each institutions; universities and other post-secondary education establishments develop plans as to consolidate relationships with the business community	0	0	0	0	0
2.3.1.5	Elaboration of an inter-institutional protocol on the implementation of a traceability system between the educational system and the labor market	0	0	0	0	0
2.3.1.6	Financial support for digitalization and development of ICT programmes	3,000	1,500	1,500	0	0
3.	Strategic Objective No. 3	1,498,596	1,055,352	213,898	128,915	100,431
3.1.	Programme 3.1: Facilitating access, increasing participation, developing innovation and cooperation in the field of vocational training	845,880	495,480	145,278	104,691	100,431
3.1.1.1	Supporting participation to education and vocational training by payment of scholarships for all students enrolled in such training programmes (vocational scholarship)	362,062	86,543	89,139	91,813	94,567
3.1.1.2	Support for the payment of accommodation and meal costs for young people from rural and disadvantaged areas, Roma people and people with disabilities or belonging to other vulnerable groups enrolled in initial vocational training in school campuses/vocational and technical schools/educational units who offer education to pupils in dual system.	23,013	5,634	5,720	5,795	5,864
3.1.2.1	Development and implementation of a promotion and awareness strategy with regards to the benefits of career development, participation to initial and continuous vocational training and recognition of non-formal and informal learning	13,022	13,022	0	0	0

Code	Strategic objective/Programs/Specific objectives/Measures	Value - ,000 RON	Value/years - ,000 RON			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
3.1.2.2	Campaign promoting the vocational training among fifth to eighth graders, as well as the development of working tools to define the profile of the lower secondary school graduate compatible with the option for initial vocational training	296,141	262,028	33,613	500	0
3.1.2.3	Development of the coordination and co-operation of various stakeholders at national, regional and local levels	0	0	0	0	0
3.1.2.4	Supply of training programmes for professionals with responsibilities relating to the provision of information, guidance and career advice	151,643	128,253	16,806	6,583	0
3.1.2.5	Extending the learning methods which develop entrepreneurial skills of the participants to the training programs through the exercise company		0	0	0	0
3.2.	Programme 3.2: Improvement of relevance and quality of vocational training	416,346	364,456	40,188	11,703	0
3.2.1.1	Updating/Drafting new occupational standards/vocational training standards	9,268	4,634	4,634	0	0
3.2.1.2	Drafting of the curriculum and of the training curricular materials for every field of qualification in the initial vocational training system	9,268	4,634	4,634	0	0
3.2.1.3	Performance of regular studies and research to anticipate the needs of qualifications and skills required on the labor market and updating the strategic planning documents of the IVT	2,316	1,158	1,158	0	0
3.2.1.4	Creation of a national monitoring mechanism of professional insertion of graduates of the education and vocational training system	6,950	3,475	3,475	0	0
3.2.2.1	Development of a quality assurance mechanism for learning on the job, including through monitoring of practical training agreements	0	0	0	0	0
3.2.2.2	Development of a mechanism for the monitoring, assessment and revision of the quality of vocational and technical education and of education in dual system	9,268	4,634	4,634	0	0
3.2.2.3	Development of a quality assurance mechanism for initial vocational training	0	0	0	0	0
3.2.2.4	Development of a mechanism for the certification of learning results in vocational and technical education	9,268	4,634	4,634	0	0
3.2.2.5	Founding and developing a national center for the continuous training of teachers, trainers, external evaluators and tutors	128,335	105,331	13,803	9,202	0

Code	Strategic objective/Programs/Specific objectives/Measures	Value - ,000 RON	Value/years - ,000 RON			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
3.2.2.6	Developing and offering continuous training programmes for trainers, teachers and the personnel of the economic operators involved in initial vocational training	25,147	19,430	3,216	2,501	0
3.2.2.7	Development of mechanisms for public and private funding, as well as of sector cooperation structures/partnerships in the field of vocational training	0	0	0	0	0
3.2.3.1	Supporting the modernization of vocational and technical educational units and of workshops	216,526	216,526	0	0	0
3.3.	Programme 3.3. Access and incentives for participation to learning throughout life: quality and relevance; partnerships for better information	236,370	195,416	28,432	12,522	0
3.3.1.1	Funding for the increase of demand in lifelong learning	0	0	0	0	0
3.3.1.2	Founding of Community Centers for Permanent Learning (CCPL) for the implementation of lifelong learning at community level	115,500	94,796	12,422	8,281	0
3.3.1.3	Development of learning methods which help develop entrepreneurial competences	3,500	2,500	500	500	0
3.3.1.4	Development of quality assurance mechanisms for the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning	4,400	3,000	1,000	400	0
3.3.1.5	Revising the methodology for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning	100,000	80,000	15,000	5,000	0
3.3.1.6	Developing a network of centers for the assessment and certification of earlier acquired knowledge	115,000	100,000	10,000	5,000	0
3.3.1.7	Training the staff in charge of the recognition and validation of non-formal and informal learning.	8,670	7,116	932	622	0
3.3.1.8	Extending mutual learning and exchange of good practices	2,400	1,400	500	500	0
3.3.2.1	Supporting the participation in European mobility programmes	2,400	1,400	500	500	0
4.	Strategic Objective No. 4	568,548	60,398	95,000	108,150	305,000
4.1.	Programme 4.1: Supporting students as to facilitate transition and access to higher education	568,548	60,398	95,000	108,150	305,000
4.1.1.1	Interventions at school level - non-competitive grants to poorly performing high schools	361,650	24,500	44,000	48,150	245,000
4.1.1.2	Revision of school curricula for the upper secondary education	12,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
4.1.1.3	Professional development for teachers and education establishment managers	0	0	0	0	0

Code	Strategic objective/Programs/Specific objectives/Measures	Value - ,000 RON	Value/years - ,000 RON			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
4.1.1.4	Revision of the assessment items of the national evaluation and baccalaureate exams and increase of CNEE institutional capacity	0	0	0	0	0
4.1.1.5	Assessment of the pupils' learning results at the end of tenth grade	0	0	0	0	0
4.1.1.6	Information and awareness campaigns on the importance of education	0	0	0	0	0
4.1.1.7	Actions at the level of universities and summer bridge programmes Non-competitive grant scheme for universities	64,966	10,966	16,000	19,000	19,000
4.1.1.8	Competitive grant scheme for universities – summer bridge programmes	64,966	10,966	16,000	19,000	19,000
4.1.1.9	Competitive grant scheme for universities – learning centers	64,966	10,966	16,000	19,000	19,000
5.	Strategic Objective No. 5. Consolidation of the institutional framework in the field of education, research and science	1,927,207	502,715	494,178	524,638	405,676
5.1.	Programme 5.1: Strengthening of the administrative capacity of sectoral policy management and implementation	1,545,131	375,249	374,108	390,098	405,676
5.1.1.1	Efficient and effective operation of the departments in the organizational structure of the MNE/Revision of organizational responsibilities and related procedures, to enable the improved drafting of the strategies and a problem-free implementation of the PSI	280,592	66,761	70,104	71,506	72,221
5.1.1.2	Ensuring performant management in the MNE, in accordance with existing objectives and legal regulations, in order to ensure economic, efficient and effective management of public funds, through the application of the internal management control standards	7,213	7,213	0	0	0
5.1.2.1	Ensuring management which targets the increase of efficiency in using the MNE's budget/ Drafting of annual and multi-annual budget programmes for the whole use of the internal and external allocated funds	0	0	0	0	0
5.1.2.2	Development of financial mechanisms designed to decrease financing unpredictability and increase the fair distribution of finances across all geographical regions based on their specific needs	0	0	0	0	0
5.1.3.1	Human resources management and adaptation to the organization's needs	0	0	0	0	0
5.1.3.2	Professional training, learning and expertise for the specialized personnel within the ministry	10,547	10,547	0	0	0

Code	Strategic objective/Programs/Specific objectives/Measures	Value - ,000 RON	Value/years - ,000 RON			
			2019	2020	2021	2022
5.1.4.1	Transparency in the decision-making, public policy and legal framework drafting process, and free access to information of public interest	3,083	1,868	751	231	233
5.1.4.2	Operationalization of the public policy impact analyses and of the feedback loops in the drafting of ES policies	568	135	142	145	146
5.1.4.3	Inter-institutional collaboration and exchange of experience with relevant national and international organizations	0	0	0	0	0
5.1.4.4	Effective and efficient operation of the institutions subordinated to and coordinated by the MNE	1,240,128	287,725	302,111	317,216	333,076
5.1.4.5	Development of the capacity to analyze existing data and closely monitor the ESL evolution at a national, regional and local level, creating the foundation for specific and efficient policies based on documented evidence	3,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0
5.2.	Programme 5.2. Consolidation of ITC governance, cybersecurity and a strengthening of human resources in the educational sector ITC area; modernization and interoperability of national ITC systems	382,076	127,466	120,070	134,540	0
5.2.1.1	Development of the ITC infrastructure	23,000	7,000	9,000	7,000	0
5.2.1.2	Primary and progressive maintenance for the communications infrastructure; primary infrastructure: office equipment and software; large infrastructure - basic data center hardware and software (operating systems, virtualization, databases, etc.)	0	0	0	0	0
5.2.1.3	Modernization of the IT Schooling Management System	229,076	466	101,070	127,540	0
5.2.1.4	The National Education Portal – NEP – VL “Biblioteca Școlară Virtuală” (Virtual School Library)	130,000	120,000	10,000	0	0

ANNEX 2: INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN (SUMMARY TABLE)

Description of the objectives and indicators	Unit	Reference value (achieved in 2018)	Target 2019	Target 2022
Strategic Objective No. 1: Reduction and prevention of early school leaving, by promoting equal access to inclusive, quality education, at all the levels and forms of education				
Impact indicator No. 1.1: People who leave the education and training sector early (% of the 18-24-year-old population that completed, at most, lower secondary studies and was not involved in official education or training in the last 4 months prior to this survey)	%	16.4	15	10
Impact indicator No. 1.2: Poor reading performance rate among 15-year-old pupils	%	39	35	25
Impact indicator No. 1.3: Rate of graduation of upper secondary studies (share of high school graduates, with or without the baccalaureate exam, in a specific year, of the total population at the theoretical age of graduation specific to the related level of education)	%	81.47	85	87
Programme 1.1: Ensuring that all children have access to education and to quality education				
Result indicator 1.1.1: The children's rate of participation in early education (share of the population with ages ranging from 4 to 5 years, taking part in early education) ⁴⁷	%	85.5	87	95
Result indicator 1.1.2: Number of people from the ECEC trained	No. of teachers, care personnel trained	-		14500
Result indicator 1.1.3: Rate of lower secondary education graduation (eighth grade) ⁴⁹	%	80.7 (2016-2017)	86	92

⁴⁷ Reference in the school year 2013/2014.

⁴⁸ Eurostat code: tps00179

⁴⁹ Calculated based on data from the National Institute of Statistics by the Institute of Educational Sciences in the annual report on the condition of education

Description of the objectives and indicators		Unit	Reference value (achieved in 2018)	Target 2019	Target 2022
	Result indicator 1.1.4: Baccaureate exam participation rate of high school graduates ⁵⁰	%	79.3 (2016-2017)	84	91
	Result indicator 1.1.5: Annual number of rehabilitated schools	No.		700	1200
	Result indicator 1.1.6: Number of laboratories modernized every year	No.		420	600
Programme 1.2: Improving participation in primary and secondary education; all the pupils attending mandatory education should graduate					
	Result indicator 1.2.1: Gross rate of enrolment in primary and lower secondary education (6-14 years old) ⁵¹	%	88.3 (2017-2018)	92	95
	Result indicator 1.2.2: Gross rate of enrolment of pupils with ages ranging between 15 and 18 years ⁵²	%	85.3 (2017-2018)	85	92
	Result indicator 1.2.3: Rate of graduation of the baccaureate exam ⁵³	%	44 71.5% 2018	72	73
Programme 1.3: Reintegration of early school leavers in the education system					
	Result indicator 1.3.1. Number of teachers trained for the implementation of the SC program for primary education;		142		5000
	Number of schools who fulfil, either independently or in partnership with other educational units, the requirements to offer the SC program for primary education	No.	238		
	Result indicator 1.3.2: Number of trainees included yearly in the SC program for primary education	%	5832		9000

⁵⁰ Calculated by the Institute of Educational Sciences based on the data supplied by the National Institute of Statistics

⁵¹ Calculated based on the data of the National Institute of Statistics by the Institute of Educational Sciences in the annual report on the condition of education

⁵² National Institute of Statistics

⁵³ Calculated by the Institute of Educational Sciences based on data supplied by the National Institute of Statistics

Description of the objectives and indicators		Unit	Reference value (achieved in 2018)	Target 2019	Target 2022
	Number of trainees in the 16-24 age group included/school year, in the SC program for lower secondary education		10077		
Strategic Objective No. 2: The development of tertiary education, able to propel economic development and to promote social cohesion by laying the foundations of a knowledge-based society					
	Impact indicator No. 2.1: Share of higher education population among the 30-34-year-old population ⁵⁴	%	25.6	26	28
	Impact indicator No. 2.2: Extent of employment of tertiary education graduates (employment rate for the graduates with ages ranging from 20 to 34 years, with 1/3 years after graduation, who attended tertiary education (ISCED 5-8), who no longer attend education and training sessions) ⁵⁵	%	77	80	87
Programme 2.1: Improvement of participation in tertiary education					
	Result indicator 2.1.1: Share of higher education population among the population with ages ranging from 25 to 34 years ⁵⁶	%	25.5	27	31
	Result indicator 2.1.2: Share of the population living in rural areas and having completed tertiary education programmes among the 30-34-year-old population ⁵⁷	%	7.8	8.1	8,7
	Result indicator 2.1.3: Share of female population graduating tertiary education programmes in the field of sciences, mathematics and computer science ⁵⁸	%	3.1	4	4,7
	Result indicator 2.1.4: Number of dormitory buildings/eating halls built annually	No.		8	12

⁵⁴ Main indicator for the 2020 Agenda

⁵⁵ Eurostat indicator code *edat_ifse_24*

⁵⁶ Eurostat indicator code *edat_ifse_03*

⁵⁷ Eurostat indicator code *edat_ifs_9913*

⁵⁸ Eurostat indicator code *educ_uoe_grad03 (ISCEDF13 - F05) educ_uoe_grad03*

Description of the objectives and indicators		Unit	Reference value (achieved in 2018)	Target 2019	Target 2022
Programme 2.2: Promoting high quality, flexible and labor market-linked study programmes					
	Result indicator 2.2.1: Improving the visibility of research of higher education institutions (average Hirsch-index for the academic staff of HEIs)	No.	2	3	4
	Result indicator 2.2.2: Number of higher education programmes classified among the first 200 in the international classifications (for example, QS World University Rankings according to Subject)	No.	-	50	65
Programme 2.3: Strategic commitment to the economic sector					
	Result indicator: Employment rate of the graduates, with ages ranging from 25 to 34 years, within 1/3 years after graduating from the tertiary education system ⁵⁹	%	50.4	52	63
Strategic objective No. 3: Developing a vocational and technical educational system, adapted to the requirements of the labor market and of direct beneficiaries; improvement of learning participation throughout life					
	Impact indicator no. 3.1: Specific rate of enrollment in vocational education of youth aged 15-17 years, share of individuals aged 15-17 years who attend initial vocational education and training (ISCED 3-4), in the entire same-aged population ⁶⁰	%	11-12 (2017-2018)	13	18
	Impact indicator no. 3.2: Employment rate of young individuals aged 15-24 years, based on education levels (employment rates of share of employed young individuals aged 15 - 24 years, in the entire same-aged population) ⁶¹	%	24.5 (total-2017 Post-secondary)	25	27

⁵⁹ INSSE - AMG110I

⁶⁰ Eurostat Indicator code tps00053

⁶¹ Calculated based on data from the National Institute for Statistics by the Institute for Educational Sciences within the annual report regarding education status

Description of the objectives and indicators		Unit	Reference value (achieved in 2018)	Target 2019	Target 2022
			school ed. - 63.8 Vocational- 72.5 High school 29)		
	Impact indicator no. 3.3: Adult participation rate to education and vocational training (share of persons aged between 25 and 64 years who participate to education and training) ⁶²	%	0.9	4	12
Programme 3.1: Facilitating access, increasing participation, developing innovation and cooperation in the field of vocational training					
	Result indicator 3.1.1: Gross enrolment rate in vocational and post-secondary education (share of persons enrolled in vocational and post-secondary education of total population aged between 19 and 21 years) ⁶³	%	14.1	19.5	28
	Result indicator 3.1.2: Number of students enrolled in entrepreneurship programmes	No.	40,000	45,000	50,000
Programme 3.2: Improvement of relevance and quality of vocational training					
	Result indicator 3.2.1: Dropout rate in technological high schools and vocational education ⁶⁴	%	3% (2016-2017)	3	1,7 %
	Result indicator 3.2.2: Baccalaureate promotion rate of technological studies secondary school graduates ⁶⁵	%	47.5	55	65

⁶² Primary Indicator for 2020 Agenda

⁶³ Calculated based on data from the National Institute for Statistics by the Institute for Educational Sciences within the annual report regarding education status

⁶⁴ Calculated based on data from the National Institute for Statistics by the Institute for Educational Sciences within the annual report regarding education status

⁶⁵ Calculated based on data from the National Institute for Statistics by the Institute for Educational Sciences within the annual report regarding education status

Description of the objectives and indicators		Unit	Reference value (achieved in 2018)	Target 2019	Target 2022
Programme 3.3: Access and incentives for participation to learning throughout life: quality and relevance; partnerships for better information					
	Result indicator 3.3.1: Transition rate in vocational education ⁶⁶	%	17.1	16	25
	Result indicator 3.3.2: Annual number of students enrolled in vocational education programmes who attend international mobility internships	No.	2,800	3,700	4,600
Strategic Objective No. 4: The complete valorization of human capital toward an intelligent and sustainable development					
	Impact indicator no. 4.1: Baccaureate promotion rate (share of students promoting the Baccaureate exam in a certain year in relation to the number of exam participants)	%	67.8%	70%	75%
	Impact indicator no. 4.2: Higher education enrolment rate (ratio between the total student population enrolled in higher education establishments of the total population aged between 19 and 23 years)	%	31	33	37
Programme 4.1: Supporting students as to facilitate transition and access to higher education (ROSE project)					
	Result indicator: Mean graduation rate in high-schools supported by the projects	%	86.9	89	92
	Result indicator: The mean Baccaureate promotion rate in high-schools supported by the project	%	49.6	52	57
	Result indicator: The mean retention rate in the first year of tertiary education within universities supported by the project	%	82.3	82.5	85.5

⁶⁶ Calculated based on data from the National Institute for Statistics by the Institute for Educational Sciences within the annual report regarding education status

Description of the objectives and indicators		Unit	Reference value (achieved in 2018)	Target 2019	Target 2022
Strategic Objective No. 5: Consolidation of the administrative capacity					
	Impact indicator no. 5.1: Confidence, at internal and external level, in the MNE institution and its actions	%	n.a.	60%	60%
	Impact indicator no. 5.2: The absorption degree of available funds for the national education and science sector by means of EU Programmes	%	31%	40%	60%
	Impact indicator no. 5.3: Degree of confirmation with the State budget: the difference between the budget planned on January 1 and the budget planned and amended on December 31, current year	%	0.27%	0.20%	0.1%
	the difference between the budget planned on January 1 and the budgetary execution on December 31	%	2.57%	2.00%	1.00%
Programme 5.1: Consolidation of the administrative capacity for the management and implementation of sector policies					
Result 5.1.1: Consolidation of the structural and functional stability of MNE and the institutions found under its supervision/coordination					
	Result indicator: Number of annual amendments brought to the functional structure ⁶⁷	No./year	max.2	max.1	max.1
	Result indicator: The percentage index of employees in the public sector, which are actually employed within institutions/structures with functional responsibilities in the education, university and scientific research sector (reference level - 2014)	%	0.93%	0.93%	0.93%

⁶⁷The change shall mean any amendment of Resolution no. 725/2010 regarding the reorganization and functioning of the MARD and of certain subordinate structures, or of any regulation which cancels or replaces this Resolution (including the law in itself).

Description of the objectives and indicators		Unit	Reference value (achieved in 2018)	Target 2019	Target 2022
Result 5.1.2: Increasing the efficiency of policy elaboration in the SE sector, as well as of the implementation process					
	Result indicator: Penalties paid for: EAFRD in relation to total payments performed in the previous year	%	5.82%	0.0001%	0.0001
	ESF, in relation to total payments performed in the previous year	%	2.7%	0.0001%	0,0001
	Result indicator: Number of amendments at chapter level and negative rectifications of the State budget	No./year	30/year	25/year	20/year
Result 5.1.3: Increasing efficiency of MNE operation budget use					
	Result indicator: The percentage of management expense of the total annual MNE budget	%	14.84%	14.80%	14.70%
	Result indicator: Management expenses per MNE employee	RON/pers.	74,818	75,500	77,055
Programme 5.2: Consolidation of ITC governance, cyber security and strengthening human resources in the field of ITC in the educational sector; modernization and interoperability of national IT systems					

ANNEX 3: PROGRAMMES AND MEASURES THEREOF (SUMMARY TABLE)

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
Programme 1.1: Ensuring access to education and to a quality education for all children						
1.1.1.1	Stimulation of participation to early child care and education by means of counselling services offered to parents, parental education and mentoring programmes, addressed predominantly to parents from underprivileged areas. Its purpose is to increase the parents' level of awareness, especially among the Romani population and that in rural areas, with regards to the benefits of early education from childhood, and to available support systems. This measure shall be funded from the priority axis 6, specific objective 6.2 of the Human Capital Operational Programme.	No. of parents/no. of beneficiaries 0	7850	11500	11500	12500
1.1.1.2	Ensuring financial incentives for teachers and placements of child-carers in rural/underprivileged areas. Financial support for teachers and pre-school carers working in rural areas, as to increase the quality of the professional personnel and thus, the quality of the public service in these areas.	No. of teachers No. 0	350	850	850	870
1.1.2.1	Revision of the ECEC framework, as to include the 0-3 years age group, as well, and as to improve the organization and functioning the ECEC services. The measure has as purpose to revise and extend the legal framework as to ensure the early childhood education services, to subsequently develop the quality ensuring system for this level of education, with the purpose of supporting quality at national level, it being funded from the priority axis 6, specific objective 6.2 from the Human Capital Operational Programme.	The adopted quality assurance framework Nr. 0	0	1	1	1
1.1.2.2	Design of initial formation/conversion programmes, as well as continuous training programmes for the ECEC personnel (professors for pre-school education, child-care teachers, school counsellors, care and specialized personnel, directors, inspectors). The measure has as purpose the provision of professors qualified for the education of preschoolers, by means of initial training and during work, as to deliver high quality public education services to the community. This measure includes stimulating professor mobility by means of professional mobility schemes, as well as mentoring programmes. The measure is partially supported by the	No. of trained professors/Number of programmes Nr. 0	1200	1800	1800	2000

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	State budget, only for the training component, while the mobility schemes shall be financed by means of the priority axes 6.6 and 6.2 of the Human Capital Operational Programme.					
1.1.3.1	National assessment of all schools: The external assessment performed by the National Agency for Ensuring Quality in Pre-university Education, on the basis of a services agreement with the Ministry of Education	Number of schools	238	2500	3000	3700
1.1.3.3	Mentoring services: the purpose of the measure is to support schools by means of the School Inspectorates as to improve the quality of teaching and school management. The measure is funded through the School Inspectorates from the State budget.	Number of mentoring initiatives -				
1.1.3.2	School inspections	Number of visits	21 964	22500	22750	23500
1.1.3.4	Establishing a continuous vocational training system the purpose of the measure is the professionalization of the professor career by means of continuous development through the Teaching-staff Resource Centre and the Children’s Palaces (for extracurricular activities) of the Ministry of Education. The State budget funds for these institutions shall constitute financial aid, along with the funds from the Human Capital Programme, objective 6.2, within priority axis 6.	No. of continuous training programmes -	5000	6000	7000	8200
1.1.3.5	Revision of school curriculum: the measure has as purpose the elaboration of a new school curriculum for grades V-VIII, establishing work-groups for each thematic area, elaboration of proposals, supporting proposals at public consultation, their adoption. There is no separate financial allocation; the personnel costs are ensured through a percentage of the paid time. Achieved? Finalization of new syllabi for secondary school (118 syllabi for grades V-VIII), approved through OMNE no. 3393/ 28.02.2017	No. of established work groups No. of revised curricula -	25	35	40	53
1.1.3.6	Providing school manuals: the purpose of this measure is to establish the quality standards and public procurement procedures for the purchase and distribution of school manuals. Funded from the State budget.	No. of new manuals	50	55	60	65

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		No. of reprinted manuals				
1.1.4.1	Student attendance to national exams and assessments: as to assess the efficiency of school education at different levels, comprehensive national assessments are held in second, fourth and sixth grade, as well as national exams in eighth grade and the Bacalaureate exam at the end of upper secondary education. The students' attendance to these national assessments and exams is covered through the state budget	No. of students/Attendance rate No. 153000	143000	133000	133000	153000
1.1.4.2	Students' attendance at the international PISA assessment: A focus group of students aged 15 years participate to the PISA study as to assess the extent to which the students have gained the key knowledge and essential abilities for a complete participation within a modern society. The assessment focuses on reading, mathematics, sciences and problem resolution, and the results are compared at international level as to underline the efficiency of different national educational systems. Romania's participation to the PISA study shall be supported from the State budget. They have moved on to Programme 1 The assessment is performed periodically, every 3 years.	No. of students/ no. -		1500		
1.1.4.3	Supporting excellence by means of additional funding of accredited educational institutions: the purpose of this measure is supporting excellence in teaching, organizing school contests and awarding students with achievements at national and international contests.	No. of school contests - No. of centers of excellence	12 16	15 16	17 16	19 16
1.1.5.1	Supporting the construction of kindergartens History, context, purpose, types, geographical dispersion Value of the project, according to the Loan Agreement with C.E.D.B. - EUR 80.75 million ECER objectives: construction (only new buildings) of kindergartens and equipping them with furniture. According to the C.E.D.B. agreement, only kindergartens with normal hours with 2, 3 and 4 group rooms.	No. of kindergartens 175	40	47	380	

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
Programme 1.2: Increasing attendance to primary and secondary education, and all students graduating standard compulsory education						
1.2.1.1	Basic school funding: The purpose of the measure is to provide public education services at the level of the primary and secondary education level through basic funding, according to art. 104 of National Education Law no. 1/2011 and art. 39, paragraphs (1) and (2) under Emergency Ordinance no. 90/2017 regarding certain fiscal-budgetary measures, the amendment and completion of certain normative acts and prorogation of certain terms, which stipulates the fact that starting with 2018, the funding of expenses with salaries, bonuses, allowances and other salary rights in money, established by law, shall be ensured for state school education establishments from the State budget, through the budget of the Ministry of National Education. The budgetary loans associated to the expenses provided under para. (1) are distributed by the Ministry of National Education to school inspectorates as to be distributed per education establishments. The basic funding is an allowance per student, the local authorities may contribute with additional funds to the basic funding. The measure is destined to support vast education attendance and equal chances for children.	No. of schools No. 11078	11078	11100	11135	11175
		No. of students No. 3,000,318	2,922,964	2,888,519		
1.2.1.2	Meal subsidies for students with special educational needs enrolled in education: the measure supports the attendance of special educational needs children enrolled in conventional education, by means of direct payments, in money, to their families as to subsidize the child's meal. The students enrolled in special education institutions already receive a hot meal, while the special needs students in mass education do not benefit from the same measure. This measure aims at ensuring that special education needs children in mass education have the same rights as those within special schools.	No. of students Nr.0	100,000	130,000	150,000	175,000
1.2.1.3	Social protection measures: the social protection measures aim at the participation to education of underprivileged children, with low income, by means of compensating a part of their personal costs as to attend school. These measures include the money programme for high-school (scholarships for students with low income attending high-school), Euro 200 (financial incentive supporting the purchase of a new computer), the school supplies programme (offers a basic package of school supplies at the beginning of every school year), deduction of students'	No. of beneficiaries of school supplies in the Euro 200 programme for Schools No.	44792	45000	45000	47000
			12041	13000	13000	13500
			555234	550000	550000	555000

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	transportation costs, the schools programme (both funded by the local authorities, with financial aid from the State budget)	60659 17086 700000				
1.2.1.4	Scholarships for students living in Moldova, as well as other Romanians living abroad: The measure's purpose is to encourage Romanians living abroad to attend the Romanian educational system by offering a scholarship granted by the Romanian state.	No. of scholarships No. 5000	5000	5200	5400	5750
1.2.2.1	Providing the methodology, ex-ante impact studies and the legal framework for the "school-after-school" type programmes: measure which aims at gathering proof and analyzing premises for an efficient delivery of school after school-type services. This addresses those creating policies at the level of the ministry and is implemented from the State budget	Adopted methodology No. 0	1	0	0	0
1.2.2.2	Providing adequate school after school-type programmes: The purpose of the measure is to facilitate school graduation for students at risk of educational failure by providing certain remediation and extra-curricular activities as to develop key competences. This shall be funded from the State budget, as well as by means of axis 6, specific objective 6.2 of the Human Capital Operational Programme.	No. of students No. 0	8000	10000	10000	11000
1.2.2.3	Developing the prevention and monitoring capacity of segregation in schools: The measure aims at supporting schools in order for them to become inclusive and directly refers to the provisions under art. 107 of National Education Law no. 1/2011. This measure shall be funded from the priority axis 6, specific objective 6.2 of the Human Capital Operational Programme.	No. of projects No. 0	400	670	670	700
1.2.2.4	Providing training for professors in the scope of early childhood education systems, prevention and intervention for the detection of children at risk of non-promotion and dropout: The measure has the purpose of developing the professors' competences with regards to early warning and approach of students at risk of non-promotion and educational failure, and it shall be implemented from the priority axis 6, specific objective 6.2 of the Human Capital Operational Programme.	No. of beneficiaries No. 0	4000	6000	6000	6000

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
1.2.2.5	The completion and support of existing counselling initiatives for students within and outside of the educational system: The purpose of the measure is to develop counselling, support and mediation services in schools, of educational and professional orientation, especially for at risk students. This shall include funding from the County Centers for Educational Resources and Assistance, through the County Council, as well as by means of dedicated funding through priority axis 6, specific objective 6.2 from the Human Capital Operational Programme.	No. of beneficiaries No. 0	15000	25000	25000	25500
1.2.3.1	Supporting school construction By means of NPLD, approved by means of GEO 28/2013, with subsequent amendments and completions, investment works are funded for state school educational establishments. By means of the Collaboration Protocol no. 3152/8070/15.01.2015, concluded between MRDPA and MNECS, it was established that MNE shall offer support to MRDPA with regards to identifying the investment issues with which the school educational establishments are confronted. As such, MNE shall collect, with the aid of the SIIR computer application (SIIR - Romanian Education Integrated Computer System), the data regarding the material basis of the existing school educational establishments (buildings, halls etc.). MRDPA shall establish the priority procedures and shall fund the investment works. Within the two stages of the National Programme for Local Development, a number of 3386 state school educational establishments were included.	No. of schools built No. of rehabilitated schools				
1.2.3.2	Supporting the modernization of school laboratories	No. of modernized laboratories				
Programme 1.3. Reintegration within the educational system of persons who left school early						
1.3.1.1	Supporting the provision of the Second Chance programme (at all levels, including inferior secondary, with traineeships), available nationally, especially for risk groups <i>Within the project Relevant curriculum, open education for all (CRED), with a duration of implementation of 4 years, will be made a revision of the methodologies, framework plans and school programs for the Second Chance program. At the same time, an analysis of the program's</i>	Amended/completed SC (Second Chance) methodology for the extension of		4000	4000	

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	impact is targeted, to identify the factual situation and propose recommendations for the program's improvement.	SC programmes in all counties Number of individuals included in the SC program for primary education Number of individuals included in the SC program for gymnasium education	5832 10077	8000	8000	4000 8000
	Elaboration of certain relevant and alternative teaching/learning materials, adapted to the profile of SC students Within the project <i>Relevant curriculum, open education for all (CRED)</i> , with a duration of implementation of 4 years, will be correlated the school plans and programs with the new approaches of the curriculum from the general system of education, focused on the key skills, for the Second Chance program.	Number of teachers trained for the SC program for primary education	142			
	Supporting graduates of the Second Chance programme to continue their education in order to integrate on the labor market	Support measures for graduates of SC programmes as to integrate on the labor market/continue studies				

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	Elaboration of mechanisms for the encouragement of adult students to participate to the Second Chance programmes (vouchers, child-care services, flexible schedules etc.)	Social scholarships Free school supplies for SC students				
Programme 2.1: Improving tertiary education attendance						
	<p>Promotion of institutional diversity. Classification of higher education establishments depending on their mission and social roles. Offering various financial incentives and budgetary allocations for each university (type) class.</p> <p>This measure is currently in progress: The Draft Methodology for the assessment of universities with the purpose of institutional classification and ranking of academic programmes has been posted on the www.edu.ro website, during 03.01.2018 - 03.02.2018, for public debate, following that the recruited experts to contribute with inputs, revisions, comments to the preliminary version of the Methodology, submitted by the World Bank in December 2017. The GR draft, containing this methodology, shall be piloted at the level of the universities. As a result of the pilot and of the debates, the draft GR regarding the approval of the Methodology for the assessment of universities with the purpose of institutional classification and ranking of academic programmes shall be finalized and published in the Official Journal. The Methodology shall be implemented and the institutional classification and academic programmes' ranking shall be finalized. (M.D.)</p>	<p>GR regarding the approval of the Methodology for the assessment of universities with the purpose of institutional classification and ranking of academic programmes. (M.D.)</p> <p>Implementation of the Methodology until the finalization of the institutional classification and ranking of academic programmes. (M.D.)</p>	1	-	89	-

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
2.1.1.2	<p>Expansion of dual-training at the level of tertiary technical education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The analysis of the possibility of expanding dual-training at the level of tertiary education in the technical field Encouraging the creation of non-university tertiary colleges <p>This measure aims at contributing to the development of a dual education and training system, which could become an alternative educational route for persons who have not passed the Baccalaureate exam and should have a chance of continuing their studies.</p> <p>To the extent to which these educational programmes would co-exist at tertiary level, both within university organizations and non-university organizations, these could constitute a solid basis for promoting access to education, especially in areas where the studies level is low. This measure could be funded within the Human Capital Operational Programme, Axis 6, Thematic objective 10.</p> <p>According to regulations in force, non-university tertiary education is organized under post-secondary education schools, within high-schools or colleges within accredited higher education establishments and are authorized to function temporarily, periodically accredited and assessed in accordance with the law, by ARACIP (National Agency for Quality Assurance in School Education).</p>	No. of universities with colleges carrying out non-university tertiary technical education	4	12	15	23
2.1.2.1	<p>Supporting exempting honorary students from paying tuition fees; scholarships for students with the best results</p> <p>This measure has the purpose of granting financial aid as to increase access to tertiary education based on merit (depending on the different types of admissions established by higher education establishments). In the past years, the state allotted, on average, approximatively 62,000 places funded from the budget for first year admission to Bachelor programmes and 35,000 for Master's programmes. This measure is funded from the State budget, the basic funding for both Bachelor programmes and Master's programmes. The regulations from 2017 are added to those above, according to which, students with excellent results may benefit from performance scholarships throughout the entire duration of the academic year, from funds allocated by MNE. The students' eligibility is established by means of internal regulations, at institutional level.</p>	Number of funded places (Bachelor's) for each year No.	62,000	59,000	58,000	57,000

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
2.1.2.2	<p>Supplementing exemption from tuition fees of students based on merit with a programme destined to support those in need - social scholarships, mainly at institutional level</p> <p>Research shows that persons who come from underprivileged social environments have a significantly lower educational level than the others; as such, the student scholarship system granted based on merit must be supplemented by a financial aid programme, aid which is granted based on need, as to ensure the constant attendance to academic programmes, even for those persons who do not constantly achieve a high academic performance level. This measure is funded through the basic funding of tertiary education, as well as by means of social assistance measures - social scholarships. Affirmative actions, materialized by allocating a number of places for Romani students and graduates of rural high-schools within higher education establishments, must be more sustained. Furthermore, the scholarships must be granted based on needs, especially to students from low-income families or underprivileged environments.</p> <p>Moreover, according to regulations issued by MNE, the students may cumulate the social aid scholarship with the performance scholarship, throughout the entire duration of the academic year.</p>	<p>New methodology for granting scholarships</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Number of social scholarships</p> <p>Number of studies scholarships</p> <p>Number of merit scholarships</p>	<p>1</p> <p>14 214</p> <p>49 149</p> <p>14 749</p>	-	-	-
2.1.2.3	<p>Extended social aid measures - subsidies for accommodations and meals - complementary funding</p> <p>This measure aims at offering universities sufficient resources as to continue to develop their services for students, and that is accommodations and meal, and, as such, to support higher education attendance, as well as student national mobility and access for students who come from rural areas or cities without tertiary education establishments. This measure is funded from the State budget, by means of tertiary education complementary funding.</p>	<p>Methodological framework for funding public universities</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Number of granted individual subsidies</p> <p>-</p>	1	-	-	-

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		No. of supported students No. 150000	150000	200000	220000	230000
2.1.2.4	<p>Implementation of a student loan programme (ensuring funding, as well as national regulation)</p> <p>Student loans have long been on the policy agenda, even before the adoption of the Education Law in 2011. However, this programme was never made operational due to the reluctance of the banks with regards to offering such a financial aid, mainly because of lack of official support from the State for such a loan scheme. As state-guaranteed loans are currently successfully used in other fields, such as the housing market, a state-guaranteed loan scheme for students could be implemented as to support financial loans granted to students. The loans could also include a binding contract for the students contracting the loans, by means of which the students undertake that they shall finalize their current academic programme within a reasonable time frame.</p>	Governmental strategy regarding subsidizing the student loan programme No. -	-	1	1	1
	<p>Encouraging the attraction of students from underrepresented groups (mature students, aged between 25-29 years, as well as ethnic Romanians living abroad, as well as underprivileged groups)</p> <p>This measure aims at offering incentives by means of the basic funding methodology for universities, as to attract students who come from underprivileged environments, non-traditional students and other underrepresented groups. The current methodology for fund allocation to universities already includes an indicator referring to this measure; as such, this measure could be developed further. The funds could come from basic institutional funding per student.</p>	Attendance rate of non-traditional students in tertiary education (correspondent to the 25-29 years age group, which shall become the 30-34 years age group in 2020) % 0	3.91	4.53	4.53	5

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		Scholarships for ethnic Romanians				
		Total number of students from underrepresented groups (from rural environments, Romani students, special needs students, mature students etc.) enrolled in Romania's universities. No. 0		4500 2415 1274 257126	4500	4700
2.1.2.6	<p>Increasing information transparency and offering guidance with regards to educational opportunities and results, which would be the basis of choosing the educational path and help reduce educational dropout</p> <p>This measure aims at supporting the current efforts made by the ministry as to offer the public free access to data and information, political decision factors and potential beneficiaries of the educational system. This measure shall include quality Barometers, student monitoring studies, Eurostudent and Eurograduate studies; the measure shall be funded through the Human Capital Operational Programme, Axis 6.</p>	Public information platforms and access data to those based on independent hearing audits No. of opinion studies/investigations 0	0	1	1	1
2.1.3.1	<p>By means of the National Programme for public or social interest Constructions - Construction of Student Housing, the State Higher Education Institutions Sub-programme, managed by the</p>	No. of student housing buildings				

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	<p>National Investment Company, the construction works of 30 student housing buildings belonging to state higher education institutions are being funded. The list of beneficiary universities has been approved by means of OMDRAPFE no. 6402/2017. From the initial list, SNSPA (National School for Political and Administrative Studies) (land not identified) and ANEF (placement not identified) were excluded, and 2 other universities were proposed: Oradea University and Constanta Maritime University.</p> <p>In 2017, these submitted requests for funding for 30 student housing buildings, which amount to a total of 10,244 housing places for 30 state higher education institutions, from 13 academic centers. For 12 of the 30 objectives, design services are in the progress of being contracted (public procurement) as to draft the technical documentation for the approval of indicators at feasibility study level (presenting an advance: Bacau Vasile Alecsandri Univ. Arad Univ, Pitesti Univ., Constanta Ovidius University, Dunarea de Jos Univ., Ploiesti OGU (UPG), Timisoara UASVM (USAMV), Alba Iulia 1 December 1918 University, Tg. Mures MFU (UMF), Brasov Transilvania Univ., Timisoara Polytechnic University and Suceava Stefan cel Mare University).</p> <p>In the year 2018, the procurement procedures shall be initiated for the design services as to draft the technical documentation for the approval of the technical-economic indicators for the remaining 18 objectives and the technical-economic indicators shall be approved for the 12 investment objectives, and as such the public procurement procedures shall be initiated for contracting execution works.</p>	No. of cafeterias				
Programme 2.2: Promoting high quality studies programmes, flexible and correlated with the labor market						
	<p>Revision of regulations by the ministry and ARACIS, as body regulating the assessment of studies programmes.</p> <p>In 2017, Government Resolution no. 915 was approved, which proposes the amendment of the Methodology for external assessment, Standards, Reference standards and the list of performance indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality-Assurance in Higher education (ARACIS). These standards have been amended in 2015, at the Erevan Conference and have been assumed by all 48 countries in the European Higher Education Area. Amending the Methodology has the purpose of: a) Supporting the strengthening of the bond between the components and participants to the academic community's life, faculty, non-faculty personnel, students,</p>	Methodological frameworks for accreditation and external quality assessment No. 0	1	0	0	0

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	<p>administrative personnel and other interested actors, as to ensure the quality of education, as well as beneficiaries in all sectors of the economic and social life as to successfully integrate graduates into the professional life; b) Agreeing upon the standards for education quality assessment within higher education with the new European standards; (EXAMPLES: increasing the students' role in assessments, standards and performance indicators which support teaching, learning and assessments focusing on the student; increasing the level of independence of the assessments); c) Allowing the process of making compatible the assessment procedures with new recent legislative amendments, for example the master's degree fields assessment.</p> <p>Maintaining the quality of ARACIS as an agency registered with the European Registry of quality-assurance in higher education agencies (EQAR), requirement stipulated by means of Government Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2005 regarding education quality assurance, as it has been approved with amendments through Law no. 87/2006 as a requirement, ARACIS is conditioned by adapting the Methodology to the new ESG-2015.</p> <p>The regulation and standardization of national higher education competences and qualifications exist as to promote the analysis of learning results within comparable curricula, as they are delivered by different providers, beneficiaries, employers, with regards to the obtained learning competences and results. Therefore, the purpose of this activity is to concentrate on the mechanisms destined to increase curriculum relevance, respectively increase the employment capacity and of professional integration of university graduates, thus answering the citizens' expectations, those of the graduates and their families, as well as the business environment.</p>					
2.2.1.2	<p>Assessment of doctoral studies</p> <p>By means of project SIPOCA 16 - QAFIN, a draft-Work version of the recommendations regarding the methodology for the assessment of post-graduate studies was created: Doctoral programmes. After the ruling of Romania's Constitutional Court on the matter of the Draft Law regarding the approval of GEO no. 96/2016. The Methodology for the assessment of doctoral schools shall be put up for debate.</p> <p>By means of the Human Capital Operational Programme, the Priority Axis Education and Competences, OS6.8, OS 6.9, the MNE intends to submit a project which aims at Rendering Operational the National System for Quality-Assurance of University Doctoral Studies in Romania by assessing 210 doctoral schools in the country. The assessment shall be performed by an</p>	Elaborated legal framework		1	210	

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	external quality-assurance agency based on a methodology which shall aim at, according to NEL: (a) the performance of the doctoral school and the institutional capacity of the IOUDS (IOSUD) of which the doctoral school is part (assessed by the external agency's experts), (b) the quality of the research (assessed by the NCSR (CNCS)) and (c) the quality of the human resources (assessed by the NCCUTDC (CNATDCU)). The assessment of the doctoral schools shall be performed in 2 stages: (1) auto-assessment and (2) assessment visit on behalf of the experts (external assessment), in accordance with provisions under the Methodology regarding the authorization, accreditation and periodical assessment of doctoral schools, based on fields, approved through GR.					
2.2.1.3	<p>The exercise of institutional reporting of data associated of quality indicators, based on branches of science, as to allocate additional excellency funding</p> <p>As is specified in the National Education Law art. 216, the State's role is to establish a programme studies hierarchy and to use financial incentives to encourage and support quality. Therefore, it is important that public resources be invested in the annual assessment of the studies programme and to use additional funding mechanism as to direct resources toward where the higher quality levels are recorded. The national assessment with purpose of elaborating the rankings shall be funded from the State budget and from the Human Capital and Administrative Capacity Operational Programmes.</p>	No. of assessed branches of science / No. -	480	480	500	530
2.2.1.4	<p>Establishing an initial vocational training system: the purpose of the measure is the funding of Teaching master's programmes as to provide well-trained faculty, including financial incentives for students enrolled in such programmes. Financially supported from the State budget and the Human Capital Programme, specific objective 6.2 within priority axis 6.</p> <p>The purpose is to render operational the teaching master's by means of legislative measures regarding the increase of attractiveness, so that in July 2018, universities shall have all the necessary instruments to prepare the accreditation files for the Teaching Master's Programmes (ARACIS) and to registered them within RNCIS (National Registry for Higher Education Certification) (ANC -National Certification Authority). As such, applications may be submitted for the teaching master's starting with the academic year 2019-2020.</p> <p>Actions to be undertaken:</p>	No. of programmes -				

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislative amendments - Extension of ARACIS professional standards for faculty functions/teaching master's from the Educational Sciences field to the other study fields - Elaboration of competences for the teaching career (ANC) Elaboration of the National Curriculum Plan					
		No. of professors -				
2.2.1.5	<p>Promoting excellence by granting doctoral studies grants</p> <p>Excellence in research in higher education is promoted by funding the third Bologna cycle, granting priority to the fields and universities registering the best performances. The doctoral studies should be funded primarily based on merit; these have the highest impact when coordinated by the institutions with the highest degree of confidence. It is important that doctoral studies be funded at a level which would allow for the greatest impact, however, simultaneously, it is essential that funding be granted only to institutions which have the capacity to offer authentic doctoral programmes. In January 2018, the Order of the minister of national education was issued which aims at including academic ethics and integrity courses within the curriculum plans, for all university studies programmes held by higher education institutions within the national education system.</p> <p>In its essence, this normative act stipulates, as of the academic year 2018-2019, the requirement of academic ethics and integrity courses for master's and doctoral university studies, as it is within these university studies that scientific creation and research have the majority weight. The provision under the abovementioned order comes to ensure, in a structural manner, for future classes of students, as of the first year of studies, knowledge in its essence; this normative act provides the requirement of university courses as of the academic year 2018-2019. In the context of those previously presented, the order completes the existing normative framework which, until now, stipulated only the requirement of scientific works assessment under the aspect of academic ethics, without having previously created, imperatively, the necessary competences for those drafting such works.</p>	No. of doctoral studies grants No. 9,766	9671	9700	9700	10000

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	<p>Developing financial incentives for institutions which are considered to have developed new programmes with a very high potential in the sense of developing transversal and entrepreneurial competences</p> <p>Increasing the quality of the studies programmes, including by optimizing their practical component, as to improve graduate insertion on the labor market, implies offering financial incentives to institutions with the purpose of improving the integration of transversal and entrepreneurial competences within the curriculum. In this respect, by means of the Order regarding the allocation of IDF, the universities may submit projects aiming at correlating the educational offer with the labor market demand, respectively promoting new studies programmes. Moreover, as a result of the 2017 approval of the Order regarding the fields and specialties/academic studies programmes correlated with the economic sectors presenting growth potential in Romania, this was used as to create another 2 guides, which have passed the public consultation stage and are undergoing a consultation process with GD EMPL, respectively: The Solicitor's Guide Specific Requirements "Support for doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers" AP 6/PI 10.iv/OS 6.13 and The Solicitor's Guide Specific Requirements "Integrated measures for increasing the participation of students from vulnerable categories to entrepreneurial programmes" AP 6/PI 10.ii/OS 6.7, 6.9 and 6.10</p> <p>The funding shall come the Human Capital Operational Programme, by means of funds which can be accessed directly by higher education institutions.</p>	<p>Order regarding the organization and functioning of the student entrepreneurial companies (SAS)</p> <p>Number of SAS No.</p>	1	-	-	-
Programme 2.3. Strategic commitment with regards to the economic sector						
2.3.1.1	<p>Developing a national research programme for innovation and entrepreneurship as to encourage the dialog between education and the economy sectors.</p> <p>Romania's research agenda, however substantial, mostly remains determined by academic curiosity, rather than commercial considerations. Collectively, the parties interested in Romania's economic development (for example, education, research, business environment etc.) must collaborate in a more efficient manner as to align to a coordinated research and development agenda, based on the existing strong points and which approaches aspects to be improved, as well, especially in relation to the coordinated development of the new Research</p>	No. of universities participating to the universities' entrepreneurial and innovative potential	26	35

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	and Innovation Strategy (for example, including a framework regarding intellectual property, commercialization process etc.). Romania's participation (MNE + JAR) to the HEInnovate exercise, initiated by OECD and the European Commission as to assess the universities' entrepreneurial and innovative potential, exercise which shall finalize in 2018 with a country report. It is estimated that the number of universities implementing institutional initiatives as to increase the entrepreneurial and innovative potential shall increase even after the end of the HEInnovate exercise.	assessment exercise 0				
2.3.1.2	Curriculum revision with the purpose of focusing on the competences and skills demanded in the labor market The Institutional Development Fund shall be channelized towards institutions and programmes which demonstrate the relationship with employers and employers' organizations as to offer programmes which include more relevant and organized internships. In this respect, by means of the Order regarding the allocation of IDF, the universities may submit projects aiming at correlating the educational offer with the labor market demand, respectively promoting new studies programmes.	Number of TEI engaged in curriculum design and revision processes for the competences and skills demanded on the labor market Number of IDF funded projects, for curriculum revision and adapting programmes to the labor market's requirements.	50	100	150	200
2.3.1.3	The institutional development fund	IDF funded projects				

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	<p>According to the Order regarding the methodology for the use of the institutional development fund by state universities, as of 2017, universities may submit project aiming at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) social-equity - increasing social inclusion and enhancing access to higher education (including those regarding counselling and career orientation); b) internationalization of the Romanian higher education; c) ensuring transparency in student management and implementing the Sole Academic Record of Romanian universities; d) ensuring the good functioning of university botanical gardens, of faculty resorts, practice bases and other support infrastructures of academic and research activities; e) creating and supporting the activities of the student entrepreneurial companies (SAS) found under the supervision of the universities; f) increasing institutional capacities; g) improving the quality of academic activity, including that of observing academic professional ethics and ethics; h) correlation of the educational offer with labor market demand; i) promoting new study programmes; j) cultivating relationships with the local and/or regional community; k) development of study programmes; l) creating an integrated educational management computer system 					
2.3.1.4	<p>Appointment of a contact person for contact with the business environment at the level of each institutions; universities and other post-secondary education establishments develop plans as to consolidate relationships with the business community</p> <p>Most institutions already have an office with a technology transfer-type function or relationships with the business environment; however, in exceedingly too many cases, these offices consume time with contract processing, rather than activities to consolidate actual relationships. This measure shall be funded through the Human Capital Operational Programme, Axis 6.</p>	<p>No. of positions filled within educational organizations No. 0</p>	48	48	48	48

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
2.3.1.5	<p>Elaboration of an interinstitutional protocol regarding the implementation of a traceability system between the education system and the labor market</p> <p>A protocol regarding the interconnection of education data and labor market data shall be created.</p> <p>A study shall be developed with regards to employers and their expectations with regards to competences, as well as graduate monitoring studies, which shall be implemented as soon as possible as to better evaluate performance with regards to consolidating competences which facilitate finding a job and technology transfer among students. Lastly, the objective shall be to use this instrument, and ancillary instruments, within a labor market observer, completely achieved, which shall offer a constant and updated assessment of the work environment and the labor market.</p>	Elaborated protocol No. 0	0	1	1	1
2.3.1.6	<p>Financial aid for the digitization and development of ITC programmes.</p> <p>Another key strategic contribution on behalf of the Government of Romania shall constitute the improvement of the computer infrastructure, on which the remote study programmes and mixed learning programmes are based, especially as to provide a better and quicker delivery of the audio and video content. Therefore, the programmes shall become more attractive to students, but this should not take place before the review of norms regarding remote education. Given the present situation, improving the infrastructure would not be truly relevant, given that there are so many regulations inhibiting the exploitation of remote learning resources at a large scale. This measure should also be coordinated with the efforts of amending existing methodologies regarding the public accreditation and funding of higher education. This measure shall be funded through the Human Capital Operational Programme, Axis 6.</p> <p>Higher education institutions shall be encouraged to apply for the funding, from European Funds by means of the Human Capital Operational Projects, of projects aiming at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training faculty who shall use digital/IT technologies in teaching - Creation of digital contents for the disciplines - Creation of on-line platforms for distributed access of actors interested in the digitization of the teaching/learning process 	0 No. of funding requests submitted by universities and approved for the stimulation of digitization within higher education	0	1	1	1

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	Concurrently, the information regarding the impact of the use of digital technologies upon teaching/learning may be the result of certain such projects which manage the impact assessments by using personal means.					
Programme 3.1: Facilitating access, increasing participation, developing innovation and cooperation in the field of vocational training						
3.1.1.1	<p>Development and implementation of a promotion and awareness strategy with regards to the benefits of career development, participation to initial and continuous vocational training and recognition of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>The development of a promotion and awareness strategy with regards to the benefits of career development must be doubled by a strategy and an infrastructure for the recognition of formal and informal learning results. Therefore, this measure shall support the elaboration of a strategy which shall present the benefits of career development and the opportunities of recognizing knowledge previously gained. Moreover, measures should be provided as to inform potential beneficiaries with regards to the advantages of the assessment and certification process, especially for those with a lower qualification level, for whom the assessment and certification of competences could become a real opportunity as to improve their situation on the labor market.</p>	No. of strategies Nr.0	0	1	1	1
3.1.1.2	<p>Promotional campaigns for vocational training at the level of V-VIII grade students, as well as the development of working tools for the definition of the profile of the gymnasium graduate compatible with the option for initial vocational training</p> <p>This measure aims at:</p> <p>a) the development and dissemination of informative and promotional materials;</p> <p>b) the dissemination of good practices and presenting examples of graduates of the vocational training system with successful careers.</p>	No. of V-VIII grade students No.-	25,000	30,000	30,000	33,000
3.1.2.1	<p>Development of coordination and cooperation between various interested parties at national, regional and local level.</p> <p>This measure aims at coordinating various interested parties who offer career counselling and orientation within secondary education and non-university tertiary education. It shall include</p>	Number of partnerships Nr.0	15	25	25	25

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	institutions such as the county/Bucharest municipality Resource and Educational Assistance Centers. Furthermore, the measure shall have as purpose the development and expansion, within rural and urban areas, of the career information, counselling and orientation centers network as to increase participation to the technical and vocational education, focusing on the underprivileged groups.					
3.1.2.2	<p>Provision of training programmes for professionals with responsibilities regarding offering career information, orientation and counselling</p> <p>Within this measure, vocational training programmes shall be developed with the purpose of training and professionalizing a number of individuals with responsibilities regarding providing career information, counselling, as well as for personnel within counselling centers, school counsellors and homeroom teachers.</p>	Number of participants Nr.0	750	1000	1000	1100
3.1.2.3	<p>Supporting participation to education and vocational training by payment of scholarships for all students enrolled in such training programmes (vocational scholarship)</p> <p>The measure is already being funded from the state budget as an incentive for young individuals to participate to education and vocational training. This incentive (vocational scholarship) is paid to all students, regardless of their parents' income, however, under the condition that the students have a certain number of attendances per month. It is a manner of directly promoting attendance by increasing the opportunity cost of school non-attendance.</p>	Number of scholarships Nr.48.000	55,000	61,000	61,000	61,500
3.1.2.4	<p>Support for the payment of accommodation and meal costs for young individuals from rural and underprivileged areas, Romani and persons with disabilities enrolled within vocational training on school campuses/in vocational and technical schools/educational units which teach pupils in dual system.</p> <p>This measure aims at covering the costs associated to school attendance for students in underprivileged categories, as to encourage their attendance in a greater number and to enhance access. The measure shall be funded from the State budget, by expanding the actual provision of such services.</p>	Number of young individuals No.-	38,000	42,000	42,000	45,000

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
3.1.2.5	<p>Extending the teaching methods which develop the entrepreneurial skills of the participants to training programs through the exercise company</p> <p>The measure aims to improve and develop the ROCT platform, as development tool for the entrepreneurial skills of the pupils, as well as the organization and performance of competitions in entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>No. of exercise companies registered on the ROCT platform</p> <p>Number of entrepreneurial competitions</p>				
Programme 3.2: Improvement of relevance and quality of vocational training						
3.2.1.1	<p>Updating/elaborating new occupational standards/vocational training standards</p> <p>This measure aims at the periodical revision of the methodology for the development of instruments for the description of occupations and qualifications, regardless of the training path, in terms of education learning results and initial and continuous vocational training. Furthermore, it is wished that the National Qualifications Registry become operational and that a correlation mechanism be developed as to correlate qualifications received nationally and internationally. The number of revised standards shall represent the primary immediate result indicator</p>	<p>Number of revised standards</p> <p>Nr.0</p>	20	50	50	60
3.2.1.2	<p>Elaboration of curriculum and curricular materials for each of the qualification fields/qualifications in the initial vocational training system</p> <p>The purpose of this measure is to develop/revise the fundamentals of the current education and vocational training curriculum: qualifications, vocational training standards, schooling plans, analytical programmes, auxiliary curricular materials, from the point of view of their relevance on the labor market, especially for the “green” economy and development of national priority sectors. The measurement shall be based on the number of standards regarding vocational training, curricular documents and teaching/learning materials.</p>	<p>Number of programs</p> <p>No.-</p>	1500	2000	2000	2200
3.2.1.3	<p>Conducting studies and research as to anticipate the qualification and competences needs of the labor market and updating the strategic planning documents of the IVT</p>	<p>Number of studies</p> <p>No.-</p>	1	2	2	2

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	A series of studies and prognosis/predictive researches shall be conducted, as to perform an initial assessment of qualifications and competences demanded on the labor market in order to determine the short and medium-term trends. This is necessary as to plan the educational offer toward the direction of forming competences requested on the labor market. Moreover, documents shall be elaborated, revised and applied for the planning of education and vocational training needs at local, national and regional level.					
3.2.1.4	<p>Creation of a national monitoring mechanism of professional insertion and retention of graduates of the education and initial vocational training system</p> <p>The creation and operation of an on-line instrument as to perform a large scale national survey, composed of several modules, with the possibility of registering a large number of answers, as to carry out an efficient monitoring at national level and to be able to elaborate a national data base with sufficient date as to allow comparisons and the establishment of reference points.</p>	Number of mechanisms No.-	-	1	1	1
3.2.2.1	<p>Development of quality-assurance mechanism for learning at the workplace, including through the monitoring of practical training agreements</p> <p>The value of learning at the workplace as to facilitate professional insertion of young individuals is undoubtedly acknowledged. The number of students enrolled in the education and vocational training programmes with a significant component of learning at the workplace is continuously increasing. Ensuring the quality of learning at the workplace is extremely important for the success of these programmes. This implies a clear regulation framework, as well as well-defined and assumed quality standards, with roles and responsibilities of different participants.</p>	Number of mechanisms No.-	-	1	1	1
3.2.2.2	<p>Developing a monitoring, assessment and revision mechanism for the quality of vocational and technical education and of dual vocational training</p>					
3.2.2.3	<p>Development of quality-assurance mechanism in the field of initial vocational training</p> <p>Development and implementation of certain solid quality-assurance mechanisms, which are to ensure the provision of education and vocational training, are essential for the consolidation of the confidence in qualifications at national and European level. In order to approach this challenge, a quality-assurance framework was elaborated in the field of vocational and</p>	Number of mechanisms No.-	-	1	1	1

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	<p>technical education; this is fully implemented at national level, in all schools offering IVTE, as of school year 2006-2007.</p> <p>However, in the field of vocational and technical education, the different initiatives in the field of quality-assurance have not led to the consolidation of a coherent approach at system level. As such, it is important that a quality-insurance mechanism be developed in the field of vocational and technical education, including a combination between auto-assessment and external assessment; these may help CVTE be relevant and efficient.</p>					
3.2.2.4	<p>Development of a certification mechanism for learning results in vocational and technical education</p> <p>As to consolidate confidence in the qualifications offered within the education and vocational training system, validity, reliability and impartiality of certification processes must be ensured. This measure aims at developing and implementing a certification mechanism for learning results in initial and continuous vocational and technical education, with a large and active participation on behalf of employers.</p>	Number of mechanisms No.-	-	1	1	1
3.2.2.5	<p>Creating and developing a national center for continuous training of faculty, trainers, external assessors and tutors</p> <p>The purpose of this measure is to consolidate the training capacity of faculty members in the field of education and vocational training and of life-long learning, by creating a national center for continuous training of faculty and trainers of education and vocational training programmes and life-long learning. The center shall also address tutors on behalf of employers ensuring vocational training, as to ensure the coherent and consistent development of the competences of persons with responsibilities in ensuring vocational training. The center shall establish the standards and the curriculum for teacher training.</p> <p><u>With regards to Programme 3.2.</u> - the measure Creating and developing a national center for continuous training of faculty, trainers, external assessors and tutors, requires a minister decision, as:</p>	Number of centers No.-	1	1	1	1

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. According to GR no. 604/2001, the National Centre for School Education Personnel Training (CNFP), public institution with legal entity, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Research; 2. According to Law no. 329/2009, the CNFP is a disbanded institution and its attributions are transferred to the resulting structure - General Directorate - CNFP, newly founded within the MERI, integrally funded from the State budget, by means of the MERI budget. 3. According to GR no. 1411/03.12.2009 (art. X), GR no. 604/2001 is amended and the regulations under Law no. 329/2009 shall apply: CNFP is created which functions as general directorate within the MERI structure. 4. According to GR no. 81/09.02.2010, regarding the organization and functioning of MECTS (Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports), CNFP functions as a General Directorate of MECTS. 5. By means of GR no. 859/23.08.2010 for the amendment of GR no. 81/2010, regarding the organization and functioning of MECTS, CNFP no longer functions as a General Directorate of MECTS, and its attributions are taken over by the Directorate for the Continuous Training of School Education Personnel within the General Directorate for Management, Human Resources and School Network. <p>A clarification is necessary; there has been a NATIONAL CENTER OF TRAINING OF PREUNIVERSITY EDUCATION STAFF, which was taken over by and integrated in the ministry of education, according to the mentions above. Currently, the MNE, acting through DGISSEP-DITPV is performing the process of accreditation and periodical assessment of continuous training suppliers and of training programs offered by them to the teachers from pre-university education.</p> <p>Specific legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law on national education no. 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and completions; • Order of the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports – MECTS no. 5564/2011 approving the Methodology of accreditation and periodical assessment of 					

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	continuous training suppliers and of the training programs offered by them, with subsequent amendments and completions.					
3.2.2.6	<p>Development and offer of continuous training programmes for trainers and faculty and the staff of the economic operators involved in initial vocational training</p> <p>The measure aims at developing a series of training programmes for trainers and faculty members, with the purpose of: (1) correlation between occupational standards, vocational training and curriculum standards, (2) development of vocational competences by training at the workplace, (3) development of interinstitutional cooperation between vocational training providers, as well as partnerships with employers, especially for the assessment of learning results gained in non-formal and informal learning contexts. A series of programmes shall be developed, and training shall be offered to more trainers and faculty members.</p>	Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accredited training suppliers - Accredited training programs - Suppliers who have carried out accredited continuous training programs - Accredited programs performed - Teachers trained in programs accredited by the MNE - Number of teachers that participate in ERASMUS+ mobilities 	76 143 149 482 69 616 121	5000/ 1200	5000/ 1400	5000/ 1600

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		equated with credits				
3.2.2.7	<p>Development of mechanisms for public and private funding, as well as of sector cooperation structures/partnerships in the field of initial vocational training</p> <p>Mechanisms shall be elaborated, including the legal framework, procedures and funding facilities of the cooperation between the public and private sector in the field of supply of vocational training programmes, including, but not limited to, sector committees, regional consortia, local committees for the development of the social partnership. As such, the framework and legal conditions for education and vocational training funding and life-long learning shall be created, including provisions for the dual formation system, at the initiative and by consulting the ANFPISDR, according to the institutional strategy of development of dual education.</p>	Number of legal frameworks No.-	-	1	1	1
3.2.3.1	<p>Supporting the modernization of vocational and technical educational units and workshops.</p> <p>Ensuring the materials and consumables for certification exams</p>	No. of educational units included in the programme	-	420	600	
Programme 3.3. Access and incentives for participation to life-long learning: quality and relevance; partnerships for better promotion and information						
3.3.1.1	<p>Funding as to increase demand in the field of life-long learning</p> <p>This measure aims at supporting participation to education and training for approximately 45,000 adults, persons who have dropped out of school early in life, with a low qualification level, as to gain basic or transversal competences;</p> <p>ANFPISDR will develop a promotion program for dual education for youth up to 26 years of age, graduates of gymnasium, who have not completed an initial vocational training system, to be included in the dual educational system. (ANOFM)</p>	Number of employees who have a low level of competences and other adults participating to training for transversal competences with the aid of	100000	150000	150000	170000

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		vouchers, subsidies No. 0				
3.3.1.2	<p>Creation of Community Centers for Permanent Learning (CCPL) as to implement life-long learning at community level</p> <p>Legal base:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Art. 343 and art. 344 in the Law of national education no. 1/2001, with subsequent amendments and completions; - Art. 23 in the Methodology of accreditation, periodical assessment, organization and operation of Community Centers for Permanent Learning, approved through Government Resolution no. 598/2017, <p>In accordance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Art. 12 para. (3) in Government Resolution no. 26/2017 on the organization and operation of the Ministry of National Education, with subsequent amendments and completions; - Art. 17 para. (3) in Government Resolution no. 12/2017 on the organization and operation of the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice, with subsequent amendments and completions, <p>Was elaborated and proposed for approval the common ORDER of the Ministry of National Education and of the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice approving the specific instructions of accreditation and periodical assessment of Community Centers for Permanent Learning (CCPL).</p> <p>Currently, it is undergoing the approval/endorsement circuit in the Ministry of National Education and, after the procedure is completed, it shall be submitted for approval to the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice as well.</p>	Number of CCPL Nr.1	20	30	30	35
3.3.1.3	<p>Development of learning methods which help develop entrepreneurial competences</p> <p>This measure aims at funding the organization of contests for business plans within the training programmes, and also, the organization and participation to national and international fairs for pilot/simulated companies as to test the competitiveness of the elaborated solutions/plans.</p>	Number of fictitious companies No.-	700	1000	1000	1200

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
3.3.1.4	<p>Development of quality-assurance mechanisms in the field of acknowledgment and validation of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>The current legal framework for quality-assurance in education and training should be revised as to include the quality-assurance mechanisms in the field of acknowledgment and validation of non-formal and informal learning, which would render this acknowledgment more efficient.</p>	Number of mechanisms No.-	1	1	1	1
3.3.1.5	<p>Revision of the methodology for the acknowledgment of non-formal and informal learning</p> <p>Acknowledgment of non-formal and informal learning results cannot be performed without the existence of a clear legal framework, represented by an operational methodology which provides the mechanisms and means which lead to the acknowledgment and certification of learning results. This measure shall aim at the development of the methodology, public consultation and assuming pertinent comments and adoption.</p>	Number of methodologies Nr.0	1	1	1	1
3.3.1.6	<p>Development of a center network for the assessment and certification of previously gained knowledge</p> <p>A well-made system for the acknowledgment of previously gained knowledge is essential for the efficient use of a National Qualifications Framework. Romania must perfect its model for the acknowledgment of previously gained knowledge. This measure aims at laying the foundation of a network of centers for the testing and certification of learning results gained within non-formal and informal contexts. The administrative capacity of the existing assessment centers must be consolidated, so that these may be in the position to acknowledge learning gained within non-formal and informal contexts. The limited geographical cover of these centers represents an important barrier for the improvement of the structure of learning acknowledgment. This measure aims at supporting approximately 210 assessment centers and offering technical support to the National Qualifications Agency, as to develop the acknowledgment, validation and certification mechanism of previously gained knowledge (3 stages: design, pilot and application).</p>	Number of authorized, fully functional centers which assess the acknowledgment of learning or of previously gained knowledge No.-	10	10	8	8
3.3.1.7	<p>Training of personnel responsible for the acknowledgment and validation of non-formal and informal learning.</p>	Number of trained employees	250	150	50	50

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	This measure shall be applied because of the adoption of the legal framework, as to ensure human resources and, consequently, the institutional capacity for the actual acknowledgment process.	No.-				
3.3.1.8	<p>Expansion of reciprocal learning and exchange of good practices</p> <p>This aims at creating a regional cooperation network, with the purpose of exchanging good practices in the field of education and vocational training; this shall focus on programme developers, trainers, professors and tutors and shall be supported by an on-line and support platform for the trainers' mobilities.</p>	<p>Number of cooperation networks</p> <p>No.-</p>	23	23	25	28
	<p>Supporting participation to European mobility programmes</p> <p>This measure aims at ensuring access, by facilitating information, to ERASMUS+ mobility programmes, funded by means of the EU Erasmus+ programme, for the 25,000 adults (academic and school personnel, directors, counsellors, trainers, inspectors, workers within the field of youth etc.). Concurrently, the measure intends to offer access to other mobility programmes for 38,000 students, as well as for 20,000 pupils from vocational and technical education, in order to acquire practical/technical skills. ANPCDEFP+ Florin Gheorghe Marginean.</p>	<p>Number of students participating to Erasmus+ mobility programmes</p> <p>No. 2800</p> <p>Number of faculty and non-faculty personnel in higher education participating to Erasmus+ mobilities</p> <p>Number of pupils from the IVT+Vocational (VET) that participate to</p>	<p>9100</p> <p>6580</p> <p>4700</p>	<p>9500</p> <p>7500</p> <p>4000</p> <p>4800</p>	<p>10000</p> <p>8300</p> <p>5500</p>	<p>10500</p> <p>8500</p> <p>6000</p>

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		Erasmus+ mobilities 3700				
Programme 4.1: Supporting students so as to facilitate their transition and access to higher education						
4.1.1.1	Interventions benefitting schools - non-competitive grants for high schools in need to improve their performance. This measure would cover approximately 80% of the state-owned high schools in Romania. The estimated average amount of the grants that are to be allocated to each public high school is EUR 100,000, whereas higher grants should be directed towards public high schools with direr needs. The grants shall be provided over a period of 4 years in order to allow conducting the activities designed to support students from 9 th to 12 th grade (or higher senior years).	Number of high schools benefitting from ROSE project grants 0	265	265	1070	1070
4.1.1.2	Systemic interventions. The revision of curricula for the upper secondary education This measure shall finance the technical assistance provided to the Institute for Education Sciences (ISE), allowing the revision of curricula for the upper secondary education, including more than 350 study programmes for grades 9 th - 12 th , for all three tracks. This process shall take place in accordance with the curricula revisions for grades 1 st – 8 th .	No. of revised curricula No. -	0	0	250	350
4.1.1.3	Professional development for the faculty and headmasters of educational units. This measure shall support professional training and development programmes for teachers and headmasters in Romanian public high schools. The training shall be focused on implementing and adapting the revised curriculum to the students' needs and skills (inclusive education), applying student-centered teaching methods, the creation of intercultural competences and formative assessment. Training quality increase through the endowment of Teaching-Staff Resource Centers.	Number of trained trainers Number of trained faculty No. de Teaching-Staff Resource Centers fitted	0 0 42	0 0 42	46 10,000 42	100 35,000 42

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		with training facilities No. 0				
4.1.1.4	<p>Revision of the assessment items of the national evaluation and baccalaureate exams and increase of CNEE (National Centre for Assessment and Examination) institutional capacity.</p> <p>This measure supports the revision and modernization of these two assessment exams, as well as the training intended for the relevant personnel of MNE (Ministry of National Education) and CNEE in relation to the testing theory and methodology.</p>	<p>No. of trained persons within MNE/ CNEE</p> <p>-</p> <p>Number of exam disciplines for which the assessment items were revised</p> <p>-</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>0</p> <p>0</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10</p>	<p>50</p> <p>34</p>
4.1.1.5	<p>Assessment of students' learning results at the end of the 10th grade.</p> <p>This measure will also support the development and performance, twice, of a small-stakes nation-wide test, based on a sample group of 10th grade students, upon their completion of the mandatory educational period. This non-exam assessment, conducted during the 10th grade, would allow the Ministry of Education to monitor the learning progress at the end of the mandatory education cycles.</p>	<p>Testing structure and organizing methodology</p> <p>Administered testing</p>	-	-	Methodology elaborated and accepted by MNE	Administered testing
4.1.1.6	<p>Informative and awareness campaigns on the importance of education.</p> <p>The poor motivation among students and teaching staff has been identified as a major constraint for the quality of education and the students' results, particularly in low-performing high schools. This subcomponent shall support wide-scale informative campaigns intended to reach out to students and teachers with regard to the importance of tuition during upper secondary and tertiary education cycles.</p>	<p>Procedure for the procurement of consultancy services</p> <p>Information and communication strategy</p>	<p>Launched procedure for the procurement of consultancy services</p> <p>-</p>	<p>Contracted consultancy services</p> <p>Approved information and</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>20</p>

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		Number of events, newsletters, press articles, radio shows, video clips, bulletin board, posters etc.		communication strategy		
4.1.1.7	<p>Interventions benefitting summertime universities and programmes, delivered as “Scheme of non-competitive grants for universities”.</p> <p>Non-competitive grants are intended to support eligible public faculties in their efforts to implement remedial programmes, mentoring, counselling, guidance and support services, coaching services, workshops in specific areas of activity, as well as outreach campaigns focusing on students at risk.</p>	Number of faculties benefitting from grants for students at risk No. 0	60	60	311	251
4.1.1.8	<p>The scheme of non-competitive grants for universities - “bridge” type summer programmes focuses on supporting faculties that organize tertiary level summer activities for high school activities, such as, but without limitation to, courses organized in campuses for students in public high schools, with an emphasis on students at risk / coming from disadvantaged categories.</p>	No. of programmes No. 0	127 ⁶⁸	127	640	513
4.1.1.9	<p>The scheme of non-competitive grants for universities - learning centers focuses on consolidating the available support mechanisms for students at risk. Each learning center would be conceived starting from the main factors which contribute to the poor performance of</p>	Number of universities	12	24	24	12

⁶⁸ Each summer programme entails the participation of at least 25 students over the course of a single project year. The number of summer programmes shall, therefore, differ from the number of implemented subprojects.

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	students and their school leaving during early faculty years, including their deficient preparation during the upper secondary education years, insufficiently developed study skills, limited exposure to new academic disciplines, as well as a lack of acquaintance with university-level pedagogical norms (the size of the class, the duration and level of work tasks and more).	benefitting from learning centers No. 0				
Programme 5.1. Consolidation of the administrative capacity required to manage and implement sectoral policies						
Measures set to modernize this capacity at an institutional level; increase effectiveness; consolidate institutional processes and procedures						
5.1.1.1	Effective and efficient operation of the departments in the organizational structure of the MNE/Revision of organizational responsibilities and the related procedures, intended to allow a better elaboration of strategies and the implementation of ISP: the measure intends to secure the set-up of a clear leadership concerning the elaboration of SE (secondary education) policies (with input from the technical departments), as well as the existence of planning, budgetary, monitoring and assessment processes and procedures which support the implementation of policies. To that end, one shall consolidate the structure, functions and responsibilities within MNE, set forth in the Organization and Operation Regulation (OOR). The intention is that all the planning and budgetary procedures, as well as the monitoring and assessment procedures, be implemented in accordance with the approved methodology (a 100% implementation at an appropriate quality level), during the strategic plan implementation period. The measure is continuously funded by the state budget, through MNE's administrative budget, for the entire 2018-2021 interval and does not benefit from specific allocated resources (being a support measure).	Amended organizational chart and OOR 2	1	1		
5.1.1.2	Ensuring performant management in the MNE, in accordance with existing objectives and legal regulations, in order to ensure economic, efficient and effective management of public funds, through the application of the internal management control standards. The measure refers to a very important component of the MNE activity (of audit, control and risk management) and supports the development of the operational capacity in the field. The beneficiaries are the directorates, agencies, units, inspectorates which carry out activities that require the development of a risk management strategy, in accordance with the international standards and procedures, as well as tools and means of control for the implementation	Number of compliant procedures in the MNE	100%	100%	100%	100%

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	process. Through the measure's application, the SE administration seeks to increase the compliance of the actions of the controlled entities with risk prevention standards, on the one hand, as well as the observance and fulfillment of all measures in the monitoring plans specific to every unit responsible with control, audit and inspection activities. the measure is financed from the State budget, the operational budget of the MNE, in a continuous manner, for the entire period of 2018-2021 and does not have a specific allocation of resources (being a support measure).	Number of implemented standards Degree of compliance of the specific monitoring plans % 100%				
Measures focusing on performance assessment and financial management						
5.1.2.1	Ensuring a management which targets the increase of efficiency in the use of the MNE budget/ Elaboration of annual and multiannual budgetary programmes for the integral use of allocated internal and external funds: the measure is intended to consolidate budgetary discipline, particularly in regard to identifying the SE management body's needs, scheduling internal (national) and external (EU) budgetary resources and the budgetary execution of the programme. The ministry shall consolidate the budgeting process for each individual programme, during the 2018-2021 interval, so as to be able to monitor in that manner the performance of internal and subordinated structures, in relation to the extent to which the annual budgetary programming is complied with. The measure is continuously funded by the state budget, through MNE's administrative budget, for the entire period and does not benefit from specific allocated resources (being a support measure).	Degree of compliance with the annual budgetary programming % 100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
5.1.2.2	Development of financial mechanisms designed to decrease financing unpredictability and increase the fair distribution of finances across all geographical regions based on their specific needs	Methodology "Per capita" financing which takes into	1	2		

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		account students' special needs				
Measures intended for the specialized administrative personnel within the SE sector						
5.1.3.1	<p>Management of human resources and adjustment to the needs of the organization: the measure focuses on an extremely important component of the public authorities in general, namely the specialized personnel, who have to be selected, employed and retained within the organization depending on the ministry's real needs. In this context, a very important goal will be to satisfy the specialization requirements of the current staff, such as the educational managers, the economists and ITC specialists within MNE. This measure is intended to improve the personnel structure, as well that of processes such as recruiting and employing staff, allotting tasks to the specialized personnel, motivating the personnel in order to reduce the fluctuations in the SE management body workforce down to 15 % in 2020 and increase the vacancy filling figure to (90)% of available jobs, during the same interval. The measure is continuously funded by the state budget, through MNE's administrative budget, for the entire 2018-2021 interval and does not benefit from specific allocated resources (being a support measure).</p>	<p>Personnel fluctuation within the ministry % 30%</p> <p>Vacancy filling degree in relation to the list of available jobs % 70%</p>	25%	15%	15%	15%
			80%	90%	90%	90%
5.1.3.2	<p>Professional training, learning and expertise for the specialized personnel within the ministry: the measure focuses on quality increase and the improvement of professional and technical competences of the SE management body staff. The beneficiaries of this measure are the SE management body employees who, by taking part in and being certified through training and specialization programmes, depending on the needs identified and recommendations formulated during the annual assessment process and included in each organization's annual training plan, shall determine the degree of readiness by means of specialized courses. The measure is funded from the state budget; the budgetary funds, amounting to 3,236,000 RON, are provided over the entire 2018-2021.</p>	<p>Fulfilment of the annual training plan at an organization level % 100%</p> <p>Personnel certified as per training and specialization programmes, out of the total</p>	100%	100%	100%	100%
			16%	22%	22%	22%

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		specialized personnel % 12%				
Measures focusing on the elaboration of public policies and communication with stakeholders						
5.1.4.1	<p>Transparency of the decision-making and the public policy development processes, as well as of the legal framework: the measure focuses on implementation and reporting as per the legal procedures that govern the SE management body's activity, with regard to the free access to information of public interest - Law no. 544 /2001, as subsequently supplemented, and Law no. 52/2003 on decision-making transparency. Transparency is one of MNE's declared values, one which supports its activity of drafting and implementing public policies and will unconditionally be observed and secured during the ISP implementation, so that a maximum degree of compliance with the legal procedures (100% for all the actions requiring the implementation of Law no. 544/2001 and Law no. 52/2003), as well as keeping the public informed, by way of publishing in full the reports provided by the law. The measure is continuously funded by the state budget, through MNE's operational budget, for the entire 2018-2021 interval and does not benefit from specific allocated resources (being a support measure).</p>	<p>Observance of legal procedures (the number of inconsistencies) % 100%</p> <p>Reports published according to Law no. 544/2001 No. 1</p> <p>Reports published as per Law no. 2/2003 No. 1</p> <p>Average duration to reply, in days 15</p> <p>Requests on the freedom of information No./year</p> <p>-</p>	100%	100%	100%	100%
			1	1	1	1
			1	1	1	1
			10	10	8	5
			50	50	50	50
			500	500	500	500

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		Hits on MNE reports on the assessment of the sector itself and its policies (online) -				
5.1.4.2	Operationalization of analyses focused on the impact upon public policies and feedback loops in the elaboration of policies for the SE area: the measure covers the qualitative aspect of elaborating public policy documents and their impact analyses within the SE area. The impact analysis shall extend to cover measures that are not financed by ESF and shall include all the programmes and measures presented in the ISP. The measure focuses on MNE's personnel specialized in impact analyses and all the stakeholders involved in the elaboration of public policy documents and impact analyses within the SE sector (other public institutions, professional associations, non-government organizations, teaching staff, faculty students, researchers), so that assurances are provided that the drafting of public policy documents and impact analyses fully observe (100% compliance in terms of quality) the ministry's approved procedure and the best international practices in the field of evaluation, during the entire ISP implementation period, 2018-2021. The measure is continuously funded by the state budget, through MNE's operational budget, for the entire 2018-2021 interval and does not benefit from specific allocated resources (being a support measure).	Compliance degree of public policy documents with the procedure approved by the ministry % 100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Consultations with the citizens and the SE sector stakeholders, aimed at elaborating and promoting public policies: the measure comes as a support for consultative processes in the administration in general, and, in particular, those pertaining to the SE sector public policies. The beneficiaries of public policy documents are pupils, students and faculty, researchers and parents; the impact of public policies should be made public, so that they may be consulted upon and promoted. MNE shall continue (in 2017-2020) to support the consultative and promoting processes for public policies among the ministry's specialists and the stakeholders, so that all such consultations should comply with the ministry's approved procedure. The	No. of policies subject to consultations as per the ministry's procedure (100% compliance) No. -	100%	100%	100%	100%

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	measure is continuously funded by the state budget, through MNE's operational budget, for the entire 2017-2020 interval and does not benefit from specific allocated resources (being a support measure).					
5.1.4.3	Collaboration among institutions and experience exchanges with relevant national and international organizations: the measure focuses on developing MNE's institutional capacity, particularly in relation to collaboration at a national and international levels; it equally pursues consolidating partnerships among agencies at a national level, which is essential for the success and efficiency of policies within the SE sector. The direct beneficiary of the measure is the SE management body, which intends to produce, from 2017 to 2020, 19 partnerships and collaborations with international institutions and have an active presence within the EU (the drafting of Romania's position in the context of al actions carried out by the European Council and during the working parties' meetings). Efforts shall be undertaken to conclude other partnerships, with the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice (MLSJ), the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ministry of Public Finance (MPF) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). The measure is continuously funded by the state budget, through MNE's operational budget, for the entire 2018-2021 interval and does not benefit from specific allocated resources (being a support measure).	No. of partnerships No. -	5	5	5	5
5.1.4.4	Effective and efficient operation of the departments within MNE's organizational structure (inspectories, libraries, and so on): the measure is designed to guarantee that each entity fulfils its annual objectives stipulated in its own activity plan, in compliance with the responsibilities included in the OOR of each structure (what was planned in relation to what was achieved). The target group of this measure comprises the organizational structures within the ministry. The funds allotted to this measure originate from the state budget (MNE's operational budget) and are distributed based on the number of employees/structure. This measure is a continuous one, applied over the entire ISP implementation period, which is 2018-2021.	Implementation degree of the annual operational plan % -	100%	100%	100%	100%
5.1.4.5	Development of the capacity to analyze existing data and closely monitor the strategies in the educational field, creating the foundation for specific and efficient policies based on documented evidence. Implementing the strategy will require both the elaboration of	Number of M&E reports based on documentary	1	2		

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
	adequate financing mechanisms designed to ensure the continuity of this process and the desired standards, as well as improved results obtained across all regions. SIIIR restructuring has to take place in a manner that would allow, during the subsequent programming period, the existence of an improved decision-making system based on concrete data. The emphasis is placed on developing the following capacities: (i) the generation of accurate data on the ESL rates, the transition among educational cycles, enrolment, attendance, grade repetition, school leaving and graduation rates for all educational cycles, but also on absenteeism and school avoidance behavior – and such information should be available based on criteria such as gender, location, social and economic status and risk groups; (ii) the generation of systematic information on the main grounds that differentiate ESL, per various categories of students, schools, types of education and training institutions, municipalities and regions; (iii) the generation of knowledge relying on the correlation of data on ESL with social and economic data for the purpose of better aiming measures, programmes and policies. SIPOCA 17	evidence and their usefulness in planning and making decisions No.				
		Number of informed staff members No.	-	225	-	-
Programme 5.2. Consolidation of ITC governance, cybersecurity and a strengthening of human resources in the educational sector ITC area; modernization and interoperability of national ITC systems						
	Measures					
5.2.1.1	Development of the ITC infrastructure. The measure intends to ensure the computerization of institutional processes and procedures applied within the integrated management of MNE resources, documents, workflows, information and relations with the beneficiaries of public policies, with the citizens and the collaborating institutions, the integrated management of statistical information and reports, as well as the maintenance of the National Education Database and the development of the Information System on the Management of Human Resources. This measure covers the ministry, its subordinated institutions and their staff who are to use computing technologies during their daily activities.	Computerized processes and procedures within the ministry %/1% employees who use the IT systems % 5% allocated funds provided using	2% 10% 95%	10% 50% 99%	10% 50% 99%	10% 50% 99%

	Measures	Output indicator/Unit/ Reference value 2015/16	Achieved in 2018	Target 2019	Target 2020	Target 2022
		the integrated IT system % 90%				
5.2.1.2	Primary and evolutionary maintenance for the communication infrastructure; primary infrastructure: office equipment and software; big data center infrastructure and basic software (operating systems, virtualization, databases etc.)					
5.2.1.3	IT Schooling Management System. The measure intends to ensure the computerization of institutional processes and procedures for an integrated management of MNE's resources, documents, workflows, the notification of and the relations with the beneficiaries of public policies, the citizens and the collaborating institutions, for the integrated management of statistical information and reports, as well as the National Education Database maintenance and the development of the Human Resource Management Information System. This measure is intended for the ministry, its subordinated institutions and their employees who are to use information technologies in their daily activities.	allocated funds paid through the integrated IT system % 90%		2% 10% 95%	10% 50% 99%	10% 50% 99%
5.2.1.4	"Biblioteca Școlară Virtuală" (Virtual School Library) National Education Portal	No. of hits by users No. -		5000	5000	5000

ANNEX 4: INFORMATION ON ISP COMPONENTS

Annex 4.1. Institutional Profile

Scope of authority

The Ministry of National Education is organized, and it operates under Law no. 90/2001 on the organization and functioning of the Romanian Government and of the ministries, with further amendments and completions, respectively under the provisions of Government Decision no. 26/2017 on the organization and functioning of the Ministry of National Education, with further amendments. The staff in the Ministry of National Education is subject to Law no.188/1999 on the Regulations of civil servants, republished, with further amendments and completions, Law no. 477/2004 on the Code of conduct of the contractual staff of public authorities and institutions, Emergency Ordinance no. 92/2008 on the regulations of the civil servant called public manager, Law no.161/2003 on measures for the transparency in the exercise of public offices, public functions and in the business environment, the prevention and punishment of corruption, with further amendments and completions, Law no. 7/2004, on the Code of conduct of civil servants, republished, with further amendments and completions, Law no. 571/2004 on the protection of the staff in public authorities, public institutions and other establishments that notify breaches of the law and Law 53/2003 on the Labor Code, republished, with further amendments and completions.

The Ministry of National Education designs, substantiates and applies the national strategies in the sectors of vocational education and training, through the county school inspectorates/ school inspectorate of Bucharest (ISMB), the higher education institutions, as well as through all the other institutions/establishment subordinated to and coordinated by them, in accordance with the annexes to the Government Decision no. 26/2017 on the organization and functioning of the MNE, with further amendments.

For the achievement of the objectives of its fields of activity, the MNE fulfils the following functions:

- a) of strategy, ensuring the drafting of the Strategy for the application of the Programme of Government in education, vocational training and university scientific research;
- b) of management, whereby they allocate, monitor and assess the use of the resources for the implementation of policies in its fields of activity;
- c) of assessment, coordination and control of the achievement of the policies in the sector education, vocational training and university scientific research;
- d) of regulation and synthesis, whereby they ensure the drafting of the regulatory methodological, functional, operational, institutional, and financial framework required for the achievement of the strategic objectives of its fields of activity;
- e) of state authority, whereby they ensure the monitoring and control of the observance of regulations applicable to its field of activity;
- f) of representation, whereby they ensure, on behalf of the Government, the representation in the national, regional and international bodies/institutions and organizations, as state authority for its fields activity;

g) of communication with the other structure of the central and local public administration and with the civil society;

h) of international co-operation, whereby they ensure the application of the international agreements in its fields of activity and the promotion of new agreements.

Internal organization of the institution

The organizational structure of the Ministry of National Education and the related number of jobs for the ministry are indicated in GD no. 26/2017 on the organization and functioning of the MNE, with further amendments. At central level, 10 general directorates and 50 directorates are operating, as well as the services, bureaus and compartments that they supervise. The structures managing the public communication, the inspection and control, the internal public audit, the strategic management and public policies, the classified information are directly supervised by the minister. The other organizational divisions are supervised by the 5 state secretaries, the general secretary and the deputy general secretary. The ministry's functional structure is made from internal organizational divisions classified in two main categories: the departments designing the ministry's policy in the sector of vocational education and training and the departments supporting the implementation of these policies.

The organizational structure by department, as well as their functions and responsibilities are provided in the Organization and Working Regulation (OWR) – a regulating and management tool helping the staff to attain the strategic objectives of the MNE.

The organizational structure of the MNE is completed by the advisory councils and boards – National Council of the Rectors, National Council for the Funding of School Education, Council of National Minorities, National Council of Pupils, National Council of Higher Education Statistics and Forecasting, National Council for the Authorization of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates, National Council for the Funding of Higher Education, National Council of University Libraries, Council of Ethics and University Management.

The institutions and establishments operating under the supervision or steering of the MNE are the 41 county school inspectorates and the School Inspectorate of Bucharest – deconcentrated public services of the MNE; the related divisions, extracurricular activity divisions and school sports clubs operate under their supervision. Furthermore, the ministry supervises/coordinates 55 state higher education institutions, 4 central university libraries, the Institute of Education Sciences, the Executive Division for the Funding of Higher Education and Research, Development, and Innovation, the Executive Division for the Funding School Education, the National Centre of Evaluation and Examination, the National Agency for Community Programmes in the Sector of Vocational education and training, the Agency of Study Credits and Fellowships, the National Centre of Development of Vocational and Technical Education, Romania's National Commission for UNESCO, the National Authority for Qualifications, the Agency for the Management of the National Network of Computer Science for Education and Research, the Company "Editura Didactică și Pedagogică" S.A., the students' sports clubs, and other.

In the MNE, divisions of management for project implementation are operating in accordance with the legislation in force – the Division of Management of Projects with External Funding, the Division of Management of Projects for the Modernization of the School and University Network, the Division of Management of Projects Financed from Structural Funds – as well as the Intermediate Body for the Operational Programme Human Capital (OIPOCU).

For the higher education system, the Executive Division for the Funding of Higher Education and Research, Development and Innovation (UEFISCDI) ensures the executive activity of the National Council of Scientific Research in Higher Education (CNCSIS) with regard to the allocation of the financial resources from the

state budget and from other revenues for Higher Education and scientific research in universities. Furthermore, UEFISCDI organizes the process of assessment and monitoring for the projects funded in the programmes steered by CNCSIS; they also manage the database of expert evaluators for the CNCSIS programmes and they draft, on the request and under the guidance of CNCSIS, prospective studies for the substantiation of medium- and long-term policies in science and technology, as well as in the higher education system.

Pursuant to GEO (Government Emergency Ordinance) no. 75/2005 ensuring the quality of education, two national agencies focusing on the management of education quality across the country have been established: the Romanian Agency for Quality in Higher Education (ARACIS) – standalone public institution of national interest, having legal personality and its own income and expense budget, respectively the Romanian Agency for Quality in School Education (ARACIP), public institution of national interest, supervised by the MNE, having legal personality and its own income and expense budget.

The leadership of the MNE is carried out by the minister of national education, who represents the ministry in the relationships with the other public authorities, with the legal and natural persons in the country and abroad, as well as in the justice system. The minister answers for the ministry's whole activity in front of the Government. For the steering of the activities by their related field, the minister delegates, by order, competences to the state secretaries appointed by decisions of the prime-minister.

The general secretary and the deputy general secretary of the MNE, high officials, appointed in accordance with the law, ensure the stability of the ministry's operation, the leadership continuity and the functional links among the ministry's structures, fulfilling the responsibilities defined at art. 49 para. (2) of Law no. 90/2001, with further amendments and completions, as well as other responsibilities laid down by order of the minister or provided in the ministry's organization and working regulation. The other management functions are public positions and they are laid down in accordance with Law no. 188/1999: managing director, manager, head of service, head of office. For the concentration of the management staff on activities focused on strategic planning, action monitoring and assessment, and quality management, they can delegate some of their responsibilities.

Standing or temporary commissions, committees and working groups are established and they operate at ministry level, in accordance with the regulatory framework in force.

Annex 4.2. Analysis of the external and internal environments

Priorities and objectives of European policies on Education and Training

- A.1. Statistics and objectives on Education and Training until 2022

The European strategic framework⁶⁹ in the field of education and training until 2020 tackles the following four strategic objectives:

1. the actual achievement of lifelong learning and students' mobility (the development of the national framework of qualifications based upon relevant study results and their connection with the European Qualifications Framework, the setting up of more flexible educational paths);
2. an improvement in education and training quality and efficiency (an increase of the level of basic competences, such literacy and arithmetic, an increase in the attractiveness of Mathematics, technological sciences and the consolidation of linguistic knowledge);
3. the promotion of fairness, social cohesion and active citizenship;
4. the stimulation of creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all education and training levels.

In 2015, Romania adopted the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* of the United Nations Organization, which also provides targets in the field of education for year 2030. In 2018, through GR no. 877/21.11.2018 was adopted the *2030 National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Romania*.

As a general guidance, the strategy targets the performance of support actions with time horizon the year 2020 and national targets for 2030, specific for each of the 17 Sustainable Development Objectives (SDO). The strategy includes the development lines drawn for the future sector, regional and local strategies. Thus, within objective 4 – Quality education, are presented the key topics related to education from the perspective of sustainable development. Lifelong education is promoted, as well as financial and entrepreneurial education, education for sustainable development, which will help increase the number of small and medium companies and will improve the quality of human resources.

The fulfilment of these strategic objectives is assessed on a yearly basis, by comparison with a number of key statistical criteria, their results being published in the "Education and Training Monitor".

Romania's progress regarding the objectives set forth in 2011 was a slow-paced, but positive one, for a number of key criteria. Nevertheless, certain objectives are yet to be reached or are unreachable by 2020.

In spite of its significant economic growth (it increased by 7% in 2017, being the second fastest growth rate in the EU), Romania is facing numerous challenges related to human development. Romania has the lowest score in the European Union in 2017 in the 2017 Human Capital Index (World Bank, 2018). Its score is of 0.60, which means that children currently born in Romania will have a productivity level when growing up of 60% compared to what they could have had if they had benefited of complete high quality educational and health services. Research has indicated that between 2012 and 2017 the value of the HCI for Romania decreased from 0.63 to 0.60. Romania's score is inferior to the region's average and to the score that would be estimated in accordance with the country's standard of living.

Inequality of revenues and social exclusion are serious challenges. The percentage of population exposed to poverty risk (following the transfer of social benefits) has increased from 22.1% in 2009 to 25.3% in 2016

⁶⁹The conclusions of the Council from May 12, 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in the field of vocational education and training ("ET 2020"). Document C 119/2/ 28.5.2009

(World Bank, 2017). Poverty threat is even higher in the case of children: according to data provided by Eurostat, approximately 50% of children younger than 8 are exposed to poverty risk. This is the highest rate in the EU and indicates that, among all age categories, children have the highest probability of living in poverty. Poverty tends to be transmitted from one generation to another (RENASIS/European Anti-poverty Network). There are significant challenges related to equality between rural and urban areas, and between the majority population and the Roma population of the country.

This sector was allocated in 2017 3.1% of the GDP, the lowest among the budgets of the EU Member States and significantly lower than the EU average of 5.5%.⁷⁰ A 4% allocation of the GDP for education is the minimum necessary for realization of the necessary reforms, as well as for reaching and maintaining the targets set for 2020. UNESCO and other international sources recommend that the budget for education should be of at least 15-20% of the total public spending and 4-6% of the GDP.⁷¹

In 2017, Romania's population had decreased to approximately 21.3 million, of which 3.5 million children of school age. To complicate things even more, it is estimated that over 2 million active individuals (25% of the labor force) emigrated to Europe and other parts of the world in search of better jobs. Measures are necessary to fight these demographic changes through a better qualified and healthier labor force, as well as to integrate the social segments which are currently excluded.

The country's population has been decreasing in the last decades due to emigration and the low natality rate. In 2018, there were 1.55 million children in the country younger than 8 (National Institute of Statistics of Romania), compared to 1.77 million children in 2002. Relative to 2002, the population residing in Romania has constantly decreased, and the 0 to 8 years age group has decreased even faster, by 12 percent compared to the 10 percent decrease for the entire population. Demographic transformations in the country are translated into a fast decrease of the school age population, while aging and migration contribute to this significant demographic challenge.

A positive aspect is the 11% increase in the number of children in nurseries and kindergartens (90,000 more children) compared to 2002.⁷²

Early Child Development (ECD) is a priority in the EU, and thus it has benefited of attention from the Romanian Government. Early child development refers specifically to services in the sectors of health, education and social protection for children, from the prenatal period to the start of primary education. The law on national education, adopted in 2011, ensured a comprehensive framework for the early care and education of children (ECEC) in Romania, structured on two levels: ante-pre-school level, addressed to children in the 0-3 age group and pre-school level, for children in the 3-6 age group. Early children education and care (ECEC) services in Romania are not part of mandatory education yet. The ante-pre-school level is mainly formed of nurseries which ensure care for children with ages ranging from a few months to three years. The pre-school level is formed of kindergartens, meaning centers which provide care and education services for children from two or three years of age until they enter the primary cycle. Among its positive interventions, Romania introduced in 2012 a preparatory class (0 class) in the mandatory education system, which, according to assessments, had a positive impact on the reduction of dropout rates in the first school years and helped reduce disparities among pupils.

⁷⁰ SABER 2017 Country Report for Romania Teachers, World Bank.

⁷¹ Methodology for Monitoring and Assessment of the implementation of Educational Strategies, March 2019

⁷² SABER Survey –Early Child Development, 2019

Also, the integrated interventions, the pilot program “Warm meal” (“Masa calda”), a better reimbursement of costs for school transportation, nursery vouchers and social vouchers encourage participation to early education of poor children.

With regard to educational factors, school segregation explains to a large extent the performance gap between Romania and the other countries, while the characteristics of the teachers explain the inequalities between the pupils from the rural area and those from the urban area.

Social school segregation appears when families from similar social and economic environments group into similar schools, and make up the pupils from one classroom or one school. Socially segregated schools, present in marginalized communities, have difficulties in offering educational services to the pupils from the disadvantaged social and economic environment, in attracting and keeping the best teachers, in reducing school dropout and improving the pupils’ results. This has long-term implications in the development of human capital, especially for the 40% with the lowest income, as well as in ensuring equal opportunities for Romanian citizens in succeeding in their career and benefiting of the country’s economic growth.

The main cause of the indicator’s decrease is represented by the continuous decrease of the number of individuals enrolled in higher education, which can have the following causes: a relatively smaller number of persons who pass the bacalaureate exam, migration, demographic decline and chronic underfunding, etc. The measures of counteracting this tendency of decrease of the number of individuals who attend tertiary education must be focused on: ensuring increased flexibility in the development of non-university tertiary education; supporting the participation of non-traditional students, as well as of those from the rural area; and increasing the attractiveness, through assurance of increased relevance for the labor force and improving quality.

The policy objectives in the field of the Romanian university field are going in the direction of quality and performance based multi-annual financing, the development and consolidation of a superior educational system which is equitable and accessible to all, supporting the correlation and inter-operability of the current systems and instruments of data collection for HE.

In university year 2016/2017 the descending trend of recent years in the number of individuals enrolled in higher education continued. Thus, 531.6 thousand individuals were enrolled in the higher education institutions of Romania, approximately 3.6 thousand individuals less than in the previous university year. Of the total number of individuals enrolled in higher education in 2016/2017, 76.3% were attending graduate studies, 19.5% - master’s studies, 3.6% - doctoral studies, and 0.6% - post-graduate studies (post-doctoral studies, programs of advanced studies and post-graduate academic studies, specialty post-graduate studies).⁷³

The evolutions of the number of students have been different in State and private education. Thus, in 2013-2016 the share of students enrolled in State-owned graduate studies increased and the share of students enrolled in private graduate studies decreased. At master’s and doctoral levels, the rate change is insignificant. For post-graduate programs, the rate of students enrolled in State education increased and the rate of students enrolled in private education decreased.

- in university year 2016/2017, of the total number of persons enrolled in higher education, 87.4% were attending study programs at State universities, and 12.6% at private educational institutions.

⁷³ Ministry of National Education - Report on the Status of Higher Education in Romania, 2017-2018.

- the evolution of enrollment in non-university tertiary education improved in the last 6 years. In absolute terms, according to NIS data, the number of individuals enrolled in non-university tertiary education increased from 62,575 to almost over 99,000 between 2009 and 2015, with a peak of 105,557 in 2014. At the same time, the absolute figure of enrollment in higher education decreased dramatically from 775,319 individuals to only 410,697 in 2015. Annex 4.

With regard to inequalities in the field of education and employment, the profile of poor individuals employed in Romania shows that 92% of them are found in the rural area, and 95% have secondary studies at most.

The comparative analysis by levels of education shows significant differences between residence environments and gender. In the urban area, 16.3% of the youth in the 15-24 age group are graduates of higher education, compared to only 4.1% in the rural area, which reflects a low level of participation to higher education of the young rural population at the theoretical age corresponding to this level of studies. In terms of gender, the share of girls in the 15-24 age group who are graduates of higher education is double than the share of boys, with the ratio being reversed in the case of vocational and primary studies or no studies, more boys being in this situation than girls. (status of preuniv. education p. 51).

Nevertheless, there is a deficit of skills for medium and high qualification jobs in the field of engineering, machines, information technology and services (EC, 2018). Although the percentage of graduates of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) exceeds the EU average (see figure 3), the number of STEM graduates is low due to the low participation to higher education: for every 1,000 individuals in the 20-29 age group there are 14.4 STEM graduates, compared to the EU average of 19.1, and the number of new graduates of science and engineering for every 1,000 individuals in the 25-34 age group decreases.⁷ Emigration after graduation is another aspect which adds to the skills deficit. Employers declare that pupils and graduates who enter the labor market often lack key social and emotional skills⁸ and have sufficient academic capacities, although too theoretical (WB, 2018).⁷⁴

The population's digital skills are improving, but remain among the lowest in the EU: in 2017, only 29% of the population had at least basic digital skills (compared to the EU average of 57%). The skills of the labor force are inadequate for the needs of a modern economy (WB, 2018). Just like in many other countries, in Romania the automation of production processes determines a demand for higher levels of cognitive abilities (ibid). According to the Study on continuous professional training, 26.7 % of Romanian enterprises (EU-28: 72.6%) have offered professional training courses to their employees in 2015, and 21.3% of the employees have attended these courses (EU-28: 40.8%). In 2015, most enterprises in Romania indicated that the main skills necessary for the development of their business are team work, technical skills, practical skills and job specific skills.

The high rate of early school leaving, the low rate of graduation from higher education and the elevated number of emigrants result in an acute lack of qualified workers. The access to a quality general education is limited, especially rural areas and for the Romani children. The difficulty of attracting competent teachers to rural areas and schools predominantly populated by Romani pupils, combined with segregation and often discriminatory attitudes, are among the causes of the Romani children's low education levels.

The most worrisome aspect is the high early school leaving rate. Following the repeated specific recommendations made to Romania, in 2015, the Strategy for decreasing early school leaving was

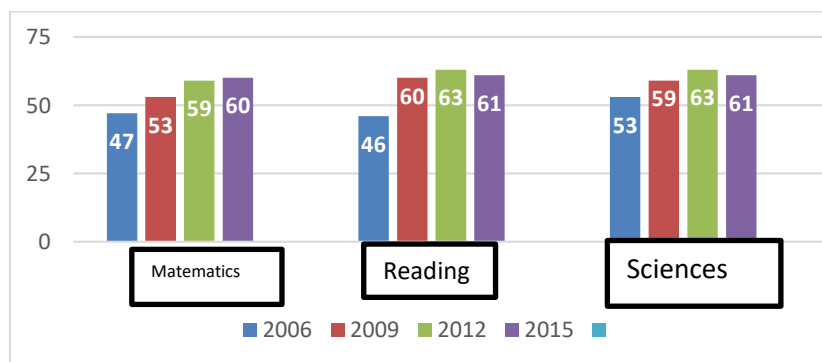
⁷⁴ 2018 Monitor of Education and Training in Romania

adopted and started being implemented. Among recent measures we see integrated interventions, a pilot programme for the introduction of a hot meal in schools, an improved reimbursement of trip expenses and the granting of social vouchers in order to encourage the attendance of pre-school education by children living in poverty. Since the fall of 2017, to improve the quality of teaching in disadvantaged schools, the authorities have been promoting measures based on EU-financed projects, whereas the process of modernizing the curriculum is being finalized. Improvements were brought to the legislation against segregation, also by consolidating the role of county school inspectorates. Nevertheless, we are still lacking a monitoring methodology. Additional measures are needed to get consistent progress in terms of fighting social and economic inequalities in the field of education. The “Guarantee for Youth” has only had so far a partial positive impact upon early school leaving, whereas “The second chance” programmes are not easily accessible. The vocational and technical training system is not sufficiently well aligned to the labor market necessities and the attendance of learning activities intended for adults is very low.⁷⁵

Having sufficient basic skills is an essential factor for finding and keeping stable and quality employment and successfully taking part in the economic and social life. International surveys indicate that Romanian teenagers display serious gaps in terms of basic competences. In that respect, an indicator described by Europe 2020 Agenda is represented by individuals with low performance in terms of basic competences. It has been defined as the proportion of persons performing low in internationally comparable reading, mathematics and sciences tests, such as PISA.

Despite the fact that Romania has displayed significant progress by improving results per education cycle of 15-year old students, measured as per OECD’s PISA study, a vast percentage are still below the minimum competence level.

Chart 12. The percentage of 15-year old students reaching the PISA minimum competence level (level 2 or higher)



The poor performance of Romanian students is also documented by reference to the results of TIMSS and PIRLS⁷⁶, which test the reading, mathematics and sciences skills of 4th grade and 8th grade students. The results⁷⁷ of the latest tests indicate that approximately 27% of 4th graders are unable to satisfy the lowest criterion for all the three disciplines in international comparisons with participating countries.

⁷⁵ The Council’s recommendation on Romania’s National Reform Programme for 2017, COM (2017) 522 final

⁷⁶ TIMSS and PIRLS are international comparative testing procedures, similar to PISA. They are conducted based on a comparative methodology by the International Evaluation Agency (IEA) at Lynch School of Education within Boston College

⁷⁷ *Timss and pirls 2011: Relationships Among Reading, Mathematics, and Science Achievement at the Fourth Grade — Implications for Early Learning* (2013), available online:

http://timss.bc.edu/timsspirls2011/downloads/TP11_Relationship_Report.pdf

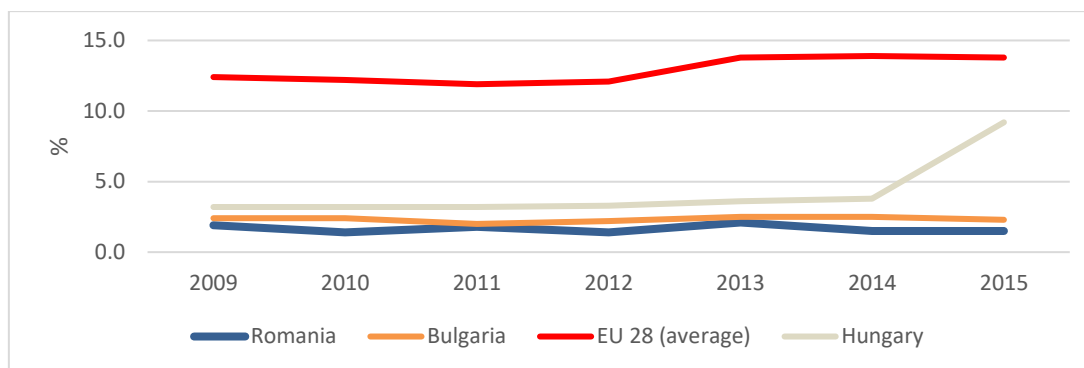
ESL and poor performance are two of the most significant issues plaguing the education system in Romania. Both are related to the families' SES and its influence upon the children's participation in education and learning achievements. Other strategic indicators, influenced by ESL and the low performance in reading, mathematics and sciences, are: the graduation of tertiary education, the employment of adults and even their participation in lifelong learning.

Vulnerable groups, such as children of Romani families, from poor and rural areas, are facing a much worse reality. According to MEF 2017⁷⁸, 29 % of Romani children receive their education in schools where all or most students are Romani. This proportion is the lowest among countries with similar characteristics (Bulgaria: 60 %, The Czech Republic: 30 %, Hungary: 61 %, Slovakia: 62 %). Moreover, rural areas witness nearly twice as many early school leaving events than urban areas.

In 2016, 37.5% of 8th graders in rural schools scored poor results at the national evaluation, as opposed to 15% in urban schools. This indicates a more extensive issue: whereas 45% of the students live in rural areas, only 24% of them continue their learning by accessing higher education. Additionally, access to quality education continues to be an important issue for Romani children. The share of Romani children taking part in early education programmes decreased from 45% in 2011 to 38% in 2016. Furthermore, 77% of the Romani youth aged 18-24 left school at an early age.⁷⁹

The country-specific recommendations from 2017 state that Romania should improve access to quality mass education, in particular for Children from the Romani population and from rural areas.

Chart 13. The rate of participation in education and training (% of the 18-64 group age), selected countries (2009 - 2015)



Source: Eurostat, indicator trng_ifs_05, 2016

Although there is a certain concern regarding its measurement method, which may not entirely reflect the current situation, the rate of participation in education among adults in Romania is low. The adults' participation in formal education, in continuous training programmes or other formal programmes is among the lowest in the entire EU, comparable only to Bulgaria's. Whereas the adults' education is an issue taken very seriously by EU's education-related policies, according to the 2017 ET Monitor⁸⁰, Romania, with its 1.2% participation rate in 2016, must eliminate the ever wider gap in relation to the neighboring countries and the average participation in education for adults at a European level.

⁷⁸ MEF 2017, available online: https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2017-ro_ro.pdf

⁷⁹ Country report SABER 2017, Romania, Faculty, the World Bank

⁸⁰ See pages 77 – 81 ET Monitor 2015.

The tertiary education graduation rate is the indicator in the case of which Romania scores the highest figures in the context of the 2020 ET strategy, in relation to its own objectives set forth. Scoring a 25.6 % tertiary education graduation rate in 2016, Romania is quite close to the undertaken target (26.7% in 2020). Despite all of the above, the rate figure is low in comparison with other EU states, such as Italy, Slovakia and The Czech Republic, which achieved similar rates. Additionally, the rate is relatively low as compared with the 40% objective set forth as an average for all of EU's member states. Therefore, increasing the participation in the tertiary education and other tertiary, non-university educational programmes must remain a long-term priority.

The relevance of higher education across the labor market is currently increasing, but some challenges do remain. The employment rate of fresh higher education graduates is growing, being supported by the developments occurring both across the labor market, as well in the field of education. The indicator reached 80.7 % in 2016, which means a decrease of the gap to the EU average of 82.8 %, while remaining below the levels prior to the crisis; the rate was 93 % during the peak year 2008, when the number of graduates was also the highest. Romania adopted for the 2015-2020 interval a strategy intended to enhance quality, the relevance across the labor market and the participation of disadvantaged groups, however, its implementation is slow.

Educational poverty is the core topic on the agenda of studies and recommendations of European educational policies, as demonstrated by the analysis provided by ETM 2015. The concept of educational poverty is nowadays used to cover a range of challenges which include both the family's socioeconomic status, as well as the education-related issues (participation, access, achievement). It may also be understood as a transversal topic from the policy of the 6 priority areas recommended by EC.

The Romanian education system and the educational policy context

School leaving is another factor of participation in education, at all levels. The data indicates that school leaving is a widely spread phenomenon, affecting all the education tiers. Nevertheless, certain key points stand out, emphasizing critical moments on the education path of children at high early school living risk. We are in need methodological observation, given that school living is calculated within national reports based on an "input-output" methodology for each academic year. By employing this method, school living is calculated as the difference between the number of children enrolled at the start of the year (in September) and the number of children still present in school enrolment registers at the end of the academic year (in September of the following year).

The school leaving rate during 2015/2016 was 1.8%. Looking at residence averages, we see a constant difference between the school living rate during primary and middle school in urban and rural areas, to the detriment of the rural areas (1.4% urban and 2.3% rural). Concerning school leaving per gender, we see a greater frequency of school leaving events in the case of male students (2.0% for boys and 1.6% for girls).

The school leaving rate during high school, over the past academic year, has once again increased, reaching 3.5% (23354 students) at the end of 2015/2016. The data shows the fact that boys permanently leave high school in greater numbers in comparison with girls (4.2% in the case of boys and 2.8% in the case of girls during the 2015/2016 academic year).

Analyzed per education track within high school education, the school living status at the end of the 2015/2016 academic year (calculated as a share of students registered as having dropped out at the end of the year, out of the total number of students enrolled at the start of the academic year) is as follows:

- Per education track, the lowest school leaving rate is provided by the vocational track – 1.4%. Per main field of study, the lowest school leaving rate is provided by the Humanities field – 1.1%.
- The highest rate is provided by the technological track – 5.7% (16,634 students); as part of this education track, the highest school leaving figures are provided by the technical (7.3%) and natural resources and environmental protection (6.1%) main fields of study;
- The theoretical track witnessed a 1.9% school leaving rate (6,201 students); as part of this education track, the math and sciences main field of study has the highest school leaving rate, of 2.4%.

The analysis of school leaving per cohort, and of losses of students per cohort, respectively depending on the residential environment, emphasizes major differences between the rural and the urban environments. Although these differences have decreased from one academic year to the next, they continue to remain significant, placing the rural school environment in a disadvantaged position. As such, during the 2015/2016 academic year, less than 1 out of 10 students would abandon their studies in urban areas, as opposed to 2 out of 10 students in rural areas. Nearly one fifth of a school cohort will be lost during primary and middle school in rural areas, as compared with approximately 7% of students in urban areas.

As in the case of primary and middle school, we see higher values of school leaving per cohort and losses of students, from the 1st grade to the 8th grade, in the case of the male subjects. Over the analyzed period, the values of the two indicators were 2-3 pp higher in the case of boys, as compared with girls.

A highly relevant indicator in regard to the participation in post-middle school education is the transition rate from the 8th grade to high school and vocational education. It underlines the level of access to the upper secondary education, as well as the education system's capacity of comprising students within this level of study.

Over the past years, the rate of transition towards upper secondary education (high school and vocational education) has had a downward trend, reaching, during the 2016/2017 academic year, 93.7%. The rates of transition from middle school to upper secondary education display different figures and developments depending on the education track.

During the 2016/2017 academic year, the rate of transition to high school reached 77.4%. the distribution of figures per gender is balanced; if, traditionally speaking, the rate of transition to high school would be significantly higher for girls than for boys, the dissolution of the vocational track in 2009/2010 practically lead to a levelling of the indicator values among genders. Once the vocational track got reactivated, as of the 2014/2015 academic year, we saw a rate of transition to high school significantly higher for girls than for boys. During the 2016/2017 academic year, the difference increased to almost 12 pp (83.4% for girls as opposed to 71.7% for boys).

Table 24. Rates of transition to upper secondary education (2009 - 2016) per education track and gender

Rates of transition to upper secondary education		2009/ 2010*	2010/ 2011*	2011/ 2012*	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2016/ 2017
Total high school education (high school and TVE)	Total	92.6	-	-	96.7	96.7	93.7	94.4
	Girls	94.2	-	-	94.4	94.6	93.8	93.4
	Boys	90.9	-	-	98.8	98.7	93.6	95.4
Only high school	Total	92.8	93.0	92.2	92.2	91.9	77.4	79.6
	Girls	93.0	93.2	92.6	92.3	92.4	83.4	84.9
	Boys	92.6	92.8	91.8	92.0	91.5	71.7	74.4
Only TVE	Total	2.2	-	-	4.5	4.8	16.3	14.9
	Girls	3.8	-	-	2.1	2.2	10.4	8.5
	Boys	0.8	-	-	6.9	7.2	21.8	20.9

** As of the 2009 / 2010 academic year, the alternative TVE (technical and vocational education) track was eliminated and reactivated as of the 2014 / 2015 academic year.*

As of the 2012/2013 academic year, the rate of transition to vocational education has had upward figures, following the transitional measures intended to organize vocational education. As of the 2014/2015 academic year, the rate of transition to vocational education has significantly increased following the reestablishment of 3-year vocational schools. During the 2016/2017 academic year, 16.3% of 8th graders chose vocational education – a figure exceeding that of the previous year. The difference per gender is maintained in favor of the male population by more than 11 pp during the 2016/2017 academic year (21.8% for boys as opposed to 10.4% for girls). Therefore, following the vocational track reactivation we see a significantly higher rate of transition to vocational education in the case of boys than in the case of girls.

The distribution of figures per gender is balanced; if, traditionally speaking, the rate of transition to high school would be significantly higher for girls than for boys, the dissolution of the vocational track in 2009/2010 practically lead to a levelling of the indicator values among genders. Once the vocational track got reactivated, as of the 2014/2015 academic year, we saw a rate of transition to high school significantly higher for girls than for boys. During the 2016/2017 academic year, the difference increased to almost 12 pp (83.4% for girls as opposed to 71.7% for boys).

Against the same background of the specific cohort of students who graduated high school in 2014/2015, the rate of high school graduation with a passed baccalaureate exam for the 2015/2016 academic year was 41.6%, much lower than that of the previous year. As in previous years, the female population scored higher figures, the difference reaching nearly 15 pp in favor of girls.

Table 25. Rate of high school graduation with a passed baccaureate exam

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
Total	63.4	42.4	39.2	44.6	44.0	51.7	41.6
Females	70.3	51.1	48.1	53.8	53.0	61.9	49.1
Males	56.8	34.1	30.7	35.9	35.4	41.9	34.5

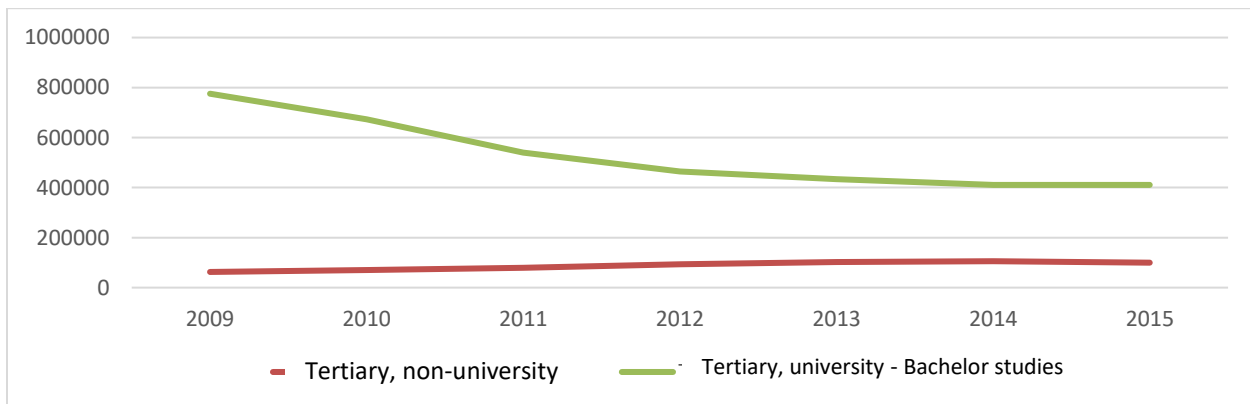
Over the past four academic years, the (current year) high school graduates' rate of participation in the baccaureate exam has been relatively consistent, around the 80% mark. For the 2015/2016 academic year, the indicator values were: 79.1% - total, 83.9% - girls and 74.1% - boys. We can conclude that almost one fifth of the current year graduates fail to take the baccaureate exam. The rate of participation in the baccaureate exam is constantly higher among girls than among the male population.

For the 2016/2017 academic year, the share of current year graduates who took the exam increased by more than one percentage point in comparison with the previous year, both in total, as well as per gender. Accordingly, the shares of graduates from previous years decreased. For the 2016/2017 academic year, out of all graduates taking the exam, 84.4% are graduates of the current class, whereas 15.6% are graduates from previous years.

During the 2016/2017 academic year, in the case of current year graduates, the difference among per-gender figures favors the girls, who lead by 7 pp (87.6% for girls as opposed 80.7% for boys), whereas it does favor the boys among graduates from previous years, who lead by an identical 7 pp (19.3% for boys as opposed to 12.4% for girls).

The graduation of tertiary education among the population falls within the objective specification as far as reaching the ET 2020 target is concerned. Nevertheless, the rates of participation in tertiary education display a slight downward trend, seen as a threat to maintaining the positive trend observed until recently.

Chart 14. Enrolments in tertiary education during the 2009-2015 period (absolute figures)



Source: INS Tempo Online database, SCL103K and SCL103L indicators

The total number of enrolments in tertiary education (university, Bachelor studies programmes and non-university, TVE-type programmes), in absolute figures, has constantly decreased; still, the evolution of enrolments in non-university tertiary education has improved over the past 6 years. In absolute terms, as per the NIS data, the number of persons enrolled in non-university tertiary education increased from 62,575 to nearly over 99,000 between 2009 and 2015, with a peak of 105,557 in 2014. At the same time, the absolute figure of enrolments in university education dropped dramatically from 775,319 persons to

just 410,697 in 2015. This decrease of the rate of enrolment in universities was largely caused by the fact that private universities had lost nearly 81% of their 2009 enrolment figure by 2015.

The rates of participation in tertiary education decreased from 63% for the 19-23 age group to 47% in 2015 (calculation based on the NIS data). Although university enrolments are the primary source of this significant drop in participation (Diagram 8), it is also important to notice that participation in non-university tertiary programmes nearly doubled from 5%, for the population aged 19-23, in 2009 to 9% in 2015. This clearly shows that, in recent years, as the graduation and baccalaureate exam passing rates decreased, non-university tertiary education has become a further learning alternative for a significant number of youth. However, this increase of non-university enrolments only partially offsets the decrease in university enrolments (see Diagram 8).

Employment rates have increased over the past five years for the population aged 15-64, from 57.4% in 2009 to 60.8% in 2014, rather reflecting an improvement of the economic sector after the 2009-2010 financial crisis. Except for individuals who only graduated primary school, employment rates have increased regardless of the graduation level.

Nevertheless, employment rates for youth present a relatively concerning image of how relevant education is and its relation to the labor market. The youth (aged 15-24) employment rates for Bachelor's degree holders decreased from 53.7% in 2009 to 35.8% in 2014, whereas for TVE graduates these rates increased from 52.3% to 70.4%. Again, this may signify a change in the labor market structure, with a richer, vocationally oriented offer of jobs, as opposed to those that require more advanced skills. Alternatively, this may indicate that the relevance of university education programmes is pretty low.

Unemployment rates present even more evidence of the fact that there are not too many links between the results of the education system in terms of graduates and competences and the labor market needs. Unemployment rates among youth (15-24 years old) have increased over the past five years from 20% in 2009 to 24% in 2014. This increase is visible at nearly all education levels, even if it rightfully seems to have affected in larger numbers strictly primary school graduates than tertiary university graduates. Unemployment rates among vocational programme and TVE graduates have dropped.

The Romanian education system analysis indicates the presence of ever growing gaps in terms of gender and area of origin, according to educational indicators at European and global levels. Female individuals participate more in education than males, whereas rural areas are at a constant disadvantage in comparison with urban ones in terms of participation, school infrastructure and the human resources involved in the system. The link between education and the labor market seems to be ever less visible, given the increased unemployment figures among young graduates of the education system. During the 2009/2010 academic year, the vocational and technical education entered a dissolution process. In the context of poor performance scores at the national evaluation for 8th graders and the baccalaureate exam, TVE becomes a track of choice.

The education system for adults in Romania remains fragmented, with its various components having evolved in different ways. For instance, the validation of educational history is properly developed, but there is no database with possible courses that adults should be able to attend so as to fill their skill gaps, which would make it possible to correlate the adult students' needs and requirements with the learning offer. Moreover, there is poor data collection and limited culture of participation in lifelong learning, particularly among the general population living in rural areas, where living is earned from subsistence and semi-subsistence farming and there is a scarce educational infrastructure and limited access to learning opportunities.

Education, on the whole, continues to be underfinanced, as demonstrated by the 3.70% of GDP allocated to education, through various sources. Education funding fragmentation, particularly at a pre-university level, represents a major challenge, since implementing a unified strategy and unified policies is difficult

at this stage due to a great number of administrative and organizational factors involved in funding education. Whereas most of the education-related expenses are made to finance staff wages, these wages continue to be among the lowest by comparison with other EU member states and the wage differences between entry-level employees and those with seniority in office are significant. As such, the teaching profession remains an unattractive career for youth, leading to an elevated number of temporarily employed teaching staff in the educational system.

The ministry is pursuing a series of priorities and actions, as established in the National Reform Plan and the Sectoral Strategies approved by various Government Decisions:

- The strategy for decreasing early school leaving, approved as per Government Decision no. 417/2015;
- The national strategy for tertiary education 2015-2020, approved as per Government Decision no. 565/2015;
- The national lifelong learning strategy 2015-2020, approved as per Government Decision no. 418/2015;
- The strategy of vocational education and training in Romania 2016-2020, approved as per Government Decision no. 317/2016.

A summary of the **Ministry's budget for education**, as well as the programmes mentioned in the annex to the state budget, are presented in the table below.

Table 26. Ministry of Education multiannual budget based on programmes

Type of programme	Budget (thousand RON)				
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017 (estimate)
Total budget for Education	3,430,219	3,990,244	4,291,792	4,381,094	4,216,540
Programme for educational materials	18,514	13,369	20,000	20,000	20,530
Funds for high school	157,000	126,808	115,406	90,387	103,921
Euro200	20,610	13,642	16,001	16,000	15,928
Ensuring the quality of human resources	54,200				
Programme for tertiary education	2,128,049	2,570,883	2,222,593	2,691,120	2,677,931
Strengthening the ministry's institutional capacity	3,012				
Total programmes	2,381,385	2,724,702	2,374,000	2,817,507	2,818,310
% programme coverage within the state budget	70%	69%	56%	65%	67%

Analysis based on data provided by the Ministry of Public Finance

Analyzing the *strategic priorities* mentioned by the Ministry in its budgetary strategic documents, over the course of the four years – 2013-2016 – these were grouped under three strategic paths: school education; tertiary education; European dimension of education and training.

Following the content analysis of these paths, using the Atlas.ti software and counting the initiatives/measures for each individual one, we have the following distribution:

Table 27. The Ministry’s main strategic paths upon negotiating the budget (% of the measures)

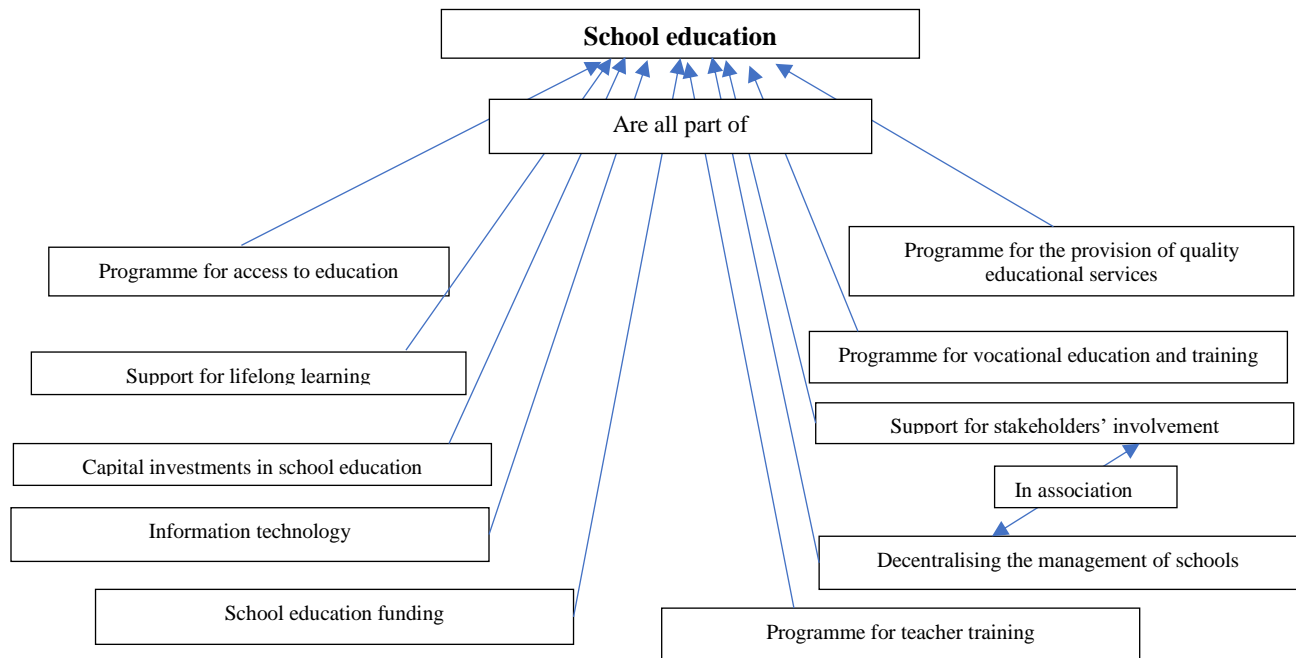
Strategic path	2014	2015	2016	%
European dimension of education	2%	8%	6%	6%
School education	67%	59%	61%	62%
Tertiary education	31%	37%	36%	35%

Analysis based on data provided by the Ministry of Public Finance

The highest number of measures/initiatives are included in the “School education” strategic path and, whereas the highest budgetary allocation percentage goes to higher education. Equally true is that the main flow for funding school education comes from the local authorities, and the ministry shall not take responsibility for implementing the policies, providing strictly support and guidance. The Ministry has to analyze the available resources and the impact resulted from their use so as to facilitate implementation and guide future interventions for the educational sector on the whole.

Within the “School education” path, in the content of the four studied budgetary strategic documents (annexes for the 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 state budgets), there are various programmes.

Figure 13. Programmes within the “School education” strategic path



Source: data from the Ministry of Education’s document with strategic priorities

As part of the “Access to education” programme, the most frequently mentioned measures are those regarding social policies, intended to support access to schooling for children coming from disadvantaged environments. Pre-school education comes second in terms of the frequency with which the measures are mentioned in the official documents. The professionalization of school management is mentioned in more recent documents.

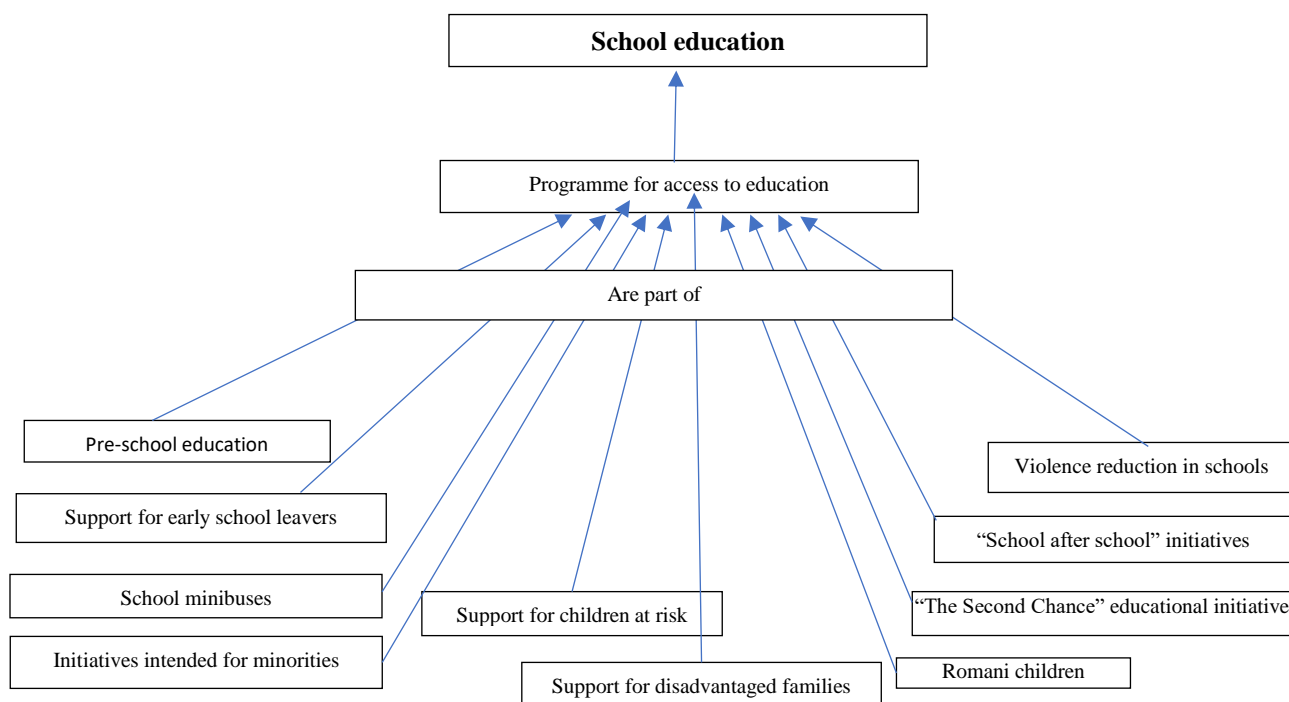
Table 28. Share of mentioning measures that support the programme for access to education (% of all the measures)

Measures/mentioning frequency	2014	2015	2016	%
Improvement of counselling quality in schools	0.00%	0.00%	1.52%	0.64%
Pre-school education	2.38%	2.04%	3.03%	2.55%
Corruption prevention and elimination	2.38%	0.00%	0.00%	0.64%
Violence reduction in schools	2.38%	0.00%	0.00%	0.64%
Romani children	2.38%	0.00%	0.00%	0.64%
“School after school” learning initiative	2.38%	2.04%	1.52%	1.91%
School minibuses	0.00%	0.00%	1.52%	0.64%
“The Second Chance” educational initiative	2.38%	2.04%	1.52%	1.91%
Sub-programme for access to education	2.38%	2.04%	1.52%	1.91%
Support for children at risk	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%
<i>Support for disadvantaged families</i>	7.14%	4.08%	4.55%	5.10%
Support for early school leavers	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Source: data from the Ministry of Education’s document with strategic priorities. The author’s analysis of the data provided by the Ministry of Public Finance

The professionalization of management in schools, together with the school inspection, the tutoring of and the counselling provided to teachers are among the most frequently mentioned measures *supporting the quality of school education* in two of the most recent documents. These measures are intended to enhance the quality of human resources.

Figure 14. Measures designed to support the programme for access to education



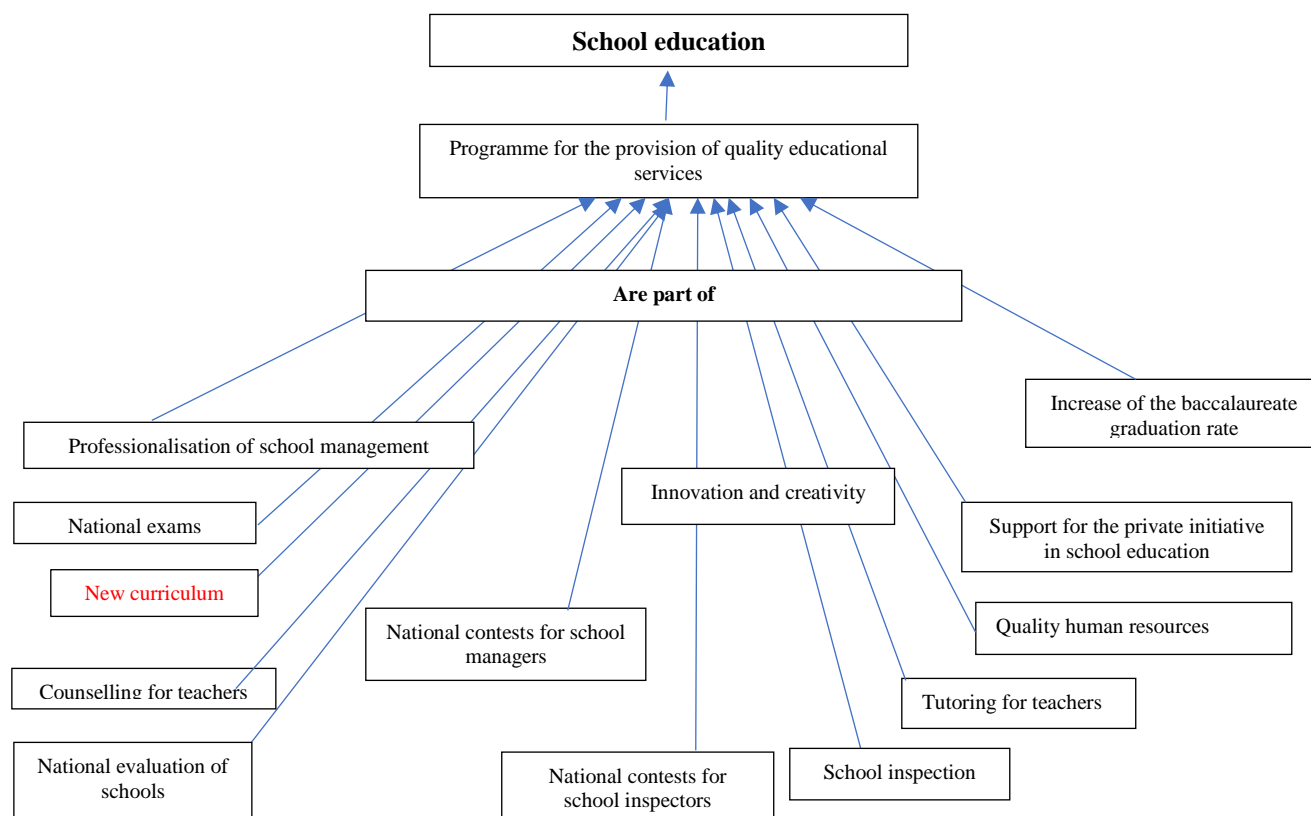
Source: data from the Ministry of Education’s document with strategic priorities

Table 29. Share of mentioning measures that support the programme for the provision of quality educational services (% out of all the measures)

Measures/mentioning frequency	2014	2015	2016	Quotations
Support for private initiatives in school education	0.00%	0.00%	1.52%	0.64%
Innovation and creativity	2.38%	2.04%	0.00%	1.27%
National contests for school inspectors	0.0%	2.04%	0.00%	0.64%
National contests for school managers	0.00%	2.04%	0.00%	0.64%
National evaluation of schools	0.00%	0.00%	1.52%	0.64%
National exams	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%
New curriculum	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%
Professionalization of school management	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%
Quality human resources	0.00%	0.00%	1.52%	0.64%
Increase of the baccalaureate graduation rate	0.00%	0.00%	1.52%	0.64%
School inspection	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%
Counselling for teachers	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%
Tutoring for teachers	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%

The author's analysis of the data provided by the Ministry of Public Finance

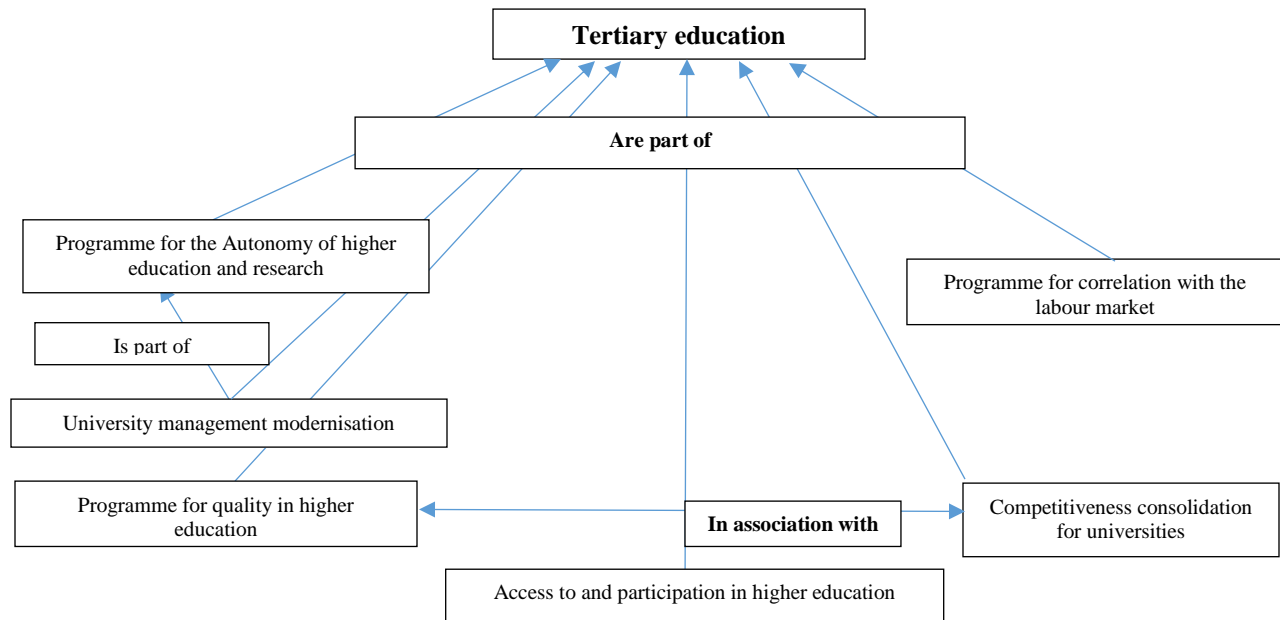
Figure 15. Measures supporting the programme for the provision of quality educational services



Source: data from the Ministry of Education's document with strategic priorities

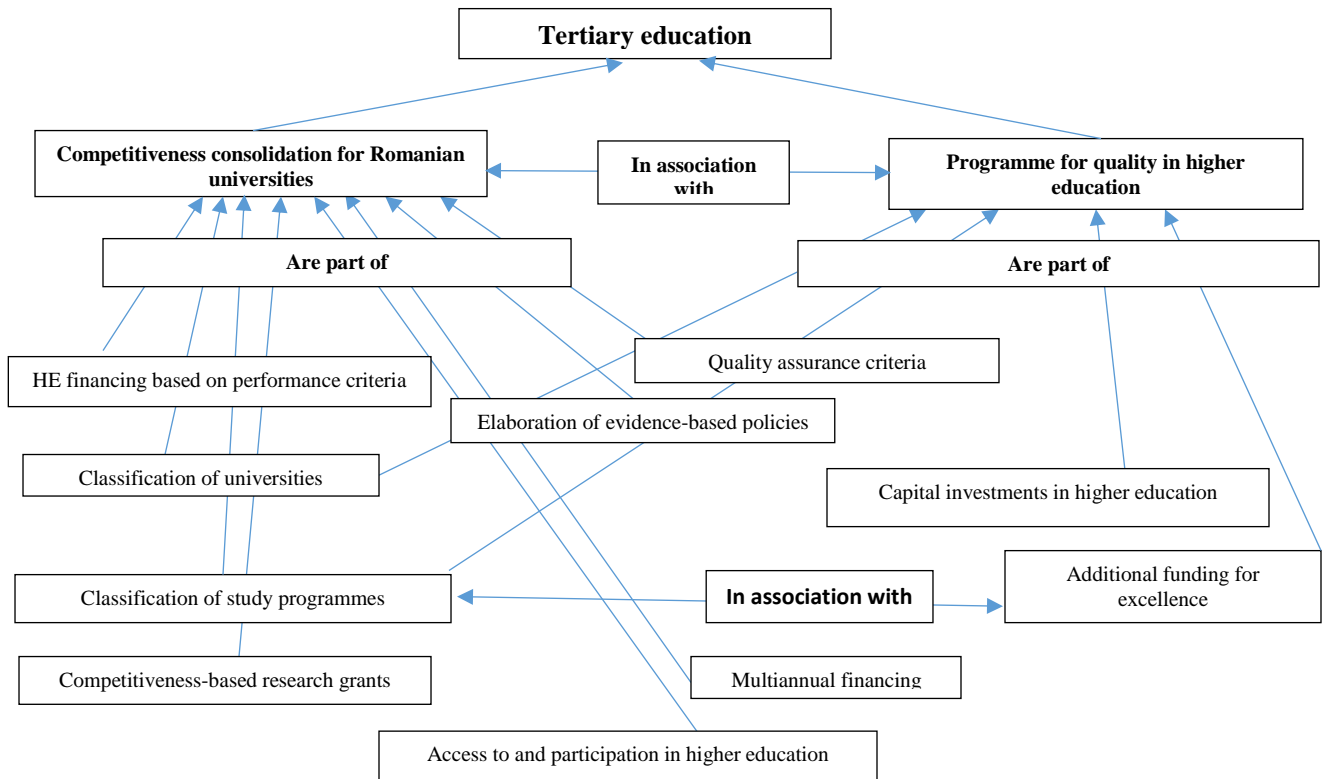
The tertiary education path comprises five programmes.

Figure 16. Programmes within the tertiary education strategic path



Source: data from the Ministry of Education's document with strategic priorities

Figure 17. Measures intended to consolidate the competitiveness of Romanian universities and the quality of higher education



Source: data from the Ministry of Education's document with strategic priorities

Table 30. Share of the measures the purpose of which is quality/competitiveness in higher education (% of all the measures)

Measures/mentioning frequency	2014	2015	2016	%
Policy elaboration and implementation capacity	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%
Capital investments in higher education	0.00%	0.00%	1.52%	0.64%
Classification of universities	2.38%	0.00%	1.52%	1.27%
Assessment of master study areas	2.38%	0.00%	0.00%	0.64%
<i>Elaboration of evidence-based policies</i>	2.38%	2.04%	3.03%	2.55%
Support for cooperation among institutions	0.00%	2.04%	0.00%	0.64%
HE (higher education) funding for performance criteria	2.38%	2.04%	0.00%	1.27%
Autonomy of human resource management	2.38%	0.00%	0.00%	0.64%
University management modernization	0.00%	2.04%	1.52%	1.27%
Multiannual financing	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%	0,00%
Performance-based financing	0.00%	2.04%	0.00%	0.64%
Public responsibility of universities	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Quality assurance criteria</i>	2.38%	2.04%	3.03%	2.55%
Ranking of study programmes	2.38%	0.00%	1.52%	1.27%
Competitiveness-based research grants	2.38%	2.04%	0.00%	1.27%
Additional funding for excellence	0.00%	0.00%	1.52%	0.64%

Among the measures intended to *increase competitiveness/quality* of higher education institutions and programmes, the elaboration of *new quality assurance criteria and indicators* leads the way, together with the development of the capacity to monitor and assesses aimed at gathering reliable data, required to *elaborate evidence-based policies*, both at an institution, as well as at a national level. The classification of universities, the ranking of study programmes and the modernization of university management are frequently mentioned in the Ministry of Education’s strategic documents.

Getting back to the *budgetary programmes*, they include:

- Initiative for educational materials;
- Funds for High School;
- Euro200 – support for disadvantaged students focused on purchases of personal computers;
- Tertiary education in Romania;
- Improvement of the Ministry’s capacity to manage European funds;
- Assurance of quality human resources.

The objectives of budgetary programmes largely focus on social policies intended to ensure equal opportunities, providing access facilities and incentives to low-income families. These policies come to support the strategy for decreasing early school living, advocating for participation in learning and bearing a part of the related expenses.

The tertiary education programme objectives are quite complex and diverse, being rather unfocused and difficult to operate. The objective of enhancing the ministry's capacity is more focused, but indicators are vague and not directly related to the intended actions/measures: *the number of project proposals received by the Management Authority*.

The outcome indicators are expressed only as immediate result indicators: the number of beneficiaries of social programmes, where the "expenditure/beneficiary" is the efficiency indicator. There are no final result or impact indicators and no correlations with the aforementioned strategic objectives.

The Ministry's strategic documents associated with the sample group of budgetary proposals for the past four years (for 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016) include three major action paths, which would correspond to three major strategic programmes: school education, tertiary education and the European dimension in education and training, respectively. These comprise various sub-programmes and measures. Most of them are mentioned in all four annual budgetary documents and, sometimes, the specific sub-programme where they are included varies from one year to the next. The measures are comprehensive for the education sector, covering from access to and participation in education at various levels/cycles to quality enhancement, decentralization, management professionalization, the involvement of stakeholders in the management of educational institutions etc. To a great extent, the measures are formulated in desirable terms, as general objectives, but they do lack action plans and operational initiatives. Budgetary programmes focus only on a small, but important portion of education, namely to social policies designed to support students from disadvantaged families. Moreover, the sub-programme for tertiary education is included in a single budgetary programme, largely comprising the institutional financing of universities, but it does not detail upon the budget for each sub-programme and does not include a clear action plan or specific indicators. The result indicator only includes the number of higher education graduates, the result of higher education as a whole, without, however, measuring the effectiveness of sub-programmes or the degree of reaching the more complex objectives mentioned in the policy document.

There is currently a considerable gap between set of goals and objectives widely expressed in the policy documents and an action plan and its related financial means. Budgetary programmes, although covering around 60% of the Ministry's budget, regard only a fraction of the specified objectives and measures. This fraction is smaller for the school education, whereas the programme for tertiary education corresponds to the synonymous budgetary programme, without, however, making budget allocations for the measures detailed in the document.

As such, there is a clear need for a restructuring of programmes and measures provided in general terms, in accordance with the available budget, taking into account the strategies adopted by means of Government Decisions. Additionally, there have to exist a clear impact and final outcome indicators, as well as SMART immediate outcome indicators for the proposed measures; the funding sources should be clearly mentioned, as well.

ANNEX 5. DRAFT LEGISLATIVE ACTS FOR 2019

For 2019, the Ministry of National Education has introduced in the database of the Government's Annual Work Plan a number of 20 draft normative acts, as follows:

1. GD for approving the methodological norms for applying the provisions of the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 97/2018 regarding the approval of the Pilot Program for granting food support for preschoolers and students from 50 state pre-university education units;
2. GD regarding the approval of the schooling figures for the state pre-university education and the state higher education in the 2019-2020 school / university year;
3. GD for the modification of GD no. 76/2005 regarding the establishment of the National Agency for Community Programs in the Field of Education and Vocational Training;
4. GD for the modification and completion of GD no. 22/2007 for the approval of the Methodology of institutional evaluation for the authorization, accreditation and periodic evaluation of the organizations providing education and the GD no. 1258/2005 regarding the approval of the regulation of organization and functioning of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-university Education, with the subsequent modifications;
5. GD on the areas and programs of accredited master's degree studies and the maximum number of students that can be enrolled in the academic year 2019-2020;
6. GD regarding the approval of the Nomenclature of the fields and of the specializations / programs of university studies, of the structure of the higher education institutions for the academic year 2019-2020 and of the names of the qualifications and titles conferred on the graduates of the undergraduate education, enrolled in the first year of studies in the university years 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020;
7. GD regarding the approval of the provisional operating authorization standards and the accreditation standards for the evaluation and quality assurance in pre-university education;
8. Government Decision regarding the participation of Romania in the "Study on improving the efficiency of the use of school resources", developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development;
9. Law on performing a proportionality test before adopting new regulations regarding professions;
10. GD regarding the approval of the National Register of Qualifications;
11. GD regarding the approval of the technical-economic indicators of the investment works "Rehabilitation, modernization and equipping of the educational infrastructure of the main building C3 - University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Târgu Mureș";
12. GD amending and supplementing GD no. 536/2016 on stimulating high school performance in pre-university education;
13. GD regarding the approval of the technical-economic indicators of the investment works "Building rehabilitation C4 - Central Pavilion - Faculty of Agriculture within the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine" Ion Ionescu from Brad", Iasi;
14. GD amending and supplementing GD no. 1252/2012 regarding the approval of the methodology for organizing and operating the nurseries and other pre-preschool education services;

15. GD on the approval of the technical-economic indicators of the investment objective “Regional Center for Advanced Research for Emerging Diseases, Zoonoses and Food Safety - ROVETEMERG” at the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine “Ion Ionescu from Brad”, Iasi;
16. GD on the fields of doctoral studies within the institutions organizing doctoral studies;
17. GD amending and supplementing GD no. 34/1999 regarding the establishment of the Romanian Language Institute, with subsequent modifications and completions;
18. Law on pre-university education;
19. Law on university education;
20. Law on Teaching Staff Statute.

From the 20 proposals of normative acts included in the Work Plan 2019, three proposals have been selected to represent the priorities of the Ministry for the year 2019, namely:

21. GD regarding the approval of the schooling figures for the state pre-university education and the state higher education in the 2019-2020 school / university year;
22. GD on the areas and programs of accredited master's degree studies and the maximum number of students that can be enrolled in the academic year 2019-2020;
23. GD regarding the approval of the Nomenclature of the fields and of the specializations / programs of university studies, of the structure of the higher education institutions for the academic year 2019-2020 and of the names of the qualifications and titles conferred on the graduates of the undergraduate education, enrolled in the first year of studies in the university years 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020.

Competence makes a difference!

Project selected under the Administrative Capacity Operational Programme, co-financed by the European Union from the European Social Fund