

# THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND



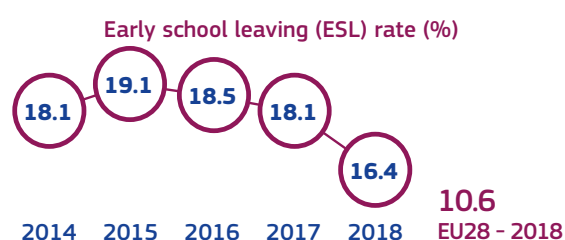
## Support to Education and Training: 2014-2018

ROMANIA

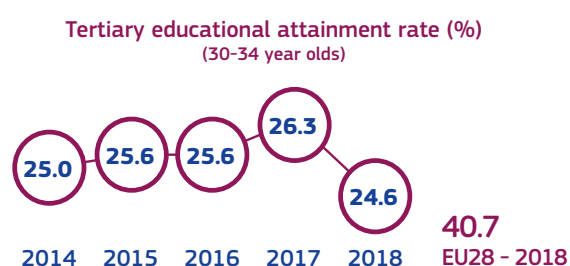
### SUMMARY

ESF Thematic Objective 10 funding is used to support education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning. Over 1.4 billion euro has been allocated to such operations in Romania, with 182 516 participations having taken place by the end of 2018. This factsheet summarises the main actions, outputs, results and lessons learned so far in the use of this funding in Romania.

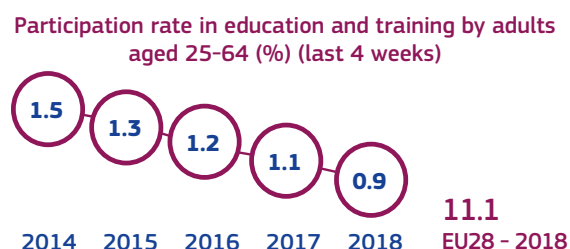
### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES



- ▶ Romania has a poor performance in relation to **school enrolment and attendance** in primary and secondary education. Non-enrolment in school is around 1.5-2% in the case of children at age 8, rising to 5-6% at age 10.
- ▶ The rate of **early school leaving** (ESL) is higher in Romania than the EU28 average, with slow progress being made in reducing the rate between 2014 and 2018. Students from rural areas and the Roma population (girls in particular) are much more likely to be early school leavers.



- ▶ The **tertiary educational attainment** rate is very low overall (24.6% in 2018 compared to the EU average of 40.7%), with women's participation being some 7 percentage points higher than for men's, although the gender gap is around half of that at EU level. However, enrolment in tertiary education has fallen in recent years.



- ▶ The level of education of the working age population is low and reduces with age, along with the employment rate. Less than 1% of the **adult population participated in education and training** in 2018 following a continuous decline from an already low rate in 2014. This leaves the country far below the EU28 average of 11.1%.
- ▶ Government **investment in education** as a percentage of GDP was the lowest in the EU28 in 2017: 2.6% compared to the EU28 average of 4.6%.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES

**ESF** European Social Fund

**TO10** Thematic Objective 10

**OP** Operational Programme

**IP** Investment Priority

\* Figures present the situation for ESF operations under Thematic Objective 10 and its four Investment Priorities (IPs) for the programming period 2014-2020 implemented up to the end of 2018, as reported on 1 October 2019. In many instances, operations are not yet complete at this stage, or have only recently started.

\* As one person could participate more than once in ESF operations over time, the number of participations is reported. These figures exclude Technical Assistance.

\* Where the breakdown of participants according to employment status, age, and level of education does not add up to 100%, it means that it was not possible to include characteristics of a number of participants in some OPs.

Support to Education and Training: 2014-2018

## ESF PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS IN ROMANIA

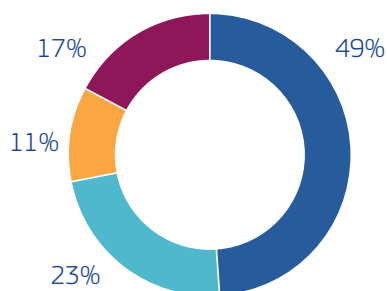
- ▶ The main ESF Operational Programme in Romania with relevance to Thematic Objective 10 (TO10) is **OP Human Capital**.
- ▶ The OP has the following TO10 priorities:
  - ▶ TO10 funds are used to **support participation in education**, including in early childhood education and care, providing information and counselling services for parents or guardians, for parents working abroad, parental education programmes, including accompanying and financial support measures;
  - ▶ The funding provides qualified **human resources for all levels of education** and contributes to the development of educational offers with innovative content in tertiary university and non-university technical education through correlating with the needs of labour market in the economic sectors with competitive potential;
- ▶ TO10 funds also support **participation in vocational education and training programmes (including dual VET)**, especially for children and young people from disadvantaged communities, with a focus on rural areas and Roma.

27% of total ESF funding<sup>1</sup>...

**€1 483 713 265**

...is allocated to the following TO10 investment priorities: **early school leaving (49%)**, **access to quality tertiary and equivalent education (23%)**, **enhancing access to lifelong learning (11%)**, and **improving the labour market relevance of education and training (17%)**.

Allocation of ESF TO10 funds



- Reducing and preventing early school leaving - IP10.i
- Improving quality and access to tertiary education - IP10.ii
- Enhancing access to lifelong learning - IP10.iii
- Improving the labour market relevance of education and training - IP10.iv

## STATE OF PLAY

26% of planned resources under TO10 had been allocated in 2018, with 6% spent.

Number of overall participations in TO10 operations by the end of 2018:

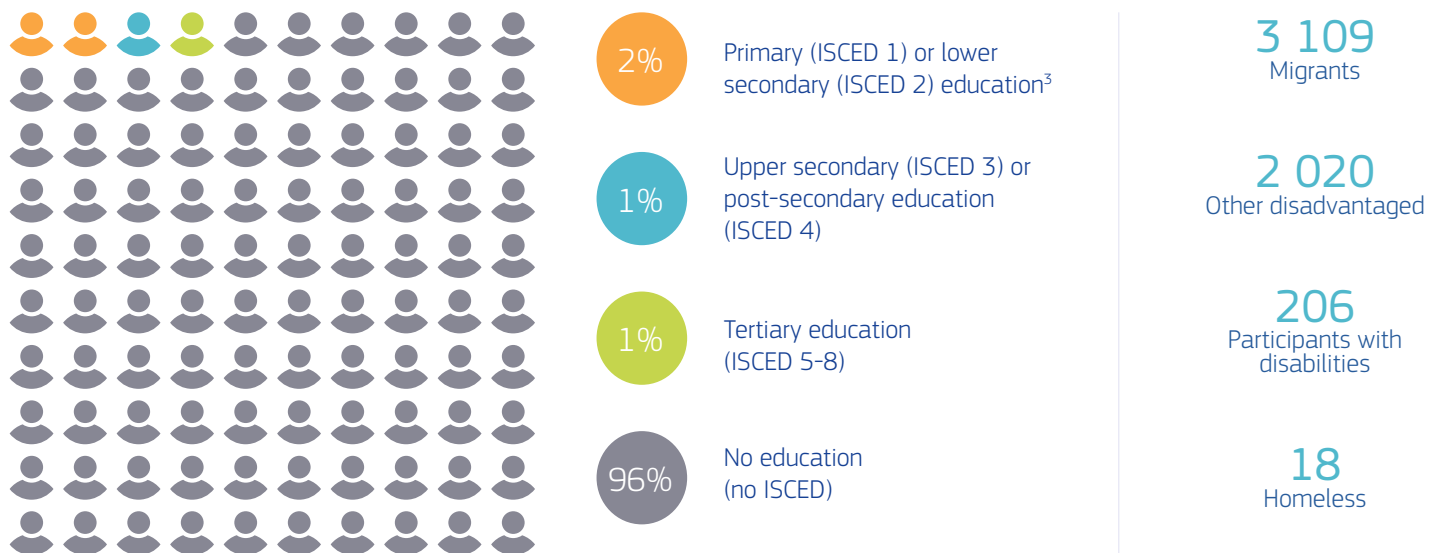
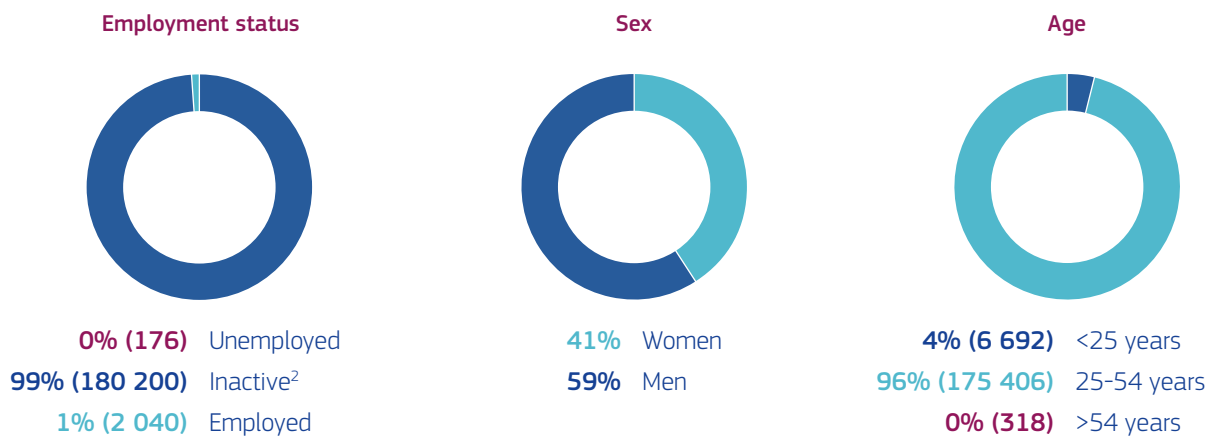
**182 516**

- ▶ **64 433** participations in operations to reduce and prevent early school leaving
- ▶ **117 412** participations in operations to enhance access to lifelong learning
- ▶ **671** participations in operations to improve the labour market relevance of education and training

<sup>1</sup> This includes EU-only funding and co-financing from the Member State.

Support to Education and Training: 2014-2018

## PARTICIPANT PROFILES WHEN RECEIVING SUPPORT



**Key achievements to date** of ESF T010 operations in Romania include<sup>4</sup>:

- ▶ **8 300** successful results have been achieved to date following participation in an activity funded by ESF T010, of which:
  - ▶ **493** inactive participants went on to engage in job searching
  - ▶ **431** participants went into education or training
  - ▶ **141** participants gained a qualification
  - ▶ **7 235** participants moved into employment upon leaving

<sup>2</sup> The inactive population can include pre-school children, school children, students, pensioners and housewives or -men, for example, provided that they are not working and not available or looking for work.

<sup>3</sup> ISCED is the UN reference classification for organising education programmes and related qualifications by education levels and fields.

<sup>4</sup> Participants' data are collected when starting an operation. Data on results are collected at the end of an operation or even later. Because of this time lag the two sets of data (participations and results) should not be directly compared.

## LESSONS LEARNED SO FAR

### ► Relevance to the needs of the target groups

ESF operations are relevant to the needs of the young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs). The operations focus mainly on delivering activities in rural areas, where a large number of the most disadvantaged NEETs are located, for example young people from marginalised and Roma communities or those who have dropped out of education. ESF operations perform better in the less developed regions of Romania than the more developed region.

### ► Implementation challenges

A number of measures have been taken to address the implementation challenges caused by delays in adopting national legislation and launching funding calls. These include supporting public authorities in the preparation of non-competitive projects and intensifying collaboration with all relevant stakeholders in the design of competitive calls, facilitating the launch of remaining calls, and careful monitoring of progress.

### ► Coherence with other programmes and policies

The ESF Operational Programme in Romania is coherent with European Semester recommendations and with national strategies, such as the National Strategy on Reducing Early School Leaving, the National Strategy for Competitiveness, the National Strategy for Research, Development and Innovation, the National Reform Plan and the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020.

### ► Improving the quality of education and training projects

Providing specialised counselling services and targeted activities has the potential to substantially increase the employment prospects of participants in ESF operations. For example, the 'School for all' programme follows a more holistic approach to addressing the needs of vulnerable children through a variety of measures such as after-school support, support for parents, counselling, and other types of social measures.

### ► EU added value to national programmes

ESF operations have allowed existing actions to address population groups or policy areas which otherwise could not have been targeted. The number of participants in educational projects would have been much lower in the absence of European funds. Moreover, the main relevant stakeholders (i.e. schools, Inspectorates, NGOs) would not have had the sufficient resources to provide facilities (e.g. lunches, school supplies, other incentives).

### ► Increasing efficiency in reporting and monitoring procedures

The elaboration of the 'Indicators guide' and the MySMIS electronic system aimed to increase the efficiency of monitoring procedures and to support beneficiaries in monitoring and reporting progress against target indicators at the level of each project.

## PROJECT EXAMPLES

### ► 'ProMediu'

This ESF operation offers internships, learning activities and career counselling in environment-related areas of employment to improve the efficiency of practical training for students at the Dunarea de Jos University of Galati.

### ► New competence-based curriculum and teaching practices (CRED)

This operation facilitates the understanding of the new competence-based student-centred curriculum and modernises teaching practices by training 55 000 teachers in how to adapt teaching to the specific needs of students, including students at risk of dropping out.

### ► School for All (Scoala pentru toti)

Schools participating in this operation establish partnerships with different NGOs and address the needs of vulnerable children through a variety of measures such as after-school support, support for parents, counselling, and other types of social measures.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Evaluation of OP Human Capital (RO): <https://www.fonduri-ue.ro/transparenta/declaratii/15-programe-operationale/2014-2020/pocu/399-pocu-ri-eval-prog>

European Commission, Study supporting the evaluation of ESF support to education and training (Thematic Objective 10)

The ESF in Romania: <https://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=395&langId=en>

Website of the ESF in Romania: <https://www.fonduri-ue.ro/>

