European Employment Policy Observatory (EEPO)

Ad hoc request
Country fiches on skills governance in the Member States

Romania
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1 Imbalances in the labour market

Romania has witnessed strong economic growth for the whole of the first decade of this century. Rates of growth at above potential, with values topping 7 or even 8% have been common for the almost the whole period between 2002 and 2008. Nominal GDP has thus increased substantially expanding the size of the economy. This vigorous and much needed positive trend has been supported by a significant inflow of FDI which at its turn has engendered a powerful rise of the domestic demand, a movement that appeared buoyant when comparing with the skinny realities of the 1990s Plan to Market transition. The advent of world crisis and subsequent depression in 2009 has however curbed this positive trend. The reversal of the financial inflows has sent the economy in a tailspin and prompted the Government to ask for financial assistance from the IMF, the World Bank and the EU Commission in early 2009 through the conclusion of a first Memorandum of Understanding, to be followed by series of such agreements up to date (2015), although with the positive note that ever since 2012 these have been treated as preventive in nature (i.e.: no more funds have been drawn by the Romanian Government). The recovery from the abyss of -9% GDP % in 2009 which has been followed in mid of 2010 by a sharp internal devaluation that drastically curtailed the remaining impetus in domestic demand has been slow. Rates of growth are currently at around a maximum of 3-4%, reaching thus at their best 50% of the pre-crisis level which, given the character of the economy is not nearly enough to close-in the gap with the mainstream of the EU.

The massive investment of the early 2000s did not mean however significant job creation. Growth has been spearheaded by investment in capital as well as by the TFP which means that actually a better combination of the production factors has been responsible for the surge in productivity in Romania between 2001 and 2008, one of the highest, by cumulative vales, in the whole of the EU. This resulted in a job shed in sectors which were usually generating large number of jobs, especially manufacturing industries of all kinds. These branches and sectors of activity not only dispensed with the excess labour of the former state owned enterprises but invested heavily in equipment, machinery and high productivity automation which made jobs lost throughout the industrial restructuring process never to be practically replaced. The whole middle segment of the labour market which was providing a more than large number of rather well paid and secure jobs for individuals with “medium qualification levels” levelled down, with the economy practically limiting its feeble job generation to the top and bottom segment of the labour market. While the pre-crisis years have seen a rather buoyant replacement demand (expansion demand by contrast has been a constant poor performer) the crisis and post crisis years have equally managed to scar this component of labour demand, especially as the public sector has been severely affected by drastic austerity measures ever since 2009, with a faint recovery from this trend being manifest only after 2013. Significant migration for employment abroad which involves around 3 million

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1 See also for this section the table and chart in the Annex;
2 We will use hereby the classification also used by the CEDEFOP led Pan European Mid-Term Forcasting of the Supply and Demand of Skills (the Skillsnet network). This exercise currently works with the concepts of „high”, „medium” and „low” qualifications for its projections. As a member of the SkillsNet network and a participant to the CEDEFOP lead venture ever since its inception in 2005, the author of this text will make frequent references the most valuable outputs produced by this expert group and which now enjoy broad European recognition;
working age Romanians, mostly directed towards other EU member states, as well as the persistence of a large sector of subsistence farming together with the informal sector have contributed to a moderate to low rate of unemployment, not surpassing 8-9% at the height of the crisis in 2009-11, and since then on a downward trend. However, youth unemployment at rates of 22-24% remains alarming reflecting a dearth of jobs suitable for a young generation displaying higher levels of qualifications than those of their parents.

Imbalances built themselves rife in such an environment. Young generations constantly increased their levels of qualification thus increasing the supply of qualified labour on the market, especially in the segment of the “high qualified”. However this increasing supply did not necessarily found its debouche on the domestic market. In practically most of the cases the highly qualified young graduates had a hard time in finding themselves adequate jobs thus leading to a pervasive phenomenon of “over-qualification” and thus further feeding into migration for employment abroad. While the economy kept growing in the 2000s, the public sector expanded at a moderate rate (credit also to the requirements of the EU accession process) and thus some expansion demand was available for a growing stream of qualified and especially high qualified labour. However as the crisis struck this source of demand dwindled to a trickle. In the meantime, the education and training system has been less adept at providing the economy with medium level qualifications, especially technical ones, which led to another set of imbalances. Therefore it is more than apparent that apart from a marked increase in the rate of unemployment for the high qualified, a powerful mismatch is at work as the high qualified are taking jobs that should have been performed by the medium qualified thus making over-qualification rife on the market and one of the root causes for continuing migration for employment abroad amongst young. The CEDEFOP projections available in the frame of the Pan European Forecasting exercise show that for the foreseeable future (up to 2025-2030) much of the expansion demand will go towards the service sectors as well as towards some high tech industries. However the services that will require the generation of a more significant number of new jobs will not be necessarily those asking also for high qualification jobs. Apparently, a lot of job generation will take place in warehousing, transportation, storage of goods and in a large sector containing miscellaneous activities which may be also a by-word for low-productivity, low income earning jobs. Even if agriculture will substantially diminish its share of total employment it will still be one of the largest “employers” and apparently will generate quite a significant “replacement demand”, a development consistent with the fact that most of the current working force is aged and ageing at a rate faster than for the rest of sectors. Worryingly enough projections show that the number of high qualified that will be unemployed will be significantly superior to current levels. Projections from the same forecasting exercise show that the economy will mostly generate low and medium qualification jobs while one the supply side, the number of highly qualified

3 Migration for employment broad has been hitting hard sectors such as health-care where the shortages have become dire as of the middle of the last decade. While the supply of medical graduates has been steadily increasing ever since 1990, significant migration flows have practically nullified the effects of this increase in terms of qualified staff thus generating a tremendous strain on the domestic provision, both public and private;

4 This makes for a double loss as migrants, especially the well qualified not only settle abroad depriving the country from a valuable and qualified labour resource and thus from the potential growth it might have generated but also women of fertile age are giving birth abroad and therefore contributing to natural growth of other nations while in the meantime deepening the ageing process at home with dire consequences;
will increase. Thus imbalances will continue and most likely deepen as there will be a significant and growing shortage of middle qualified (apparently the largest in the EU) while the low and the high qualified will be in excess of market demand. This trend will maintain itself for the whole period up to 2025\(^5\).

2 Production of labour market and skills intelligence

Production of labour market and skills intelligence can be divided into four strands: (1) basic statistical, policy making and regulatory purposes labour market and skills intelligence (2) research and forecasting oriented labour market and skills intelligence (3) labour market and skills intelligence for the public employment services and (4) labour market and skills intelligence for education and training.

The first strand is rooted into the general use information platform provided, maintained and regularly perfected and updated by the National Institute of Statistics/Institutul National de Statistica (NIS- www.insse.ro). The NIS through its specialized network of offices and operators as well as according to its law of organization enshrining its role as national statistical office regularly collects, processes and provides authorities, enterprises, NGOs, social partners, actors of the education and training processes and the general public with a comprehensive body of labour market statistics, including information on occupation and skills. Labour market statistics and intelligence is also produced by the Ministry of Labour and its agencies such as the National Agency for Employment (Agentia Nationala pentru Ocuparea Forlei de munca-www.anofm.ro), the National Public Pension House (Casa Nationala de Pensii Publice-www.cnpp.ro) as well as the Labour and Social Inspection (Inspectia Sociala si a Muncii). This information is generally used for reporting and analysis at national level while also feeding into the general statistical system operated by the NIS. (2)The second strand is broadly exemplified by the research type information and intelligence consisting of studies, researches, methodologies, including forecasting ones, methods and tools as well as other various research type products, including more complex projects where deemed necessary. These stream from research organizations the main source being the National Labour Research Institute (INCSMPS – Institutul National de Cercetare Stiintifica in domeniul Muncii si Protectiei Sociale, see at www.incsmps.ro). The Institute has also served as national contact point for the Refernet network of the CEDEFOP between 2009 and 2013 thus being the producer of the various products under the aegis of the network, including the VET in Europe Report for Romania\(^6\) (see also at www.refernet.ro). (3) The third strands refers basically to labour market information and intelligence that is produced by the National Agency for Employment as the country’s public employment service and administrator, under the authority of the Ministry of Labour, of the unemployment insurance system. (4) The last and final strand consists of centres specializing and guidance and counselling for education and training (school inspectorates, schools, universities etc.).

\(^5\) See for that both the analytical highlights for Romania of the EU Panorama of Skills as well as the results of the CEDEFOP Mid Term projections on the supply and demand for skills;

\(^6\) Also know as the country VET Report and indicated as a bibliographical source by the core team of the EEPO. The latest version on the CEDEFOP website is the last in a series of five such successive reports coordinated and authored by the author of these lines, the EEPO national correspondent, Dr.Catalin Ghinararu;
2.1 Forecasting capabilities

Forecasting capabilities have started their gradual build-up at the end of the 1990s. However the approaches taken by then were rather crude and hampered by the inconsistency of the time series, by an LFS still in its infancy as well as by census data (i.e.: 1992 population census data) quickly rendered obsolete by the sweeping economic changes. With the advent of the 2000s, stabilization of the economy and commencement of sustained growth that lasted for a decade exercises grew in coherence becoming more adroit both in terms of methodological approach as well from practical point of view. The 2002 census which, for these purposes has been a comprehensive exercise, the institutional development signalled by the foundation of the National Commission for Prognosis (Comisia Nationala de Prognoza, see at www.cnp.ro) as the main national body concerned with the production of official forecasting and the constant improvement of LFS data and methodologies by the NIS have helped the skills-oriented forecasting demarches by providing a solid and constantly updated methodological foundation for their work. An important addition in terms of methodology came from the on-going cooperation between the CEDEFOP Centre and the National Labour Research Institute (INCSMPS) which have forged a relation since the inception of the mid-term Pan-European forecasting initiative in 2005. The early and continuing participation, up to these days, into this constantly developing and enriching success story of European skills forecasting has provided a source of methodological inspiration as well as benchmark against which the national forecasts have been assessed, both from the methodological point of view which to this date owes a lot to the time series (econometrical) approach used by the CEDEFOP lead venture, as well as in terms of results. Of great assistance was the participation of Romania between 2009 and 2012 in the role of sub-regional expert responsible for the validation of the results for Central and Eastern Europe and Greece in the frame of this exercise. The SOP HRD 2007-13 has provided an opportunity for various stakeholders in the field to start working on systems that would allow them the forecasting of the demand and supply of skills as well as more generally labour market forecasting. The National Centre for the Development of VET which even under the PHARE pre-accession financing had built a system which allowed for the substantiation, in consultation with local stakeholders, of the local and regional plans for the development of VET provision in the mid-2000s, has embarked upon an ESF funded project developing a system for the forecasting of the demand for skills for VET students (see at www.cndipt.ro). The methodology developed by the National Labour Research Institute as a partner in the project has been rooted into the econometric time-series approach of the CEDEFOP (i.e.: the Warwick University and Cambridge Econometrics approach) complemented with an enterprise type investigation. It is to be noted the great degree of detail at which the forecast descends providing an insight of likely developments up to 2025 down to the level of individual occupations. Forecasts are also disaggregated at the level of development regions. The exercise has been making use of a complex array of data combining LFS data as well as Census data and, in a separate strand that was used to cross-validate the results of the econometric type exercise, results of an enterprise survey.

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7 The position was held by the author of this ad-hoc request, Dr.Catalin Ghinararu, a member of the SkillsNet network of the CEDEFOP since 2005;
8 To note that the CEDEFOP Centre held its first seminar on enterprise based anticipation methods in Bucharest, in 2007, in cooperation with the IMCSMPS;
As a result of these developments the current system of capacities may be divided into three main categories (1) permanent basis capacities, fully operational and providing forecasts on a current basis (2) ad-hoc available capacities, developed at methodological level and which may provide forecasts upon demand (3) capacities in construction capitalizing on the current methodological gains and which aim at providing, in the near future, a constant stream of forecasting data for policy making agencies. The first category is mainly represented by the capacities developed at the level of the National Commission for Prognosis which uses its own models to produce and regularly make available forecasts for the main aggregates of the Romanian economy, including labour market aggregates (employment rates, wages, unemployment rate, activity rate) providing thus an official base for the production of other more detailed forecasting exercises. The CNP produces its forecasting in spring and autumn thus timing itself with the forecasts of the EU Commission. This capacity is regularly used for all governmental and official reporting, including in the relation with the EU Commission as well as with the IFIs. All Government assumptions, plans and programs make use of the CNP outputs. Basic data are provided to the CNP by the NIS as well as by the National Bank of Romania (BNR) and other national bodies concerned.

(2) Into the second category fall all of the instruments developed by various think-tanks and research institutes, chiefly amongst them the ones built by the INCSMPS and which make use of an econometric, time-series based approach, generally complemented by some sort of enterprise investigation. Methodologies are consolidated and allow, in most of the cases, for the production of short and mid-term forecasting results disaggregated on levels of education, gender, branches of economic activity, occupational groups and even occupations, both at national and regional level. Specific methodologies have been developed, including in the frame of ESF financed projects (SOP HRD 2007-13, Priority axis no.2) for the forecasting of supply and demand of skills for the graduates of the VET system as well as for higher education graduates. Some of these (at result level) have also fed into the EU Panorama of Skills. To be noted also that a system of exploring the demand for “green skills” (a niche development) has been pioneered by the National Agency for Employment in the frame of an ESF co-funded project labelled GREEN JOBS (www.locuridemuncaverzi.ro). At the level of the NAE also, a small system has been developed for the Bucharest-Ilfov region, also within the frame of an ESF co-funded project. All of these initiatives may be counted as capacities ready for activation on need-arising base. These capacities are also flexible enough in methodological terms to accommodate improvements and adaptations.

(3) Into the third category falls basically the system of labour market and skills forecasting currently under the development, with the co-financing of the SOP HRD (to be finalized and rendered operational by the end of this year, 2015), by a partnership between the National Agency for Employment and the National Labour Institute (the INCSMPS). This system which combines an econometric type approach with an investigative type approach (stakeholders’ surveys to be carried on a regular basis at local and national level) aims ultimately to equip the NAE with a permanently operational instrument, capable of producing short and mid-term forecasting type outputs that would inform its decisions on labour market interventions, with a particular regard to the provision of training for the unemployed. It will also complement its current emphasis on youth and youth...
employment (an emphasis mirrored in the architecture of the current operational programme for human resources development, the PO CU 2014-20, where two priority axis focus on youth) which includes the construction of a national data base on NEETs. The system will also provide a forward-looking underpin to the new system of “individual cards” which is pioneered by the NAE in its programs for NEETs and which will allow for the monitoring of service beneficiaries (i.e.: youth), including after the participation in certain individualized labour market intervention. Thus the NAE aims to equip itself with a full array of tools allowing it to plan, implement and monitor its provisions in a cost-effective way. The forecasting system should be operational by the end of this year. Interesting to note that, it will also contain a small module focusing on the production of informal employment related projections.

Governance of these systems remains concentrated in the hands of state or state related stakeholders. Although all of the major stakeholders have access to their outputs or at least to the majority of them (i.e.: there may be outputs for which the final use is confined to a specific beneficiary and therefore not necessarily into the public domain) the role of stakeholders such as business of social partners or even NGOs in the design and operation of such systems remains, to date, rather limited. Involvement might exist when such systems are complemented by enterprise investigation but it is to be understood that it this involvement is “passive” (stakeholders are information sources but they do not take part in the actual development of the system).

2.2 Transmission and use of information

Information and intelligence as such produced is for the following purposes (end-uses): (1) policy making, administration and reporting purposes (2) labour market, employment and skills policy making and administration (3) research and forecasting purpose, (4) educational and guidance purposes (4) general information and support for decision making at the level of business, social partners, local administrations etc.

Accordingly the transmission of information follows a main circuit (1) and several lateral loops. The main circuit of information production and transmission goes from the National Institute for Statistics which collects and transmits information via its various investigations and surveys as well as through the censuses it elaborates and conducts in accordance with specific legal provisions. This information further feeds into the decision and policy making circuits of the Romanian Government, line ministries, national agencies and other national bodies as well as into the forecasting processes developed by the National Commission of Prognosis. It forms the backbone for major decision-making at all levels of government (national and local) as well as for actors in the business sector, NGOs, social partners etc. It also feeds into the specific loops of the education system, of the employment services as well as serving as basic information for the research and forecasting activity at a more detailed level. The employment and labour market intelligence loop (2) is rooted into the basic information that is collected and processed by the Ministry of Labour11 (see also at www.minmuncii.ro) and its agencies, notably the National Agency for Employment but also the National House for Public Pension (www.cnpp.ro) as well as the Labour and Social Inspection. This information regularly feeds into the main information circuit and serves as the basis for policy and decision making in the field

11 Currently the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection, Family and Elderly Persons (Ministerul Muncii, Familiei, Protectiei Sociale si Persoanelor Varstnice);
as well as for general policy making with regard to the functioning of the labour market, employment services and more generally social protection systems. This loop also provides information for research and forecasting in the field as well as feeding information for guidance and counselling into the education loop. The education and career guidance information and intelligence loop (3) is rooted in the more recently build counselling and career guidance system of both general and vocational education. Information regarding education and training opportunities as well as the functioning of the education system flows from the education and training units towards specialized counselling and career guidance offices as well as towards the general information system and the employment loop. It also feeds and important information to the research and forecasting loop. Finally the research and specialized forecasting loop (4) which uses information and intelligence from both the main transmission circuit as well as from the employment and education loop feeds into the system a particular type of information and basically what we would call “intelligence” as it processes primary information turning it into analyses, researches, studies as well as forecasting exercises for the use of policy makers, business community, the education and training sector, employment services and labour market stakeholders etc. It also feeds back into the system requests for more elaborate primary information thus signalling the need for continuing development and improvement as well as pointing towards information gaps, both existent and emerging, and possible bottlenecks in the transmission of information. Accordingly this final loop serves as the most likely catalyst for the continuing development of the system and its transmission mechanisms.

3 Steering the education and training provision

3.1 Policies and programmes

Education and training provision is organized in Romania according to Law no.1/2001, which serves as the frame education law. Since its adoption the law has suffered a significant number of amendments, changes and modification as it has been judged that its initial form was poorly suited for the realities and changing needs of the country and its real economy. Currently the education system may be divided into “initial education system” including here the “initial VET education” and “continuing education”, including here continuing VET. The initial education is practically the realm of the Ministry of Education. The same Ministry operates under its auspices the National Authority for Qualifications (ANC-Autoritatea Nationala a Calificarilor) formerly known as the National Adult Training Board. The initial education is divided into primary, secondary and tertiary education which includes secondary and tertiary VET. The general initial education circuit starts with a mandatory pre-school grade and continues up to the national “baccalaureate exam” administrated at the end of the high school cycle (12th grade or the 13th year of schooling if we include the mandatory preschool year). A successful outcome at the baccalaureate exam provides high-school graduates with the possibility of entering tertiary education (the academic path). Apart from the general baccalaureate there is the possibility of a vocational baccalaureate for graduates of vocational secondary education. Vocational schools which have been dismantled during the last decade have been recently re-established. Graduates of vocational school, provided that they have obtained a certified qualification are entitled to enter

12 This exam has been first created in the 19th century and it is a direct implant from the FR system of education and administration in general, adopted by Romania since the mid 19th century under the influence of the 2nd French Empire (1852-70);
the general education path and participate into the baccalaureate exam thus providing them with the opportunity of entering tertiary education. Starting with the year 2014-15, tertiary VET has been indicated as a novel option with possibility of following it to be given also to high-school students that did not pass baccalaureate exam. Thus preoccupations have been focusing on re-enforcing the VET path of education as a mean of meeting the demand of the business sector and providing a viable labour market and employment alternative to scores of youngsters for which the general path as well as the much too-theoretically focused baccalaureate exam were not providing the right option. It is to be noted that tertiary academic education has been re-organized into the three cycles of bachelor, master and doctorate so as to streamline the supply of subjects/courses and make it more responsive to market demand. Apprenticeship has been recently strengthened as employers engaging in it now have the possibility of complementing subsidies from national funds with incentives from ESF co-financed projects. It has to be mentioned that since its inclusion as a part of the Youth Guarantee initiative, apprenticeship has received an important stimulus with the number of contracts concluding strongly on the rise. Also to be noted is the initiative of providing graduates of higher education with the possibility of entering, following graduation a period of six-month professional stage, whereby employers also receive a financial incentive. “Second chance” programs are provided for those abandoning general education in an effort to stem school drop-out.

3.2 Financial incentives

Several types of financial incentives are available both to individuals as well as to enterprises in order to stimulate engagement in education and training with a particular focus on vocational education and training at all levels.

Apprenticeship is well endowed in this respect with the apprenticeship act (law no.279/2005 with subsequent changes and amendments) providing a subsidy for employers engaging in this type of combined employment and training focusing on the young. Employers receive a subsidy calculated using the benchmark of the social reference indicator for each apprentice with which they conclude an apprenticeship contract.

These subsidies may be topped with allocations from the ESF provided that the company engaging in apprenticeships is beneficiary or partner in such a scheme. Subsidies are provided for the entire period of apprenticeship. Starting with 2013 the law has been modified so as to commit apprenticeship employers to the provision of the necessary vocational training associated via a certified training provider, which allows the apprentice to receive a nationally recognized qualification.

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13 In practice it is to be noted that due to poor labour market perspectives most of the bachelor students do follow also the masters cycle. Also, as doctoral studies have become
14 See here for more information the 2014 EEPO review on hiring subsidies, country contribution ROMANIA, by the same Dr.Catalin Ghinararu, the EEPO national correspondent;  
15 Initial education, both general and vocational at all levels, is free in Romania according to Constitutional provisions, for all citizens (education is provided free at all levels also in the languages of the main national minorities). However, following a second cycle of university education, even if with a state university, has to be paid. Therefore only one full cycle of tertiary academic education is free of charge and paid for by the state budget. Continuing education both general and vocational is paid. Incentives and facilities apply only to cases described in some detail in this section;
Skills Governance in Romania

Subsidies from the unemployment insurance fund, for a period of six months, are also granted to employers engaging in the provision of professional stage (according to law no.335/2014) for graduates of higher education.

The unemployment insurance fund fully subsidizes the training of the unemployed during their unemployment benefit period. It may also subsidize, in accordance with changes to the unemployment insurance act promoted in 2013 the certification of skills acquired via non-formal or informal ways, through specialized providers. This provision is also subsidized for the long-term unemployed (12 months and more).

Secondary education and enrolment in the high-school route may be subsidized by the Ministry of Education via its “high-school fellowship” program which mainly targets young from low income family, which have already acquired a qualification via the VET route, to enrol and complete high-school and pass the baccalaureate exam.

In higher education, ESF co-financing in the frame of Priority Axis no.1 of the SOP HRD 2007-13 has been used to finance doctoral and post-doctoral studies. In the frame of Priority Axis no.2 in the meantime, several vocational training schemes have been able to offer a modicum of tailored financial incentives to their participants.

Up to now the relation between whatever exercises and initiatives have been taken in terms of skills forecasting mechanisms and the financing of both HE and VET provision has been low. Although the skills anticipation exercises have been aimed at both tiers of education (HE and VET), financial incentives have been left untouched. It is also true to say that strict fiscal consolidation promoted ever since 2009 has impeded any more serious initiative on the issue until very recently. This has also affected ESF funded initiatives to a certain extent.

4 Career and vocational guidance

According to legal provision contained into the country’s education law (law no.1/2011 with subsequent amendments) counselling and guidance offices with specialized personnel are functioning at the level of local school inspectorates as well as in school and high-schools including the VET ones. Universities, according to their own status of autonomy may also organize specific services staffed with qualified personnel. In most of the cases these services provide information that is of immediate use in finding training and education opportunities, up-skilling as well as job placement, a service that is much sought after. Job exchanges are frequently organized as well as education fairs. Universities, high schools and inspectorates often team for such events with parents’ and students’ associations, foreign universities, employers’ associations etc. Such events are quite frequent lately. Also recently changes have been introduced into the country’s unemployment insurance (law no.76/2002), apprenticeship (law no.279/2005) and professional stage (law no.335/2014) acts so as to provide for mandatory career guidance and mentoring for the unemployed, the apprentices as well graduates of higher education

16 Law no.76/2002 with subsequent changes and amendments as modified by law 250/2013;
17 Subsidies offered in the frame of this scheme were quite generous which explains the relative success of the scheme, at least in terms of its „output indicators“.
18 This explains why „result indicators“ lag behind. In many cases Universities and other institutions which undertake to organize such programs were unable to advance the sums for the stipends and as such reimbursement requests draged on for longer periods than initially planned. This had an adverse effect upon the target groups (i.e.: doctoral and post-doctoral students) of such initiatives (projects);
benefiting from the professional stage act. Romania also acts as a member of the EURIDYCE network as well as of the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (the ELGPN)\(^\text{19}\). A particular hub for this type of information, including is the Institute for Education Sciences (IES-Institutul de Stiinte ale Educatiei at [www.ise.ro](http://www.ise.ro)).

5 **Stakeholders in steering education and training provisions**

The state still holds a sway in what concerns policy making at national level mainly through the Ministry of Education as well, to a lower extent recently and only in matters concerning the link with the labour market and the employment services, through the Ministry of Labour. The regulatory authorities for the higher education, (i.e.: the ARACIS), for primary and secondary education (pre-university, the ARAPIS) as well as for the continuing education and training (the ANC- National Authority for Qualifications) being now under the authority of the Ministry of Education. Social partners somewhat side-lined when the government in office between 2009\(^\text{12}\) drafted and promoted the education law, have to a certain extent made a substantial comeback. Although their role in the current authority for qualifications is lesser that the one they held in the previous National Adult Training Board\(^\text{20}\) they are still able to influence policies both through lobbying as well as through their role in the country’s social dialogue bodies such as the Social and Economic Council and the Tripartite Council which routinely examine and provide consultative opinion on each and every draft act of law on the matter the Government intends to submit to the Parliament. It was the pressure of the social partners', both unions and employers that brought about the renewed attention to the alternative route of VET, placed back into the fold the vocational schools and led to a retrieved emphasis on apprenticeship.

Parents’ and students’ associations and organizations where instrumental in reducing the number of studies and courses in the curricula as well as in increasing the role and importance of guidance and counselling in schools.

Academics and research also play their part in steering the system as due to the contribution of the ESF they are better equipped to produce and provide all stakeholders with forecast and studies and make them available on a more regular basis. An increased role is played by the guidance and counselling community which due to both the EURYDICE as well as due more recently to the contribution of the ELGPN has increased its voice. The mismatches on the labour market signalled with ever more frequency and better by the academics have found an echo in a greater interest for guidance and counselling as first-hand remedial tools for labour market mismatches.

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\(^\text{19}\) Between 2012-14 jointly with Austria Romania has been the lead country of Policy Review Clusters no.3 and 4, 'Coordination, Cooperation and Access' of the ELGPN; The author of these lines also serves as an official representative of the country to the ELGPN network, since 2012;

\(^\text{20}\) Consiliul National pentru Formarea Profesionala a Adultiilor (CNFPA);
ANNEX (tables and charts):

Table 1. Romania – general labour indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>LMI expenditures (% of GDP)</th>
<th>Duration of working life (in years)</th>
<th>Employment rate (20-74) (%)</th>
<th>Unemployment rate (25-74) (%)</th>
<th>Unemployment rate (&gt;25) (%)</th>
<th>Long term unemployment (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>0,54</td>
<td>31,8</td>
<td>63,5</td>
<td>6,1</td>
<td>20,5</td>
<td>4,7</td>
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<td>5,6</td>
<td>19,1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>64,8</td>
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<td>20,2</td>
<td>4,1</td>
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<td>64,4</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td>19,3</td>
<td>3,2</td>
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<tr>
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Source: Eurostat;

Chart no.1 – ROMANIA, GDP growth rate, job vacancy rate and the unemployment rate (national definition), quarterly data 2005-14

Source: NIS and NAE data, processed by Dr C. Ghinararu;
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