

**PROGRESS – MUTUAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR INCREASE OF HUMAN
CAPITAL INVESTMENT**

**STUDY ON CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM –
ROMANIA**

Bucharest, April 2009

This study valorizes the information from the National Report on Adult Education realized in 2008 for the International UNESCO Conference CONFINTEA VI.

Statistical data were updated with the contribution of the National Institute of Statistics and of the National Agency for Employment.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACVT	Advisory Committee on Vocational Training
CVT	Continuing Vocational Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
G.D.	Government Decision
G.O.	Government Ordinance
IVET	Initial Vocational Education and Training
LLL	Life Long Learning
MERI	Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation
MLFSP	Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection
NACPF EVT	National Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training
NAE	National Agency for Employment
NATB	National Adult Training Board
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
SME	Small and Medium (size) Enterprise
SOP HRD	Sectoral Operational Plan for Human Resources Development
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
VET	Vocational Education and Training

I. INTRODUCTION

Context of the study

The partners of the PROGRESS Project “Mutual learning activities for increase of human capital investment” are organizations from Greece, Bulgaria and Romania, three of the Member States that hold the lowest participation rates in lifelong learning (LLL), and Denmark that holds one of the highest rates as regards LLL participation.

Proposed in the framework of human capital investment development, as described in the European Employment Strategy and the Joint Employment Report 2007/2008 priorities, the project aims to develop transnational cooperation and mutual learning activities in order to strengthen the investment in human capital in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania, through the analysis of the implemented policies and the detection of the crucial points, the transfer of know how and of good practices from Denmark, but also from the other participant countries, as well as the development of policy recommendations for improving the implemented strategies.

Comparative analysis of the LLL systems in the participant countries, focusing especially on the continuing vocational training systems, on their strengths and weaknesses, elaborated in a first phase of the project, will be followed by a series of workshops on benchmarks aiming to identify the reasons for low participation rates in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania, as well as the crucial points for enforcing investment in human capital.

Based on the conclusions of comparative analysis and workshops, policy recommendations for the improvement of LLL effectiveness in relation to the labour market inclusion will be developed and disseminated.

Field of interest of the study

The present study emphasizes the main characteristics of the **continuing vocational training system (CVT) from Romania**, giving emphasis on the factors that promote or impede the participation of citizens in CVT.

For a better delimitation of the field of interest, this chapter describes the CVT system as part of the national education and vocational training system, whose structure is presented in Appendix 1.

On the left part of the scheme the initial education and vocational training system is depicted. Its structure, the correlation of the education cycles with ISCED levels and a proposal of correlation of the current qualification levels with the EQF reference levels are presented in Appendix 2¹.

Even if the interest of this study is focused on the CVT, a short description of the initial education and vocational training system is necessary for understanding the

¹Concerning the qualification levels, the legislation in force states a 5 level structure for all qualifications (1, 2, 3 – pre-university levels, 4, 5 – university levels). Yet, the more recent regulations related to Bologna process describe the framework for higher education on 3 levels which are effectively implemented. The post high school (not tertiary) education is considered as 3+ level. Obviously, the number of 5 qualification levels is not anymore sufficient, but a decision to adopt more levels was not taken yet.

opportunities and the obstacles in building pathways in a lifelong learning (LLL) perspective.

Within the **compulsory education**, the second cycle of **lower secondary education** offers two alternatives:

- High school (lower secondary) – 3 options:
 - o Theoretic school;
 - o School of arts, sports, theology;
 - o Technologic school;
- Arts and trades school.

The graduates receive a *graduation certificate* and a *personal portfolio for further education*. Supplementary, if passing the vocational competences certification exam, the graduates of the arts and trades schools receive a *level 1 vocational qualification certificate*.

Both alternatives can be continued through **upper secondary education**:

- High school (upper secondary) – 3 options:
 - o Theoretic high school;
 - o High school of arts, sports, theology;
 - o Technologic high school;
- Completion year (for graduates of arts and trades schools), followed (non-compulsory) by technologic high school (upper secondary).

The finalisation of upper cycle is attested through a *graduation certificate* that confers the right to attend post secondary non-tertiary education, the right to sit the baccalaureate exam and the attestation exam. Graduates also receive the *updated personal portfolio for permanent education*. High school graduates that sit and pass the baccalaureate exam receive the *baccalaureate diploma* conferring to the holder the right to attend higher education, in the conditions established by the law.

For certain educational profiles and specializations, graduates can take a separate attestation exam. If passing the exam, graduates receive a *level 3 vocational qualification certificate* or a *vocational qualification attestation* respectively, neither conditioned by the passing of the baccalaureate exam (except for the graduates of pedagogical high schools wanting to follow a teaching career in pre-primary or primary education).

The **post secondary non-tertiary education** comprises 1 to 3 years of study, is organised at the initiative of MERI or following the specific requests of firms and other interested institutions and consists of two alternatives:

- Post-high schools;
- Foremen schools.

According to the Education Law (Law 84/1995), the pre-university education, including the post secondary non-tertiary education, is subordinated to MERI.

The structure of the pre-university education is the result of the **reform process** started in the early 90's and assisted by the EU through pre-integration programmes (especially PHARE Programme).

As presented above:

- all the alternative educational routes are open pathways, allowing the graduates to attend all the ISCED levels;
- some routes lead to the achieving of 1st, 2nd or 3rd qualification level.

In the meantime, the CVT system has been subject of a reform process, too (assisted by World Bank and PHARE projects).

At the moment, the IVET system and the CVT system are **competences based** (from training, assessment and certification point of view) and, with some differences, they use common **references** (classifications of qualifications and standards) (see Appendix 1).

Theoretically, the needed framework for building bridges between IVET and CVT is created. Practically, these bridges are only for "one-way traffic": the CVT system recognizes the competences acquired within the IVET system, but the education system does not recognize the acquisitions through CVT.

This situation generates **obstacles** for people wanting to alternate education and work, to develop their career by acquiring competences in different learning contexts.

The **tertiary education** includes:

- university education;
- post-university education.

According to the Education Law, universities and other higher education institutions are **autonomous** and have the right to establish and implement their own development policies, within the general provisions of the in-force legislation. The MERI coordinates the activity of the universities and other higher education institutions, complying with their autonomy.

The **CVT system** consists of:

- nationally regulated CVT system, with two branches:
 - o formal CVT (sub)system, consisting of CVT providers;
 - o non-formal and informal CVT (sub)system, consisting of competences assessment centres;
- CVT regulated at sector level;
- non-regulated/free CVT market.

The fact that the **CVT regulation framework** is not an integrated one leads to differences regarding the **certification/recognition of the learning outcomes** and generates obstacles related to learning/career pathways.

The *nationally accredited training providers* (formal CVT) and the *nationally accredited competences assessment centres* (non formal and informal CVT) deliver *nationally recognised certificates* (including Europass supplement). These certificates are recognized on the labour market and inside the CVT system

(including between the formal subsystem and the non-formal/informal one) and lead to the accumulation of competences/qualifications. But, as affirmed before, these certificates are not recognized by the IVET system.

There are specialized CVT providers set up for responding to a (sub)sector needs; usually these kind of providers are not nationally accredited, but their certificates are recognized by the (sub)sector (for example, National Banking Institute; National Institute for Public Administration, etc.)

There is also a free/non-regulated CVT market; some of the training providers offer courses/certificates recognized at international/European level (Microsoft, Cisco, EBC*L, ECDL, etc.)

The **apprenticeship at the workplace** is a VET system oriented towards young people (age 16-25) who want to achieve to a qualification (level 1, 2 or 3 from 5).

The apprenticeship agreements, signed between young people and accredited/authorised enterprises, are special work agreements. The duration is of maximum 3 years, and of minimum 6 months (for level 1), 12 months (for level 2), and 24 months (for level 3). The apprenticeship is a training programme alternating theory periods (within accredited/authorised training providers) and practice on the job.

The apprenticeship is under the responsibility of the MLFSP. It is an appropriate form of vocational training for young people facing economic obstacles in participating in training, but, in practice, there are only a few companies organizing apprenticeship programmes.

The apprenticeship at the workplace system uses the same classification of qualifications and the same standards as the nationally regulated CVT system.

Other aspects to be mentioned when delimitating the field of interest of the study are related to the **target group** and the **content** of the continuing training, as follows:

- The training is addressed to *adults*²;
- The training is basically *aiming to the labor market*;
- CVT is defined as the training that *complements, updates or/and upgrades* knowledge and skills that were acquired from other vocational education and training systems or/and from professional experience aiming at the *integration or/and the reintegration in the labour market, the professional and personal development*.

In this respect the CVT system will be detailed in the next chapters.

²According to the Constitution of Romania, the Labour Code and the Government Ordinance no 129/2000, republished, concerning the adults' vocational training, "**the adults**" are persons over 15 years old, being entitled to employment (between 15 and 16 years old only agreed by parents).

II. METHODOLOGY

The **areas of the research** consist of the following topics (always emphasising the participation of citizens in CVT):

1. CVT Policies;
2. Financing schemes for the participation of citizens in CVT;
3. National Studies for the characteristics of the participants in CVT;
4. Motives/incentives and counterincentives for participation;
5. “Good Practices”;
6. The contribution of the organizations that implement CVT;
7. The role of the trainer/educator;
8. Vulnerable social groups;
9. Alternative training schemes (distant training, mixed/combined systems);
10. The contribution and the role of new technologies (e-learning);
11. Connection of CVT with the European Employment strategy in a national level;
12. Connection of CVT with the labour market in a national level.

In the Appendix 3 some indicative axis for detailing the areas of research are presented.

A **qualitative research** has been chosen as methodological approach for the study, aiming to emphasise the meaning and the explanation the social subjects give to a phenomenon, in our case to the participation in CVT.

The research techniques, selected as suitable for the investigated issues, are:

- SWOT analysis;
- Focus Groups.

The 12 mentioned above areas of research will represent the recording points of the SWOT analysis and the questions to be launched during the Focus Groups implementation.

SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis technique (Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, Threats) is a programming and planning technique among the known “covering gap techniques” and it is based on the view and opinion of experienced executives in a field or it is conducted by experienced executives and experts.

The dimensions of the investigated issue consist of the 12 areas of research mentioned above.

During the implementation of the SWOT analysis strengths and weaknesses – referring on the present situation and the opportunities, and threats – connect with the expected developments of the investigated issue or/and the proposed solution are recorded.

The results of the SWOT analysis are presented on a table with the following form:

Dimension / Parameter / Factor	Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
1				
2				
3				
.....				

The dimensions will also be presented on a text form apart from the table format.

Implementation of the SWOT analysis – methodological aspects

The participants in SWOT analysis are experts with experience in the CVT field and in the implementation of such research techniques.

For each of the 12 areas of research the analysis consisted in:

- Internal analysis – factors that represent strengths or weaknesses from the participation in CVT point of view;
- External analysis – factors that can be seen as opportunities or threats for increasing the participation in CVT.

The results are presented in the Chapter III.

Focus Groups

The focus groups technique can work complementary with other methods and techniques and it is a methodological tool for drawing qualitative data, through a process of direct interaction of group participants for a clearly specified issue. It is different from other methods of group interviews because it requires the direct interaction and the organized conversation of group participants. The specific technique is based on the interaction of the participants and not on bringing on surface their own opinion separately (which can be achieved with other ways of research interviews).

The number of the participants in a focus group is supposed to be between 6 and 12, in order to ensure the group's function and to provide the opportunity for all the participants to reflect.

Every focus group has two hours duration (but this is not limitative) and it is carried out by a coordinator (moderator), while in most cases it is necessary to have a coordinator assistant (moderator assistant). The implementation steps and the development of the focus group include the following stages³:

- Introduction (participants get to know each other, presentation of the problem, introductory questions);
- General information (transitory questions that clearly lead to the main research problem);
- Main part (key questions for the research problem);

³ Krueger, 2002

- Conclusion – closing (checking results, degree of participants' agreement).

From the four types of focus groups (single category, multiple category, double layer, broad involvement), the methodological suggestion was, based on the initial planning, to conduct multiple category focus groups, because more focus groups make possible the comparison between categories⁴.

Specifically, the suggestion was to organize four different focus groups:

- a) Policy makers, highly standard experts and specialists;
- b) Highly ranked employees in organizations that implement policy and programs;
- c) Trainers;
- d) Trainees.

Supporting documents describing the implementation of the focus groups and 4 questionnaires (for each category of focus group) have been provided by the scientific responsible for the study (appendix 4). The partners were allowed to add or erase some of the questions.

Implementation of the Focus Groups – methodological aspects

Aiming to cover a diversity of target groups, 'EUROED' implemented 7 focus groups not only in Bucharest, but also in two other cities: Brasov (one of the most important from Romania) and Pucioasa (a very small city, with less employment opportunities), as follows:

- Bucharest: 1 focus group, with the participation of policy makers, high standard experts, highly ranked employees;
- Brasov: 2 focus groups of trainees and 1 focus group of trainers and training experts;
- Pucioasa: 2 focus groups of trainees and 1 focus group of trainers and training experts.

Depending on the availability of the invited persons, the composition of the trainers' groups in Brasov and Pucioasa was completed by training experts (working in the same organization or external experts).

For example, in the trainers' group from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry from Brasov participated two trainers, collaborators of the CCI, two experts from CCI (responsible with the organization of the training programmes, the selection of the trainees, and the marketing aspects), and one expert from 'EUROED'.

At the Cultural Centre from Pucioasa, besides the trainers of the Centre, one expert from 'EUROED' was invited to take part in the debates.

Each of the four trainees' groups was homogenous from the composition point of view (see appendix 5).

⁴ Krueger & Casey, 2000

The first two groups of trainees (from CCI Brasov) consisted mainly of employed young people, with a high education background in economic, finance or banking field. Most of them participated before in other training programmes. Their main goal was to accumulate new competences, especially practical skills and they have very openly communicated their opinions.

Two different groups of trainees participated in two focus groups in Pucioasa. One group consisted in employed people, participating in “*Project management*” training programme, the other group consisted in unemployed people, participating in “*PC operator*” training programme. If the goal of the first group was to acquire the needed competences for accessing the Structural Funds, the goal of the second group was to find a job.

The participants in another focus group were policy makers, highly standard experts and highly ranked employees working within or collaborating with the National Adult Training Board. The NATB is a tripartite institution that contributes to the elaboration of policies and strategies in the CVT field, and, in the meantime, is deeply involved in the implementation of CVT policy and programs.

One of the participants in this focus group is one of the Romanian employers’ confederations representatives in the CEDEFOP Administration Council and in Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (EC group), and used to be one of the NATB Board’ members. He is the director of the Romanian Institute for European Education and Quality and a well known specialist in the quality assurance domain.

The trade unions were represented by the president of the TU Federation from Milling and Bakery, member of the NATB Board, representative of Romanian TUs in the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (EC group), president of the Sectoral Committee from Food Industry, directly involved in the qualifications development in this sector. He was interviewed separately, by launching discussions on the opinions formulated during the focus group.

The technical staff of the NATB were represented by the director of the Phare Programme Implementation Unit, responsible for the development of the national qualifications system, and by two high level experts (one of them with a long management experience) covering the both branches of CVT provision: formal and non-formal/informal.

Another invited person was a representative of the National Agency for Community Programmes in Education and Vocational Training, a high level expert with a long experience in European projects developed in Romania in the CVT field.

The results of the focus groups are presented in the Chapter IV.

III. SWOT ANALYSIS

1. Continuing Vocational Training Policies

- *Legislative framework for CVT*
- *Points of the Legislative framework for CVT that mention citizens' participation*
- *Involved ministries and supervising/ coordinating bodies (organizations)*
- *Types of organizations providing CVT*
- *Thematic (training) fields of CTV*
- *Target groups of CTV*
- *Policies for the equal participation of man and women in CTV*

Concerning the **legislative framework**, there is a special chapter within the *Education Law* no 84/1995 dedicated to the permanent education, and the Law no 133/2000 focuses on the organisation of the permanent education programmes through the educational institutions stipulating that these programmes have to ensure:

- compensatory education ("second chance" education);
- continuing vocational training;
- civic education;
- personal education for playing an active social role.

The legislative framework regarding the continuing vocational training (CVT), consists of:

- *Government Ordinance* no 129/2000 *on adult vocational training* (with further modifications and completions), that provides the general framework of:
 - quality assurance of CVT programmes;
 - competences based training, assessment and certification;
 - assessment and recognition of the competences acquired within nonformal and informal learning contexts;
- Subsequent legislation of G.O. no 129/2000:
 - *Application norms* of G.O. no 129/2000 (approved through the G.D. no 522/2003, with further modifications and completions), that details the stipulations of G.O. no 129/2000;
 - *Accreditation methodology* (approved through the Order no 353/5.202/2003 of MLFSP and MERI, with further modifications and completions), that consists of criteria and procedure used for the accreditation of the formal CVT providers;
 - *Certification methodology* (approved through the Order no 501/5.253/2003 of MLFSP and MERI, with further modifications and completions), that regulates the organization of the assessment process and the certification of the formal CVT;

- *Procedure for the assessment and certification of competences acquired in other ways than the formal ones* (approved through the Order no 468/4.543/2004 of MLFSP and MERI, with further modifications and completions), that provides the criteria and the procedure used for the accreditation of the competences assessment centres and the procedure applied for the assessment of competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning contexts;
- *Labour Code* (Law no 53/2003, with further modifications and completions), that regulates the training within enterprises and stipulates that the organizations are obliged to train the personnel every two years (or every three years for SMEs);
- *Law no 76/2002* (with further modifications and completions) *on unemployment insurance system and stimulation of employment*, that regulates the passive and active measure against unemployment, including the organization of CVT programmes dedicated to unemployed people, but also facilities offered to enterprises for CVT programmes dedicated to the employees, aiming to prevent the unemployment;
- *Law no 279/2005 on apprenticeship at the workplace* (and subsequent regulations), that stipulates the conditions of organization and participation in apprenticeship programmes within enterprises;
- Other regulations concerning the training at sector level; for the so called “regulated occupations” the CVT programmes can be provided only by special sector providers or the curricula have to be endorsed by a special organization at sector level, etc.

Mention of citizens’ participation, target groups of CVT

According to the specific legislation regarding adult vocational training (O.G. no 129/2000), **adults** are defined as persons old enough to establish work relations and to participate in vocational training programmes (aged >16 or 15 with the approval of parents).

Access of adults (employed or unemployed) to vocational training is a right guaranteed by the Labour Code. Overall, employers have to ensure access of their **employees** to vocational training (every two years, or three for SMEs).

The **individuals seeking employment** (not necessary unemployed) can participate to the vocational training organised by the National Agency for Employment (NAE) through its own training centres or through other accredited CVT providers, as stipulated by the Law no 76/2002. Unemployed persons have the obligation to attend vocational training programmes, as recommended by the local agency for employment where they are registered, otherwise their unemployment financial aid is withdrawn.

The apprenticeship at the workplace is a VET system oriented towards **young people** (age 16-25) who want to work and to achieve simultaneously a qualification. As mentioned in the Chapter I, the apprenticeship agreements,

signed between young people and accredited enterprise, are special work agreements.

Specifically regarding completion of the basic education, the MERI approves organisation of courses for individuals older than 14 that did not complete primary education ("**second chance**" education).

Special CVT programmes are organized by MECI and NAE for **vulnerable groups**: people from rural area, Roma population, long-term unemployed, etc.

Involved ministries and supervising/ coordinating bodies

The main responsibilities concerning the coordination of CVT system are as follows.

The **MLFSP** and the **MERI** have the general responsibility for CVT legislation, policies and strategies.

The MLFSP is also responsible for monitoring the implementation of the *Short- and Medium-Term Strategy of Continuing Vocational Training 2005-2010* (approved through G.D. no 875/2005).

The MERI is responsible for "second chance" education, but also for the continuing training of the teaching staff.

The **National Adults Training Board** (NATB), as a tripartite body, is responsible for the CVT quality assurance through:

- accreditation of the training providers, through **accreditation commissions** in each of the 42 counties (decentralised process);
- accreditation of the competences assessment centres;
- approval of the occupational standards.

From December 2004, NATB acts as **National Authority for Qualifications** (NAQ); in this respect, NATB elaborates and implements the needed methodological framework for the development of the national qualifications system, but the status of NATB acting as NAQ has to be clarified and enhanced.

The provision of CVT programmes for unemployed people, but also for other individuals seeking for a job, is the responsibility of the **National Agency for Employment**.

Different **ministries** or **central/sector authorities** are responsible for organizing/ approving different CVT programmes.

The main **types of CVT providers** are:

- state owned or private providers (including schools, companies, NGOs, etc.) that could be (see Chapter I):
 - o nationally accredited providers – deliver nationally recognised certificates (including Europass supplement);
 - o providers accredited/authorized at sector level – deliver certificates recognized at sector level;

- not accredited providers – deliver certificates that could be recognized by the market;
- companies accredited for providing apprenticeship at the workplace programmes deliver nationally recognised certificates (including Europass supplement);
- companies that provide CVT for their employees without being accredited – deliver certificates recognized within the company, but could be recognized by the market, too;
- nationally accredited competences assessment centres (non formal and informal) – deliver nationally recognised certificates (including Europass supplement) (see Chapter I).

There are available data concerning the accredited CVT providers and competences assessment centres. In the period January 2004 – December 2008, more than 2,800 CVT providers have been accredited for a more than 11,500 CVT programmes. In March 2009, 42 competences assessment centres were accredited for 111 occupations/ qualifications.

Thematic fields of CVT

The accredited CVT programmes can be organized for occupations from the Classification of Occupations in Romania (approved by MLFSP and the National Institute for Statistics), for qualifications from the approved List of Qualifications (approved by MLFSP and MERI) or for Key Competences (from the list approved by NATB, based on the 8 European key competences).

The sectoral committees have an important role in the permanent up-dating of the first two documents.

The occupations and qualifications are described in terms of competences through occupational standards or training standards. These standards are developed by sector's experts, through job analysis, are validated by the sectoral committees, and approved by NATB. This methodology aims to harmonise the CVT programmes with the needed competences at sector level.

Only the curricula developed based on occupational standards (or training standards, which are similar) can be accredited. The programmes dedicated to key competences do not need occupational standards.

There are not available statistics on CVT programmes by sectors.

Adults are ensured ***equal rights*** in accessing vocational training without any discrimination regarding age, gender, ethnical origin, political orientation or religious beliefs (O.G. no 129/2000). The law on equal chances for women and men (Law no 202/2002) reinforces the equal right of both genders to access vocational training, as well as vocational counseling and guidance.

SWOT – Table 1 – CVT Policies

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
Specific legislation on CVT	European approaches and the need to	Lack of coherence in legislation	Changes in legislation without

	harmonize the national legislation with this approaches		being really debated by the interested actors; Less interest in implementing European recommendations after becoming a MS
CVT included in the Labour Code and in National Collective Work Agreement; Legal obligation of the employer to provide CVT for employees	A raising awareness of social partners about the benefits of CVT;	Not implemented by all the employers – no coercive stipulations in the Labour Code)	Lack of awareness of employers and trade unions concerning CVT
Special legislation for apprenticeship on the job	Very appropriate for young people with a low standard of living	Very few implemented – considered too bureaucratic by the employers	To not adapt the legislation to the employers demands
Special legislation for CVT dedicated to unemployed and other vulnerable groups (e.g., “second chance” education programme; special programmes for Roma population, etc.)	Well organized system (managed by NAE); Partnerships created for implementing this kind of programmes	Some measures dedicated to enterprises (financed from UIF) considered too bureaucratic by the employers	To not generalize the good practices; To not persuade employers to implement the measures
Public institutional framework operational at central and local level	To clarify responsibilities and to create cooperation areas	Status of NATB acting as NAQ to be clarified and enhanced	
Structures of social dialogue in place – new special legislation for sectoral committees	To improve the social dialogue and, in particular, to consolidate the sectoral committees	Regulations difficult to implement; Human resources not prepared for playing their role	Sectoral committees not operational; Social partners more interested in the crisis than in CVT system’s development
Three categories of CVT providers: nationally accredited; sector accredited; not accredited	Emerging CVT market	Limitation of the CVT market by the legislation; monopoly situations (approval of curricula, provision of training)	To continue the actual trend of introducing monopoly situations, more and more “regulated occupations” from the training point of view
Competences based training, assessment and certification – stipulated by legislation	Easier harmonization with other Member States’ learning systems; Easier movement on the labour market	Different approaches in pre-university and university systems	Lack of coherence in the future, too
Recognition of	Easier learning and	Not yet recognized by	Not to be recognized

competences acquired in non-formal and informal ways – stipulated by legislation	career pathways	the initial VET system	in the future, too
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2. Financing schemes for the participation of citizens in CVT

- *Government financing – Financing from the European Union, financing from national resources*
- *Private financing - the degree in which the enterprises/businesses finance the training of their personnel*
- *Special schemes of financing*

Government financing (EU funds, national funds)

There are not any global statistics available concerning the share of **public budget** allocated to CVT.

Based on the Labour Code, the public institutions draw annually plans for the CVT of the employees and implement totally or partially these plans, but it is difficult to access this information. There are available some data for the training delivered for some target groups, such as: teachers or teachers/educators/mediators working with Roma population.

An important source for financing CVT measures is the **Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF)**. The main target group of the measures funded through the UIF consists of jobseekers but there are facilities for partly funding the training in enterprises, too.

In conformity with the Law no 76/2002 regarding the unemployment insurance system, art. 48¹, companies can benefit of UIF for training the employees: 50% of the training costs for 20% of the employees can be covered from UIF. The measure is seen as a way of preventing unemployed (see table *Participation in training, by disadvantage groups*). For benefitting of this opportunity, the companies are subjects of a selection procedure. Some of the companies consider that the procedure is too bureaucratic and give up asking for this financial support.

As shown in the table below, the trend of the budget allocated from UIF for vocational training has been increasing constantly.

Budget allocated from UIF for vocational training

Indicator *	2005	2006	2007	2008
The rate of vocational training expenses for unemployed persons or for other categories of beneficiaries (according to Law no 76/2002 regarding the unemployment insurance system) from the total expenses made from UIF.	1.18%	1.64%	1.71%	2%

* According to the Short and Medium Term Strategy for CVT 2005-2010

Romania has benefited of **pre-accession funds** from the European Union including for CVT measures. There are still on-going Phare projects aiming to train different categories of adults, such as: members of sectoral committees and

sectoral experts involved in the development and validation of occupational standards; teaching staff involved in the reform of TVET system, teaching staff from rural area, etc.

Before 2007, the year of EU accession of Romania, **bilateral projects** (with Germany, The Netherlands, UK, etc.) with an important CVT component have been implemented in the CVT field, the target groups consisting of: NATB staff, sectoral committees' members and experts, human resources involved in the accreditation of the CVT providers, staff of the cultural operators, etc.

From 2007, the CVT measures have become eligible under the European Social Fund in compliance with the **Sectoral Operational Plan Human Resource Development** (SOP HRD). The Priority Axes of the SOP HRD, the Key Areas of Intervention for each axis and the related financial plan are presented in the Appendix 6.

Starting with 1997, Romania also benefited from the financing through the European Community programmes in the field of education and vocational training, i.e. **Socrates**, **Leonardo da Vinci** (until December 2006) and **Lifelong Learning** (in the present), managed by the National Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training (NACPF EVT).

Private financing

The Labour Code stipulates the obligation of the employers, to train the employees), but not all the employers respond to this obligation.

EUROSTAT survey CVTS2 (2002), conducted in enterprises by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) with 1999 as the reference year, shows that, on an average, Romanian enterprises spent for each employee with 3 times less than the EU member states average.

In many situations, the responsibility for training is "transferred" by the enterprise to the employee. There is no data concerning the value of individuals' contribution for assuring the own training.

A similar survey to European level was carried out in 2006, relying on the data collected in 2005, and the results show that the discrepancy between Romania and EU27 maintains approximately to the same level (average cost of CVT courses/by participant represented 0.3% from the average cost of CVT courses at EU27 level).

Expenditures with continuing training in enterprises

Indicators	1999	2005
Percentage of cost of CVT per total labour cost (%)	1.45	1.31
Percentage of cost of CVT courses per total labour cost (%)	0.56	0.70
Average cost of CVT/participant (RON)	310	1141
Average cost of CVT courses/participant (RON)	120	609

Source: Romania, NIS, CVT Survey

In spite of periodical discussions on the necessity to raise sectoral training funds, there are not enough will and capacity of the social partners to implement funding mechanisms for CVT at sector level.

The CVT measures are eligible under ESF, but the enterprises' capacity of accessing ESF needs to be improved.

Special schemes of financing

There are numerous examples of good practice on the participation of the **civil society** or of **public-private partnerships** in different CVT activities, for example the cooperation between MERI and various NGOs, public and intergovernmental bodies in order to develop and run projects/activities for Roma people, especially for training different categories of staff involved in educational activities.

Training costs supported by individuals

The contribution of the individuals to the CVT costs is an important one. People pay for acquiring new competences and practical skills, for developing their career or for personal development.

SWOT – Table 2 – Financing schemes for the participation of citizens in CVT

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
Discussions on the subject of setting up a “training funds” with the contribution of employers and employees	Easier dialogue on “training fund” at sector level by the establishment and consolidation of sectoral committees	No “training fund” implemented ant national or sector level	No initiative of the state for promoting the “training fund”; Disagreement of the social partners for setting up the “training fund”
No VAT paid by accredited CVT providers; Accreditation costs partially supported by the state		Very limited incentives for CVT	No initiative of the state to introduce incentives for employers or employees
UIF available and consolidate structure for its management	To provide CVT focused on the companies and individuals needs	Bureaucratic conditions and procedures	Funds for CVT used partially
Access to Structural Funds; SOP HRD operational	To implement strategic CVT programmes, at national level; To develop HR at CVT system level and at CVT provider level; To increase the general participation in CVT and the quality of CVT provision	Lack of capacity to develop and manage projects; Lack of correlation at strategic level and of cooperation between the stakeholders	Funds not used or used inadequately To increase the gap regarding participation in CVT in comparison with other MS
Access to European funds for education	European cooperation in VET field –	Insufficient valorization of the projects' results	The interest of organizations moved

and training via LLL Programme	identification of common strengths and weaknesses – finding common solutions		towards Structural Funds
Public funds available for special programmes, for vulnerable groups; Contribution of civil society to this kind of programmes	A better evaluation of the training needs for different categories of beneficiaries, as a basis for accessing the Structural Funds	Not enough human resources allocated to this projects/programmes; No continuity of actions	Difficult sustainability of this kind of programmes

3. National Studies for the characteristics of the participants in CVT

- *Statistical data on the participation of citizens in CTV*
- *Information regarding the characteristics of the participants*
- *Information regarding the subjective difficulties for the citizens' participation in CTV*
- *The profile of the trainees that participate in CTV (grouped in categories, unemployed, employed, etc.)*

Statistical data on the participation of citizens in CVT are available through the Household Labour Force Survey (AMIGO) carried out by National Institute of Statistics.

The indicator from the table below refers to the participation of the population (25-64 years age) in various types of education and training, not especially in CVT programmes, labour market oriented.

Participation in education and training of population with age of 25-64 years, by gender, in 2002-2007 period

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.6	1.5	1,5
Male	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.5	1,5
Female	1.0	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.5	1,5

Source: Romania, INS, Household Labour Force Survey, annual data

Other available information is presented in the next tables.

Persons who attended a training level within the last 4 weeks, in the national education system*), by age groups**), by sex, by urban/rural area and by training purpose

- persons -

Sex	Age groups
Urban/rural area	

*) Excluding persons left abroad for one year and over.

*) In the fourth quarter of 2007 for persons aged 45 years and over, who attended a training level in the national education system, a lower number of noticed cases were registered.

Training purpose	Persons who attended a training level	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years
		Total		
TOTAL	1942969	1779561	132380	24079
of which:				
Basic school /university education	1877347	1735493	115609	20051
Vocational training, training/retraining courses organised by recruitment agencies	51081	34618	12508	*
MALE	920189	838924	71096	7787
of which:				
Basic school /university education	884881	816513	59581	6643
Vocational training, training/retraining courses organised by recruitment agencies	28677	18569	9260	*
FEMALE	1022781	940637	61284	16291
of which:				
Basic school /university education	992465	918980	56029	13408
Vocational training, training/retraining courses organised by recruitment agencies	22404	16049	*	*
URBAN	1335938	1192580	117593	20405
of which:				
Basic school /university education	1299326	1175914	101461	17189
Vocational training, training/retraining courses organised by recruitment agencies	27809	12796	11870	*
RURAL	607031	586981	14787	*
of which:				
Basic school /university education	578020	559579	14149	*
Vocational training, training/retraining courses organised by recruitment agencies	23273	21822	*	*

⁾ Excluding persons left abroad for one year and over.

^{**)} In the third quarter of 2008 for persons aged 45 years and over, who attended a training level in the national education system, a lower number of noticed cases were registered.

Source: INS, Household Labour force Survey, the fourth quarter of 2008

Persons who attended a training level within the last 4 weeks, outside the national educational system*), by sex, urban/rural area, period and purpose of taking part in the most recent level of education or training

- persons -

Period Purpose	Persons who attended a training level	Sex		Urban/rural area	
		Male	Female	Urban	Rural
	Total				
TOTAL	27916	14663	13253	21824	*
Period					
Only during work hours	*	*	*	*	*

In time or outside of working programme	6975	*	*	*	*
Only outside work hours	*	*	*	*	*
Person did not work	12930	7009	*	9554	*
Purpose					
Professional	15856	8435	7422	12445	*
Personal	12060	*	*	9379	*

^{*)} Excluding persons left abroad for one year and over.

Source: INS, Household Labour force Survey, the fourth quarter of 2008

Every 5-6 years, a EUROSTAT survey on CVT is conducted in enterprises by NIS. According to the results obtained from the latest CVT Survey (carried out in 2006, relying on the data collected in 2005), an improvement records given the situation recorded in 1999, under the aspect of participation of employees to the vocational training and under the aspect of diversity of vocational training forms, too. Thus:

- the weight of enterprises that provided CVT to employees is 40.3% than 11.0% in 1999;
- participation rate to CVT courses was 30.8% than 20.2% in 1999;
- from the total of enterprises that provided CVT to employees, 81.7% chose other forms of CVT than the courses (planned period for training or practical experience to the job, planned period for job-rotation of the staff, participation to the training circles/ improvement of the knowledge, training to distance - self training, participation at the conferences, seminars, university lecture, cultural shop) than 62.3% in 1999;
- though the total duration of CVT courses was 1.3 bigger than in 1999 (24,402 thousand hours, than 18,740 thousand hours), the average duration by participant was 44.1 hours than 72.7 hours.

There are also data collected by the NATB on the participation in accredited CVT programmes. The total number of certificates issued in the period 2004-2008 is of 1,238,302, from which 728,823 are qualification certificates.

Statistics on the participation in training of the **unemployed people**, by sex, age, education, and disadvantage groups are systematically collected by the National Agency for Employment.

The Law no. 107/2004 which changes and completes the Law no.76/2002 on the unemployment insurance system and the stimulation of employment creates training opportunities for new disadvantaged groups.

The main **disadvantaged groups** benefiting of public support through vocational training are: long-term unemployed; women; young people; Roma ethnics; people with disabilities; unemployed aged over 45; sole family supporters; people carrying out activities in rural areas without a monthly income or with a monthly income lower than the unemployment benefit and who are registered at the employment agencies; people returning to work after the two-year maternal or paternal leave, or a three-year leave in case of a child with disability; people returning to work after the completion of military service; inmates who have at most 9 months until the end of imprisonment.

The data are presented in the tables below.

Participation in training, by sex, of the unemployed people

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Male	52%	47.4%	44%	46%	49%	48%	40%
Female	48%	52.6%	56%	54%	51%	52%	60%

Source: NAE, 2009

Participation in training, by age, of the unemployed people

Year	Participation in training, by age (%)			
	<25 years old	25-34 years old	35-45 years old	>45 years old
2002	38,5	36,7	19,3	5,5
2003	36,5	32,14	23,1	8,26
2004	38	28,5	24,5	9
2005	36	26,02	25,9	12,08
2006	29,02	27	29,18	14,8
2007	24,7	26,5	31,4	17,4
2008	26,7	25	30,5	17,8

Source: NAE, 2009

Participation in training, by education level, of the unemployed people

Year	Participation in training, by education level (%)		
	Primary, secondary, upper secondary education	High school, pre-university post-high school education	University education
2002	46,4	46,3	7,3
2003	58,2	37,37	4,43
2004	52,02	43,45	4,53
2005	56,48	37,87	5,65
2006	61,06	34,38	4,56
2007	59,85	35,80	4,35
2008	56	38	6

Source: NAE, 2009

As NAE organises qualification courses only for the qualification level 1, 2, and 3, the participation in training is significantly higher for unemployed people with secondary or upper secondary education.

Participation in training, by disadvantage groups

Disadvantaged groups	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Long-term unemployed, out of which:		8906	5341	4940	3633	3104	2691
People carrying out activities in rural areas			4131	12256	20484	21147	18725
Roma ethnics	282	202	282	1601	2283	1613	1109
People with disabilities	52	8	21	114	90	106	94
Post-institutionalised youth	137	34	15	40	55	21	45
Ex-prisoners	111	7	6	21	5	10	7
Prisoners			368	901	1206	1744	1546
Repatriates	8						
Refugees	2						11
Persons returning to work			8	28	8	20	24

after maternal/paternal leave							
Persons returning to work after invalidity retirement			30				
Persons returning to work after military service			6				
Employees trained for preventing unemployed (Law 76/2002, art. 48 ^{^1})			107	2065	2660	2800	2610

Source: NAE, 2009

Obviously, there are not systematically collected data, at national level, on the participation in CVT, covering all the categories and characteristics of the participants. In the opinion of some highly standard experts the available data do not reflect the real participation in CVT, which is more important than the reported one (see Focus Group with policy formers, executives and highly standard experts from implementing bodies).

Characteristics of the participants, profile of the trainees

The participants in CVT are people of all ages, employed or unemployed, sent to participate in CVT programmes by the employer or by the NAE, or participating through personal initiative.

The lack of statistical data makes difficult the characterization of the participants in CVT, but the qualitative research emphasized some characteristics of the trainees:

- most of the employed trainees are under 45 years old (the older are generally unemployed);
- they seem to be motivated to participate in CVT, aiming to acquire new competences and practical skills, and to develop their career (a significant number are participants in more CVT programmes and intent to participate in other courses in the future);
- less participants seem to be more interested in having a certificate than to acquire new competences;
- they have an active participation in the courses and are very open in communicating their opinions.

According to the statistics most of the people participating in CVT programmes organized by NAE are young people under 25 years old and between 25 and 34 years old, seeking employment. These categories are easier to be integrated on the labour market. The fact that a significant number of young people are registered to NAE's database and participate in vocational training indicates that:

- their initial training is not in accordance with the labour market's needs;
- young people accept more easier to participate in training and to change their initial qualification.

On the other side, people over 45 years old demonstrate a lower flexibility, hardly accepting participation in vocational training and acquiring of a new qualification.

Concerning the attitude of the unemployed participants only some of them are motivated, others are pessimistic, skeptical concerning the utility of the training for finding a job, and the communication is sometimes difficult with them.

Difficulties for participation

There are two categories of difficulties concerning the participation of citizens in CVT:

- difficulties related to the mentality:
 - o employers do not consider the CVT costs as a necessary investment;
 - o people are not aware of their rights to participate in training and of the utility of the participation in CVT;
 - o participation in CVT has not always an impact on the career
- objective obstacles:
 - o lack of funds (employers, individuals) and lack of capacity to accede the available funds;
 - o lack of time (due to long work programmes, lack of the employer's support, family problems);
 - o difficult access (limited offer – geographically and occupationally, lack of flexibility of CVT offer, access conditions – needed level of education);
 - o CVT content not adapted to the beneficiaries' needs.

SWOT – Table 3 – Participation in CVT

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
NIS statistics on participation in CVT	Common work with EUROSTAT	Insufficient data on participation in CVT at the level of organizations and individuals;	No basis for a coherent CVT policy
NAE statistics on CVT measures funded from UIF	Autonomous system, easier to maintain		
NATB statistics on accredited CVT providers and accredited competences assessment centres		Attributions not sustained by administrative arrangements; Interferences of responsibilities with other institutions	Administrative incoherence
Apparently, the participation in CVT is higher then reflected in the statistics	To improve the surveys and to obtain better results	Inadequate survey methodology; Vitiating answers due to a misunderstanding of questions/concepts	To not improve the methodological approach
Establishment of sectoral committees	Improvement of social dialogue on	Lack of awareness of both employers and TUs	Interest of social partners directed

	CVT	about the CVT benefits	towards other critical aspects (global crisis)
	Strategic CVT projects already launched; CVT – a subject more and more discussed CVT – possible solution to crisis effects	Lack of awareness of people	Interest of people directed towards other critical aspects (global crisis)
Some CVT strategic projects already started	Access to Structural Funds	Lack of financial resources of companies and individuals	Access limited by the extreme bureaucracy
CVT programmes organized by NAE and supported from UIF	Increasing number of unemployed		
CVT providers willing to find solutions to facilitate participation; Legal possibilities to customize the training programmes		Difficult access: limited offer (geographically and occupationally), lack of flexibility of CVT offer, required level of education to participate in training	Vicious circle: difficult access, less participants, less providers, more difficult access; Prohibitive access; Poor chances for a professional progress
		Obligations imposed by the company after supporting the costs of training	Less participation in CVT
MECI – experience and institutional framework for running “second chance” programme	“Second chance” programme	Absence of basic skills	More vulnerable people
		Limited impact of CVT on the career	Less participation in CVT
	Increased social dialogue on CVT topics	Lack of people awareness concerning their legal rights to participate in CVT	Less financial contribution of employers for CVT
Sectoral committees operational; Occupational standards validated by the sectors	Increased involvement of the sector in qualification development	CVT offer not responding to the real needs of beneficiaries (of companies and individuals)	Less participation in CVT
MECI, NAE – experience and responsibilities in the field of career information and counseling	Eligible costs from ESF for developing/ improving career information and counseling services	Lack of career information and counseling support	Lack of awareness regarding the importance of information and counseling for the career

4. Motives/incentives and counterincentives for participation

- *Special measures for the increase of citizens' participation in CTV*
- *Economic/financial incentives for the citizens*
- *Incentives/motives regarding the valorization of participation (f.e. improvement of working condition)*
- *Accreditation/certification of CTV*
- *Research regarding the motives/incentives for the participants*

Special measures for increasing the participation

Romania has a Short and Medium Term Strategy of Continuing Vocational Training 2005-2010, elaborated under the Phare Twinning Project "Support for Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection for CVT" – by the MLFSP from Romania and the Ministry of Education from Denmark, and approved through the G.D. no. 875/2005. The main partners were NATB, NAE, MERI and the social partners.

The goal consists of increasing participation in education and training of the population of age 25-64 to 7% until 2010 through:

- Strategic Objective 1 – To facilitate the access to CVT for all the categories of participants, in a LLL perspective;
- Strategic Objective 2 – To increase the CVT quality

A related operational plan has been implemented from 2006, but the results are not yet the expected ones.

"*Special measures*" could be considered the CVT programmes provided by the NAE for job seekers and for some vulnerable categories of population (rural communities, Roma population, post-institutionalised youth, inmates) or the "second chance" programme managed by MERI.

From the total number of CVT programmes organized by NAE, 68% were run by its own training centres at fees under the market fees. External accredited providers have been used only for completing the internal capacity.

The support of the state consists not only in the allocation of funds, but also in the organization of programmes, the selection of participants, the counseling/motivation of participants, and other related activities concurring to the success of the programme.

One of the most complex programme is dedicated to Roma people and can be considered as an example of "good practice". It is largely presented in the Appendix 7.

Most of the previous projects funded from the pre-accession funds (there are still un-going projects) had (have) a consistent CVT component. A weakness of some of the CVT programmes run under these projects is that they did not pay attention to the certification of the learning outcomes.

A “*special measure*” can be considered the Sectoral Operational Plan Human Resource Development (SOP HRD) (Appendix 6). The difficulties to access the ESF through SOP HRD are related to the lack of experience at the level of institutions set up to manage the plan, and at the level of potential beneficiaries.

Theoretically, the ESF is accessible starting with 2007; practically the first projects started at the end of 2008. For different reasons (lack of competent human resources, incapacity to cover the co-financing and the pre-financing), the access of SMEs to ESF is problematic.

There are not any ***economic/financial incentives for the citizens*** participating in CVT. The lack of this kind of measures in the CVT Strategy is one of the reasons for not attending the main goal of the strategy: 7% of the 25-64 years old population participating in education and vocational training.

The trainees consider that in most of the cases, there is not any ***valorization of the participation***, any correlation between the participation in CVT programmes and their status as employees: better work conditions, better salary, better evaluation followed by promotion, etc.

Nevertheless, people are motivated to participate in CVT:

- They are aware that acquiring new competences is necessary for preserving their jobs or for finding a better job;
- The young graduates (of high school, higher education, even of master cycle) have not practical competences;
- Having a recognized certificate is an important reason for participating in training (could be a condition for being hired, for acceding to funds or for participating in different projects/activities);

The motivation is more obvious in the case of people with a high level of education and a successful career than in the situation of people with a low level of education and of unemployed persons.

The unemployed persons participate in CVT programmes because:

- They are obliged by the NAE;
- They hope to find a job;
- Some of them are interested in acquiring new competences.

There are research projects regarding the motivation of participation in CVT (by categories of participants, of training, etc.), but the access to the results of those projects is difficult (it is itself a research project).

Accreditation/certification of CVT

Usually, people who pay themselves the costs of training prefer to participate in CVT programmes provided by accredited training providers which are allowed to deliver “*nationally recognized*” certificates. This choice is more obvious for qualification programmes as the certification certificates are recognized by the MLFSP for changing the professional status of a person. In constructions, for example, a person can be hired as a mason only if he/she has a qualification certificate; otherwise, he/she works as an “unqualified worker”.

People intending to migrate and to work abroad are interested in having qualification certificates; there are employers that ask for this type of certificate.

As presented before, the certificates delivered by the accredited CVT providers have a *supplement* précisising the acquired competences.

The enterprises which support the costs of CVT for the employees are not always interested in nationally recognized certificates, especially for short CVT programmes (for “communication”, or “new marketing techniques”, etc.); sometimes the companies prefer non-accredited providers for limiting the turnover of the employees.

An important opportunity is offered to people without certification, but having work experience, by the competences assessment centres, but very few are aware of this opportunity.

SWOT – Table 4 – Incentives and counterincentives

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
Special measures implemented for increasing the participation (SOP HRD, programmes for vulnerable groups)	Funds available and institutional framework operational	Lack of capacity for accessing the Structural Funds	To not valorize the opportunities
CVT costs deductible for organizations, but not from taxes	National Strategy for CVT aiming to increase the participation in CVT	No CVT incentives for companies and individuals	No initiative of the state for promoting incentives for CVT, especially in global crisis conditions; Lack of employers' support for promoting incentives for CVT
No VAT applicable to CVT services provided by accredited providers			
CVT leading to certificates (nationally recognized, recognized at sector level or by the market)	Possibility to accredit CVT programmes; Free market allowed	Needed improvement of the current accreditation system	No trust in the quality of CVT provision
Flexibility of training and certification, based on competences	Similar European approach, in a LLL perspective	CVT achievements nor recognized by the IVET system	To perpetuate the actual situation and the lack of mutual recognition between parallel systems
Recognition of the competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning contexts	Similar European approach, in a LLL perspective	Not enough competences assessment centres	Not enough awareness of the potential of the system; Not encouraged financially by the state

5. “Good practices”

- *Recording of good practices for the information of the public regarding training programs.*
- *Recording of good practices for the increase of citizens’ access to CTV*
- *Recording of good practices for the connection of CTV with their vocational course/route of the participants*

The dissemination of “good practices” in general, and in CVT in particular, is still incipient and the impact is insufficient, even if:

- all the European projects have the dimension of dissemination (through websites, conferences, printed materials, etc.);
- there are projects dedicated to “good practices” dissemination (for example, the *“Guide of good practices regarding the quality assurance at the level of VET providers”* has been elaborated through the initiative of the National Group for Quality Assurance and published on the website of the MLFSP);
- there are registers of accredited CVT providers and of accredited competences centres that can be consulted on the NATB website;
- the public institutions have websites for making possible the access to useful information (MMFSP, MECI, NAE, NATB, etc.).

The “good practices” are insufficiently disseminated because:

- there is a lack of culture in this respect;
- the public institution neglect this aspect (sometimes their own websites are not updated);
- the companies which are potential beneficiaries of CVT are not interested to make this information available for the employees (not even the trade unions);
- the advertising, in the case of the most CVT providers, is insufficient and non-professional (professional marketing is expensive);
- usually, people select a service based on information receiving from friends, colleagues, and less on information research;
- some advertising is very aggressive and does not reflect any real quality.

For improving the situation:

- the “good practices” need the confirmation of a trusted authority; in the case of CVT providers or competences assessment centres, this authority could be NATB or the sectoral committees;
- the initiatives to disseminate the “good practices” could be taken by sectors, through the sectoral committees, or at company level, by trade unions;
- the networking and the associative process is favorable for the dissemination and integration of good practices.

SWOT – Table 5 – Good practices

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
Good practices available at system level and at provider level	Networks, associations, sectoral committees	Low dissemination of information: - lack of interest for this kind of information; - advertising costs too high for the CVT providers; Low rate of multiplication	Not known by the interested factors; Not multiplied
Accredited CVT providers published on NATB webpage	Legal and institutional framework for fighting the lying advertising	Aggressive advertising not always supported by quality	Lack of trust in “good practices”

6. The contribution of the organizations that implement CVT

- *Organizations’ accreditation/certification (processes and range of implementation)*
- *Professional associations of the organizations that implement CVT*
- *Degree of incorporating good practices*
- *Internal planning and evaluation systems that promote citizens’ participation in CTV*

Organizations’ accreditation/certification

As presented at the point 1, not all the CVT providers are accredited. There are:

- nationally accredited providers, which deliver nationally recognised certificates, under the logo of MMFSP and MERI (including Europass supplement);
- providers accredited/authorized at sector level, which deliver certificates recognized at sector level;
- not accredited providers, which deliver certificates that could be recognized by the market.

The accreditation can be asked by the **CVT providers** for two categories of CVT programmes:

- qualification programmes, developed for qualifications registered in the List of Qualifications (approved by MLFSP and MERI), finalised with “*qualification certificates*” and “*certificate supplement*”;
- other type of programmes (e.g., for updating the competences related to a qualification, for acquiring new competences, etc.), developed for qualifications registered in the List of Qualifications, for occupations from the Classification of Occupations in Romania (approved by MLFSP and the National Institute for Statistics) or for key competences (from the list approved by NATB, based on the 8 European key competences); these

programmes are finalized with “*graduation certificates*” and “*certificate supplement*”.

The “certificate supplements” are annexes compatible with Europass Certificate supplements indicating the acquired competences.

The implementation of the accreditation legislation started in January 2004. The accreditation process is coordinated at national level by the NATB, but it is a decentralized process; there are 42 accreditation commissions, one for each county. The members of the accreditation commissions are representatives of the decentralized structures of the MLFSP, MERI and NAE, and representatives of the social partners.

The evaluation of the CVT providers and programmes in view of accreditation is made by experts in the field of training, selected by the accreditation commissions, but the decision is taken by the commissions. The accreditation criteria regard: the curriculum (based on occupational/training standards), the resources (material, human, didactic), and the financial situation. The validity of the accreditation is of 4 years.

Another category of providers are the **competences assessment centres** which are authorized by the NATB to assess and certify the competences acquires by individuals in non-formal and informal learning contexts. The evaluation of centres in view of accreditation is made by external verifiers certified by NATB. The accreditation criteria regard: the assessment instruments (based on occupational/training standards), the resources (assessors certified by NATB, capacity to organize the assessment in real work conditions), and some internal quality assurance procedures. The validity of the accreditation is of 1, 2 or 3 years, depending on the evaluation score.

The accredited competences assessment centres deliver “*competences certificates*” which mention the demonstrated competences.

Only a few of the CVT providers are organized as **professional associations** and the number of the associates is not always representative for the sector/training field. There are examples of associations, such as: FORTI – Association of CVT Providers and Users in IT Field; ANCZEA – National Association of Adult Education Zonal Centres, etc.

It is difficult to evaluate the **degree of incorporating good practices**, obviously it is not a current practice between the Romanian CVT providers, but the examples of existing associations and networks demonstrate the capacity of this kind of structures to disseminate and incorporate good practices.

Internal planning and evaluation systems that promote citizens' participation in CTV

At the level of central authorities NAE has implemented an internal planning and evaluating system for promoting of the citizens' participation in CVT.

At the provider level there are CVT providers and competences assessment centres that plan, implement and evaluate measures for increasing the participation in training through a better quality of training, a better answer to the

beneficiaries' needs, a flexible approach for facilitating the access to CVT programmes. The providers that have implemented a quality management system permanently evaluate their results based on a set of indicators, aiming to improve their activity.

A complementary approach of training and competences assessment provision could be a way to increase participation.

SWOT – Table 6 – Contribution of organizations

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
National accreditation system in place Accredited CVT providers on the market	On-going ESF strategic project aiming to improve the quality assurance in CVT system; European approach available through EQARF	Critical points of the accreditation system: lack of self-assessment at providers' level; accreditation system based on inputs, not on results	To not succeed to improve the system
Nationally recognized certificates and certificate supplement (Europass)	Similar European approach; Transparency of acquired competencies	CVT certificates not recognized by IVET system	To perpetuate the actual situation; lack of mutual recognition between parallel systems
Competences assessment centres operational; Nationally recognized competences certificates	Similar European approach; Transparency of acquired competencies	Not enough competences assessment centres; Competences certificates not recognized by IVET system	System of recognition of prior learning not generalised
Complementary approach (competences assessment and training delivered by the same organization)	Examples of good practice		Possible conflicts of interest
Quality management system implemented by CVT providers	On-going ESF strategic project aiming to improve the quality assurance in CVT system	Low number of cases	Difficulties in implementing the project's results at providers' level
Flexible CVT programmes	CVT providers interested in attracting participants		

7. The role of the trainer/educator

- *Accreditation/certification systems for trainers in CTV*
- *Processes and systems of initial trainers' training in adult education*

- *Processes and systems of continuing trainers' training in adult education*
- *Research data regarding the contribution of trainers in promoting the citizens' participation in CTV*
- *Degree of professionalisation of trainers (associations, unions)*

The beginning of the regulation at national level of the trainer's profile and status is marked by the G.O. no 129/2000 on the adults' vocational training, implemented from 2004 under the coordination of the NATB. The current regulation stipulates the obligation of the accredited training providers to use trainers qualified for the specific CVT programme (qualification proved with diploma/certificates). Beginning with January 2010, the trainers have to be also trained for working with adult people.

In 2001 was developed an occupational standard for "trainer", with four units of competences: training planning; training delivery; trainees' assessment; review and promotion of the training programs. In 2007, this standard was reviewed and has 8 units (training planning; training delivery; trainees' assessment; use of advanced training methodology; marketing of training; planning of training programs; organization of training programs; evaluation, review and quality assurance for training programs).

Initial and continuing trainers' training. Accreditation/certification systems for trainers

The Romanian training systems for trainers/adult educators envisage both initial and continuing vocational education.

The initial education refers to:

- the compulsory course on "Adult Education (AE)" provided for students learning within Educational Sciences Specialization Departments, from Faculties of Psychology and Pedagogy (one semester course);
- the optional course on AE offered by the Universities' Departments responsible for initial and continuing teachers' training (DPPD);
- the Master programmes in AE provided by the West University of Timisoara and "Al. I. Cuza" University of Iasi, University of Bucharest, etc. on counselling, programme developers and evaluators.

In 2001, one year after the Memorandum for lifelong learning, „Al. I. Cuza” University in Iasi initiated the first European Master Degree in Adult Education. This was the result of all partnerships between IIZ/DVV – the Romanian branch, „Al. I. Cuza” University in Iasi, the University of Hanover, and New Bulgarian University - Sofia.

The continuing training for trainers consists of:

- programmes for *trainer* or for *trainer of trainers*, provided by accredited CVT providers, finalized with nationally recognized certificates (graduation certificates);

- puzzled training seminars offered on the job or through different international projects (ex. on counseling), or according with the specific sectoral training needs, but usually not certified.

In addition of this, since 2004 has been implemented a national regulation regarding the recognition and evaluation of the competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning contexts. In this respect, assessment centres have been accredited for *trainer*, too, that make possible the recognition/ certification of competences acquired by work experience.

Professionalisation of trainers/assessors

The establishment, in 2006, of the Sectoral Committee for Education and Training, Research-Development and Sports (sectoral partnership structure consisting of employers organisations, trade unions, professional associations, regulating authorities, training providers, etc., dealing, among others, with the validation of the qualifications within a specific sector) was a booster for the qualification related with adult education. The latest version of the occupational standard for *trainer* was validated by the Sectoral Committee.

The establishment in 2006 of the National Group for Quality Assurance in Education and Training – a national structure created in order to harmonize the quality concept and standards in education and training – as a National Reference Point for ENQA-VET and of two National Agencies for Quality Assurance in Education (for Higher Education and for Pre-University Education) may have an impact on the professional status of the trainer.

As the main targets, at policy level, in this area, as stated by the Sectoral Committee, can be mentioned:

1. Defining a unified concept for *trainer* based on common core competencies, but differentiated for specific functions:
 - the extension of the *trainer* concept for all categories of trainers;
 - common core competencies for all trainers, not depending on the level of qualification;
 - common “framework programs” for training of trainers;
 - common procedures for the trainers’ evaluation and accreditation;
 - the differentiation of the specific categories of trainers by optional competencies;
2. Developing the professional association(s) of trainers as self-regulating bodies;
3. Developing higher education programs in the area of adult education;
4. The implementation of quality assurance and quality management systems – based on ISO and EFQM models.

The assessors who work within the competences assessment centres are certified by NATB and registered in the National Register of Certified Assessors. There are discussions to externalize the final examinations of the CVT programmes and the assessment to be done by certified assessors, within accredited centres.

SWOT – Table 7 – Role of the trainer/assessor

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
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Trainers qualified for the specific CVT programmes (qualification proved with diploma/certificates)	Asked by legislation for accredited CVT providers	No special requirements for the trainers used by non-accredited CVT providers	
Proposal of ESF project dedicated to training of trainers advanced by NATB	Special requirement for professionalization of trainers starting with 2010	Not yet specified the content, duration, access conditions, etc., related to the expected “training of trainers” programmes	Legal requirements superficially implemented
Occupational standard for “trainer” recently updated Occupational standard for “assessor” under discussion	Sectoral Committee interested and involved in the professionalization of trainers and assessors	Sectoral Committee not yet consolidated (as status, funds, human resources)	Interest not concretized
Assessors certified by NATB	Discussions to externalize the final exam for the CVT programmes – assessment done by certified assessors	Limited number of certified assessors	Measure not implemented

8. Vulnerable social groups

- *Categorization of vulnerable social groups*
- *Measures for positive treatment of vulnerable social groups*
- *Special measures for the increase of access and participation for vulnerable social groups*

Categories of vulnerable social groups

The list of categories of vulnerable young people presented in the Appendix 8 has been elaborated under the European project “*QualiMoVET*”⁵, but it could be expanded to all categories of ages and used in the current project.

Taken into consideration this list, the most relevant vulnerable groups for Romania are:

- Ethnic group (Roma population), facing social obstacles (limited social skills, sometimes anti-social behavior), economic obstacles (poverty), educational difficulties (learning difficulties, early school-leavers and school dropouts);

⁵ *Leonardo da Vinci – Development of Innovation Project „QualiMoVET“ – Quality signet for modular VET for disadvantaged young people*

- Young people from rural area, facing geographical obstacles (limited public transport, poor facilities), economic obstacles (poverty), educational difficulties (learning difficulties, early school-leavers and school dropouts);
- Young people with a low standard of living, facing economic obstacles (poverty, homelessness), social obstacles (limited social skills, sometimes anti-social behavior), educational difficulties (learning difficulties, early school-leavers and school dropouts).

The list has to be completed with the categories taken into consideration by NAE for benefiting of public support through vocational training: long-term unemployed; women; young people; Roma ethnics; people with disabilities; unemployed aged over 45; sole family supporters; people carrying out activities in rural areas without a monthly income or with a monthly income lower than the unemployment benefit and who are registered at the employment agencies; people returning to work after the two-year maternal or paternal leave, or a three-year leave in case of a child with disability; people returning to work after the completion of military service; inmates who have at most 9 months until the end of imprisonment.

Measures for positive treatment and for the increase of access and participation in CVT

There are legal regulations, strategies, programmes and institutions dedicated to the social inclusion, in general, and to different vulnerable groups, in particular. The list below is not exhaustive:

- Regulations: G.O. no 488/2005 – National indicators of social inclusion; G.O. no 1827 – National Plan 2006-2008 for fighting poverty; G.O. no 1217/2006 – Establishment of national mechanism to promote social inclusion in Romania;
- Strategies: National Strategy on social inclusion of young over 18 leaving the State Child Protection System 2006-2008; Government Strategy for improving Roma situation 2001; National Strategy for protection, integration and social inclusion of disabled persons in 2006-2013 period “Equal opportunities for disabled persons – towards a society without discrimination“;
- Institutions: MLFSP, MERI, NAE, and their territorial structure; Anti-Poverty Commission and Promotion of Social Inclusion.

Important measures to enhance access to learning and create learning opportunities for children and young people with special needs and for those with a social and economic disadvantaged background have been taken within the framework of national programmes, coordinated by MERI and co-funded by external donors (*The Rural Education Project*; actions of the projects Phare “*Access to education for disadvantaged groups, with a focus on Roma*” (2002-2004) and “*Access to education for disadvantaged groups*” (2004-2006); Phare TVET (2002, 2003 and 2004-2006); Education for information in disadvantaged rural areas). One of the main areas for action refers to the improvement of the quality of human resources available in rural areas aiming to increase participation in education, improve school performance, encourage participation in further

education at higher levels and fight social exclusion. All these projects had an important CVT component aiming to train the specialists working with vulnerable groups.

Other measures dealing with the adult population from rural areas are the training programmes run by the public employment services (approximately 15,000 people in 2006). NAE provides, free of charge, from the Unemployment Insurance Fund, vocational training courses for people who perform activities in rural areas and do not have any income or the income is lower than the unemployment benefit and are registered by NAE, in order to acquire the needed competences for facilitating their access on the labour market. Thus, in 2007, NAE organised vocational training programmes for 21.147 people who perform activities in rural areas (out of which 20.992 unemployed people).

Another disadvantaged group is that of the Roma population, who benefited in 2006 from specific programmes promoted by public authorities (MLFSP, MERI, National Agency for Roma, NAE), civil society or external donors (EU, Roma Education Fund, World Bank, etc.) who encourage participation in education and training⁶.

The Romanian Government has adopted (G.D. no 430/2001) the *Strategy for improving the Roma situation* and NAE has been actively involved in its implementation. Since 2001, NAE has elaborated and implemented training and employment programmes specifically addressed to Roma population.

The "second chance education" programmes have been adopted and are being implemented in the last ten years by schools, high-schools and "teacher resource centres" for adult basic education .

Schools and "teacher resource centres" are accredited to engage in adult basic education (G.O. no 3062/2000) and one of the priorities established through law by MERI is "*completing basic education, including literacy education, as well as training adults in the permanent education system in areas of interest such as: ICT, foreign languages, entrepreneurial education, democratic citizenship education, education for health*".

Specifically regarding completion of the basic education, MERI approves organisation of courses for individuals older than 14 that did not complete primary education. For individuals exceeding with more than 2 years the normal age of the grade, education within the compulsory sequence can be provided in other forms – evening classes, part-time education, distance learning – according to the rules established by MoERI. These types of programmes are intended for the so-called "at-risk population": individuals that have never attended any school, young school leavers or individuals completing primary or compulsory education but unable to read, write or calculate at a satisfactory level. There are no admission requirements for these types of programmes.

In the field of adults' training, the Law no. 107/2004 which changes and completes the Law no.76/2002 on the unemployment insurance system and the stimulation of employment creates training opportunities for new disadvantaged groups.

⁶ See Appendix 7

SWOT – Table 8 – Vulnerable groups

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
Specific legal regulations, strategies, programmes and institutions; Good practices; Involvement of the civil society	Similar European approach	Not enough capacity for a large dissemination and multiplication	To remain at the stage of “good practices”

9. Alternative training schemes (distant training, mixed/combined systems)

- *Degree of dissemination of the distant training systems*
- *Degree of development of distant training systems in CTV*
- *Incorporation of distant and combined training systems in the legislative framework*
- *Opinions and views of practitioners and organizations for the contribution of distant training in increasing the citizens’ participation in CTV*

The distance learning is a scheme of training used within the Higher Education, but less used in CVT. The legislation does not encourage the distance learning forms in CVT; these kind of CVT programmes cannot be accredited under the G.O. no 129/2000 and, consequently, the certificates are not “nationally recognized”. Changes of legislation have been prepared for introducing the accreditation of the distance learning programmes within CVT system, but not yet promoted for approval.

The most of trainees’ and practitioners’ opinions are not in the favor of distance learning. They consider that not only the presence of the trainer but also the presence of the other trainees contribute to a better learning process.

SWOT – Table 9 – Alternative training

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
Used in higher education		Less used in CVT	
Distance learning CVT programmes not accepted for accreditation	Changes of legislation prepared	No interest manifested by the policy makers for promoting these changes	To perpetuate the actual situation

10. The contribution and the role of new technologies (e-learning)

- *Degree of incorporating new technologies and the internet*
- *Incorporation of e-learning training systems in the legislative framework of CTV*
- *Recording of good practices of e-learning in CTV*

- *Opinions and views of practitioners and organizations for the contribution of e-learning in increasing the citizens' participation in CTV*

It is difficult to quantify the degree of incorporating of new technologies and the internet in the learning process, but it could be appreciated as low.

As affirmed before, the current legislation is an obstacle in promoting e-learning. The accredited CVT programmes can incorporate e-learning sequences, but the main structure of the course, including the final exam, has to be a classical one.

The trainees seem to prefer the face to face courses, the permanent presence/ support of trainers and the group interactivity.

SWOT – Table 10 – New technologies

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
Good practices		Low level of implementation; Classical courses preferred by the trainees	Implementation not encouraged by the legislation

11. Connection of CVT with the European Employment Strategy in a national level

There are national strategies (*Short and Medium Term Strategy of Continuing Vocational Training 2005-2010*) and operational programmes (*Sectoral Operational Plan for Human Resources Development*) approved and correlated with other documents, such as:

- Joint Assessment Paper on Evaluation of Employment Policies (JAP 2006);
- National Action Plan for Employment 2004-2005;
- Joint Inclusion Memorandum on Social Inclusion (JIM 2006);
- National Strategy on Employment 2005-2010;
- Pre-accession Economic Programme 2005;
- Strategy for Continuous Vocational Training on short and medium term 2005 – 2010;
- National Strategy for developing social services 2005;
- National Strategy concerning the prevention and fight against domestic violence phenomena 2005;
- National Strategy on social inclusion of young over 18 leaving the State Child Protection System 2006-2008;
- National Strategy for developing the social assistance system for elderly persons 2005 – 2008;
- Government Strategy for improving Roma situation 2001;
- National Strategy for protection, integration and social inclusion of disabled persons in 2006-2013 period “Equal opportunities for disabled persons – towards a society without discrimination“;
- National Strategy for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men;
- Strategy for Pre-university Education Development 2001-2010;

- Strategy for decentralisation of education 2005;
- Strategic Guidelines for Education and Research 2006-2008.

The general objective of the CVT Strategy consists of the increasing participation in education and training of the population of age 25-64 to 7% until 2010 through:

- Strategic Objective 1 – to facilitate the access to CVT for all the categories of participants, in a LLL perspective;
- Strategic Objective 2 – to increase the CVT quality.

The general objective of SOP HRD is the development of human capital and increasing competitiveness, by linking education and lifelong learning with the labour market and ensuring increased opportunities for future participation on a modern, flexible and inclusive labour market for 1,650,000 people.

The specific objectives of SOP HRD can be summarised as follows:

- Promoting quality initial and continuous education and training, including higher education and research;
- Promoting entrepreneurial culture and improving quality and productivity at work;
- Facilitating the young people and long term unemployed insertion in the labour market;
- Developing a modern, flexible, inclusive labour market;
- Promoting (re)insertion in the labour market of inactive people, including in rural areas¹;
- Improving public employment services;
- Facilitating access to education and to the labour market of the vulnerable groups.

The ESF intervention in Romania shall support the achievement of the general objective and the specific objectives in the field of human resources development, making a real contribution to the implementation of European Employment Strategy and to the overall objective of growth and jobs.

SWOT – Table 11 – Connexion with European Employment Strategy

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
Short and Medium Term Strategy of Continuing Vocational Training 2005-2010	Document harmonized with European and other domestic strategies, programmes, etc.	No concrete financial mechanism previewed	Objectives not achieved
SOP HRD	Document harmonized with European and other domestic strategies, programmes, etc.	At the beginning of implementation; Limited capacity of implementation	Low degree of implementation

12. Connection of CVT with the labour market in a national level

The connection of the CVT provision with the labour market needs is realized as follows:

- at national level, through:
 - o use of national occupational standards for curriculum development, competences assessment and certification (compulsory only for nationally accredited CVT providers);
- at sector level, through:
 - o the involvement of Sectoral Committees in qualifications development and validation;
- at local level, through:
 - o the cooperation of the CVT providers and of the competences assessment centres with the companies (adaptation of curricula to the companies' needs, training/assessment of the employees, organization of practice and assessment within the companies, etc.).

SWOT – Table 12 – Connexion with labour market

Strengths	Opportunities	Weaknesses	Threats
National occupational standards for curriculum development, competences assessment and certification	On going Phare project “Establishment of National Authority for Qualifications” – development and updating of occupational standards	Limited number of experts for job analysis and occupational standards development	Not enough occupational standards or low quality of standards
Sectoral Committees set up	New legislation for the consolidation the Sectoral Committees; Sectoral Committees supposed to identify the training needs	New legislation difficult to implement; Lack of trained human resources	Sectoral Committees not able to play their role
Cooperation between CVT providers and companies	Local tradition	Lack of practice opportunities	Low interest of companies in CVT

IV. FOCUS GROUPS

The methodology used for implementing the focus groups and some considerations on the participation in the focus groups are presented in the Chapter II.

This chapter contains the results of the 7 focus groups organized by 'EUROED':

- 4 focus groups of trainees:
 - o 2 focus groups of participants in the same course "EBC*L" – the results are presented in the same table;
 - o 1 focus groups of employed people, participants in the course "Project Management";
 - o 1 focus groups of unemployed people, participants in the course "PC Operator";
- 2 focus groups of trainers and training experts;
- 1 focus group of policy makers, high standard experts, highly ranked employees.

Focus Groups 1 and 2 – TRAINEES

Place and date: Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Brasov – 14 March 2009

Moderator: Ana Elena Costin

Moderator assistant: Anisoara Necea

Participants: Trainees from the training programme “EBC*L” – 2 groups (see list in Appendix 5)

QUESTION	ANSWERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the project context • Presentation of the low participation in CVT, in Romania
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>What is, in your opinion, the explanation of the low participation in CVT, in Romania?</u> - • <u>How were you informed about this course?</u> • <u>Why did you decide to participate in the course?</u> • How useful do you think it is and where does your participation in CVT programs has helped you? • Are there any personal factors that prevent/impede you to participate in continuous vocational training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low participation in CVT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lack of awareness is obvious, people do not even think about their need of participating in new training. - It is a mentality problem; the ignorance and the daily inertia are the main explanation of the low participation in training. - The consumers have not the culture of quality, they do not ask for quality but for lower prices. In consequence, the employers do not ask for quality at the work place. • Information on the course: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From his mother; from colleagues/friend; it was proposed by the company • Decision to participate in training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We learnt a lot of theory during the school and university studies, but in practice we are not able to do anything. - I am very disappointed by the university, less then 5% of the learning outcomes were useful for the work life. • How useful the training is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I participated before in other courses and they are useful. - It is the first course I am participating in. - It is useful if you have a lasting job and a perspective to develop your career. • Personal preventing/impeding factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The obligations imposed by the company after paying you a CVT course are sometimes too hard.

<p>programs while you wish to?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I didn't feel to be more appreciated by the organisation after participating in a CVT programme. - The costs of training are impeding the participation in CVT.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember an element / measure that made your participation easier. • Remember an element that suspended your participation. • The trainers of the programs how much do they help your participation? • The bodies and the organizers of the programs how much do they help your participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures making participation easier: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the trainer manages to make attractive the content of the course, to offer less theory and more practice, more case studies. - The company proposed me to participate in this course. • Participation suspended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no cases • Help from the trainers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using interactive methods, making the course accessible; - Discussing the programme's content at the beginning of the course and adapting it to the trainees' needs • Help from the organisers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organising a flexible programme (time-table), correlated with the work time; - Offering nationally/European recognised certificates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which measures do you wish the State to take (e.g. financing, certification, access etc.) in order to participate more? • What else do you think should be changed in order to participate more in continues vocational training programs? • The organization of distance learning programs or e-learning programs would increase your participation (yes / no and why)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to be taken by the State: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising the awareness of people on the importance of CVT through more aggressive public campaigns; - Facilitating the organisation of CVT programmes all over the country, not only in Bucharest and the big cities • What else should be changed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The participation in CVT would increase if the companies would pay for the training (at least part of the costs). - The companies should pay for the training and the employees should be obliged to participate in CVT programmes. • Distance learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could be a solution, but only if you are pushed by someone else or by the situation. It is difficult to impulse yourself to participate in e-learning. - E-learning is not suitable; I prefer the face to face courses and the presence of the colleagues. I often learn from the questions asked by the others.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic conclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is a general agreement concerning the participation in this particular course

participants.

- If you had exactly a minute with the responsible which designs and organizes the programs, what would you ask in order your participation to be increased?

• A minute:

- A more aggressive promotion (I would come earlier, but I didn't know about this course);
- To offer reduction of tariffs to those who persuade other people to participate in the training programmes

NOTE: The questions underlined were introduced by the mediator

Focus Group 3 – TRAINEES

Place and date: Cultural Centre “Alexandru Bratescu Voinesti”, Pucioasa – 27 March 2009

Moderator: Rodica Cojocaru

Moderator assistant:

Participants: Trainees from the training programme “Project Management”

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the project context • Presentation of the low participation in CVT, in Romania
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What reasons would determine you to participate in a training programme? • How useful do you think it is and where does your participation in CVT programs has helped you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons to participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acquiring new and useful knowledge; - receiving a certificate; - improving my skills; - interest in the training content; - quality of the training; - requirement of the employer • How useful it is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I have new knowledge and I hope that these new competences will help me in the future. - It offers me solutions to new problems.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any personal factors that prevent/impede you to participate in continuous vocational training programs while you wish to? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I acquired new competences. - It is professionally useful, and I hope, also, financially. - On a short term, it leads to a wider horizon. • Personal preventing/impeding factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of time; - Finding a job/being hired before finishing the training programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember an element / measure that made your participation easier. • Remember an element that suspended your participation. • The trainers of the programs how much do they help your participation? • The bodies and the organizers of the programs how much do they help your participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures making participation easier: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The need to find a job; - My own will/decision; - If I have time for training; - If I am interested in the subject; - Training location near the workplace • Participation suspended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No more time for continuing the training programme (1 trainee) • Help from the trainers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making a clear presentation of the content; - Offering explanations and examples; - Helping us to understand the concepts • Help from the organisers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offering very good conditions for the training; - Organising a flexible programme (time-table)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which measures do you wish the State to take (e.g. financing, certification, access etc.) in order to participate more? • What else do you think should be changed in order to participate more in continues vocational training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to be taken by the State <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To act for the general/national interests, for preserving the natural resources, for economic development, for raising the level of general education of the population; - Creating more and better remunerated jobs; - Offering incentives for training to people; - Making the education and training more attractive; - Introduction in university curricula and optionally in high school curricula of the “Methodology of promoting and development of (ESF) projects”; educational/didactical programmes through mass media on the same topic • What else should be changed:

<p>programs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization of distance learning programs or e-learning programs would increase your participation (yes / no and why)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning with a trainer is much more effective. - Blended learning would be preferable than e-learning. - Could be, if it is professionally organised and the learners are interested in.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had exactly a minute with the responsible which designs and organizes the programs, what would you ask in order your participation to be increased? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic conclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the participants consider that participating in training is useful for acquiring new competences. • A minute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The programmes are well organised, the problems are related to (lack of) money and jobs.

Focus Group 4 – TRAINEES

Place and date: Cultural Centre “Alexandru Bratescu Voinesti”, Pucioasa – 31 March 2009

Moderator: Rodica Cojocar

Moderator assistant:

Participants: Trainees from the training programme “PC Operator”

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the project context • Presentation of the low participation in CVT, in Romania
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What reasons would determine you to participate in a training programme? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons to participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to be able to use the computers - to acquire new skills needed on the labour market; - for personal development; - to find a job - to improve my knowledge and skills; - for my career;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How useful do you think it is and where does your participation in CVT programs has helped you? • Are there any personal factors that prevent/impede you to participate in continuous vocational training programs while you wish to? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for being anchored in nowadays society • How useful it is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I get more information, useful in the future; - I hope to get a job; - I want to improve my education level. - I want to change the working field. - I want to find a job in my working field. - I like to learn; I feel better. - I'll be able to use the computer for acceding information and different programmes. • Personal preventing/impeding factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distance; - Financial conditions; - Lack of time; - Health (under recovering treatment)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember an element / measure that made your participation easier. • Remember an element that suspended your participation. • The trainers of the programs how much do they help your participation? • The bodies and the organizers of the programs how much do they help your participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures making participation easier: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My will to learn; - My previous work; - The courses organized by the local agency for employment; - The fact that the participation is free of charge; - Advantageous location • Participation suspended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No cases • Help from the trainers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helping me when I had understanding problems; - Patience, but exigency; - Making a clear, coherent presentation of the content; - Offering explanations and practical examples; - Helping us to understand the content • Help from the organisers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible training programme – more days, less hours a day; - Providing information in time; - Demonstrating interest for the programme;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offering good conditions for the training; - Providing the needed manuals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which measures do you wish the State to take (e.g. financing, certification, access etc.) in order to participate more? • What else do you think should be changed in order to participate more in continues vocational training programs? • The organization of distance learning programs or e-learning programs would increase your participation (yes / no and why)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to be taken by the State <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating more and better remunerated jobs; - Offering jobs, but I do not hope anymore; - Financing the CVT; - Improving the labour legislation and, especially, its implementation; - A better prospecting of the labour market • What else should be changed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning with a trainer is preferred by most of participants. - Both training forms (face to face and distance learning) could be useful.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had exactly a minute with the responsible which designs and organizes the programs, what would you ask in order your participation to be increased? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic conclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the participants consider that participating in training is useful for acquiring new competences. - One participant was hopeless, considering that it was to late for her to learn and to find a job. • A minute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More and better remunerated jobs available

Focus Groups 5 – TRAINERS and EXPERTS

Place and date: Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Brasov – 14 March 2009

Moderator: Ana Elena Costin

Moderator assistant: Anisoara Necea

Participants:

- Stefan Cornelius Andreescu, trainer

- Adrian Paul, trainer
- Flavia Sibianu, expert, responsible for CVT programmes organization (CCI Brasov)
- Dan Demian, expert, responsible for CVT programmes organization (CCI Brasov)
- Mariana Matache, expert (director 'EUROED')

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the project context • Presentation of the low participation in CVT, in Romania
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For what reasons do you think the trainees participate in the programs? • What do you think are the reasons for those that do not participate? • Your trainees participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The age, the occupations and the social situation of the participants are very different; the reason of participation depends on the category of the trainees groups: - The unemployed are obliged to participate in CVT programmes, only very few are motivated. Most of them are pessimistic and the communication is difficult with them. - Most of the employees and young people participate in CVT because they are not satisfied by what they learnt during university studies (For example, the graduates of economics studies do not have practical skills of book-keeping or using specific computer programmes). - There are participants who want to refresh their knowledge, sometimes they do not participate in the final exam. - The people with a lower level of education (high school only) have difficulties to find a job; they hope to be hired after finishing the course. - Some companies send the employees to courses; there are employers interested in having well prepared employees. • Do not participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People are not aware on the importance of CVT or do not know about the CVT programmes, about the quality of programmes; there is not enough advertising. - People have no money for courses. - The organisations do not send enough employees to CVT programmes; sometimes the employees who participate in training are not those who need more the training. - Most of the people is very busy and they need an impulse to start learning (women, for example, who are willing to learn, are hard learners and, after beginning, become fond of learning and want to continue)

<p>actively during the training?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role of the trainer is to make the trainees active during the training (through practical work identical with real work conditions, interactivity with the trainer and between them). - Usually they are active, less the unemployed people (not all of them)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What difficulties do they have, which make difficult the attendance in the programs? • Those who leave from a training program, why do they do it? • How can you help in order more people to participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The access conditions (the level of education needed) are sometimes prohibitive and not always justified (for example, for acceding to the programme for achieving the qualification of IT operator, one needs ISCED 3 - graduation of high school). - Some people have not even the basic skills. - There are some legislative obstacles (for example, the lack of some occupations in the Classification of Occupations from Romania) for organising accredited CVT programmes. - The employers do not let them to leave the work place earlier (or even after 8 work hours) for attending the course. Some of them work only in the third shift for being able to attend the course. - People are not aware of their rights concerning the participation in CVT. • Leaving from the programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An average of 2 from 25 trainees leaves the course. The reasons are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They have not time anymore. ○ The employers do not let them to leave the work place or ask them to come back to the organisation (it frequently happens with the public administration institutions, but also with big companies) ○ They consider that the course is too difficult for them. • Trainer's help: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I continue to follow the trainees after finishing the programme. I contact them periodically and encourage them to continue to learn. - I present them the situation from other countries (from CVT point of view). The fact that they receive a European "licence" (EBC*L) represents a motivation; some of them would be interested to work abroad. - I explain them that the employees that know more become indispensable for the employer. - For people having difficulties to follow the others, more help is provided by the trainer; the trainees work in groups and they help each others. - I discuss with the trainees during the breaks about their problems or the enterprises' problems. - I try to understand and to help the trainees who have real difficulties in attending the course. - I have discussions with the HRD departments from different organisations and I try to help them for the identification of the training needs (training needs analysis) at organisation level. I consider that a training specialist has to be also a "missionary" helping the organisation to analyse:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the organizers of the programs help in order more trainees to participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Which are the objectives of a training programme? ○ How was the topics chosen? ○ On what basis were the participants selected? - I always start the programme by asking the trainees to formulate their expectations and I try to be in consonance with their expectations and with the expectations of their organisations (if any); - If possible, I try to personalize the course (there are close limits generated by the approved content and by the diversity of participants). - A trainer has to be empathetic, “to stay at the student’s desk, not at the master’s desk”. • Help of organisers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accepting the payment by instalments - Paying attention to quality of training programmes - Offering a flexible program (time table) – after the work program, partially/totally during the week ends
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could be changed in the legislation framework for the increase of participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The State no not invest in people; there is not a national policy to encourage the participation in CVT. - The State should fund some national CVT programmes: IT, DHR, basic of economics. - There are some incentives for CVT, for enterprises, but it would be more effective to offer incentives to people, not to companies. - At least a half of the costs of CVT programmes should be supported by the enterprises. The Labour Code’s stipulations concerning the participation of the employees in CVT programmes are not applied by the employers (no coercive measures are specified by the Code). - The current QA system (accreditation system) does not impede the CVT providers which offer courses at low tariffs, but of low quality. - Changes are needed concerning the access conditions to CVT programmes (from the education level point of view). - More attention has to be paid to “second chance” education. - There are too many situations of monopoly on the CVT market. That hinders both the training providers to offer training and the potential trainees to participate in training. - The Employment Agencies organise auctions for CVT courses for unemployed, but the main criterion is the price (the lowest price), not the quality (it is not a fair competition for the providers which promote quality). - The regulations concerning the CVT are necessary, but not so much bureaucracy; instead, the professionalization of the staff involved in the accreditation system is needed. - The accreditation of the training programmes has to be done by families of occupation, not for each occupation.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could be changed in the way of organizing and in the bodies for the increase of participation? • What could be changed in your intervention for the increase of the participation? • The offer of distance learning or/and e-learning programs would lead to the increase of participation (yes / no and why)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in the way of organising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To do more advertising - To find the best methods for attracting “the difficult to attend” groups - The best solution is to organise the programme in a location placed faraway of office and home (usually, it is not possible). • Change in your intervention: • Distance learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The experience with those who participated in distance learning, especially in e-learning is not a positive one; they did not acquire the expected competences. There are two kind of reasons for that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The insufficient quality of the training programmes organised by some universities; ○ People are not accustomed with self-learning and self-assessment; they need to be guided and supervised by the trainer; they need the explanations and the help of the trainer. - Distance learning could be organised for short periods, alternating with face-to-face sessions (and only for people with a higher education level). Could be a generalised solution for the future, but not for the present, not even for the near future.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had exactly a minute with the responsible of the design of the relevant policies, what would you ask so the participation of the trainees to be increased? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The participants agree with the need to increase the participation in CVT - Even if the participation in training is lower then in other MS, the general education of people is wider, they are able to accomplish different activities; some of them participate in training only for being certified; that is why the system of recognition of competences acquired in non-formal and informal contexts is very useful and has to be multiplied in Romania. • A minute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The policy regarding the participation in CVT has to solve two problems: the lack of time and the lack of money

Focus Groups 6 – TRAINERS and EXPERTS

Place and date: Cultural Centre “Alexandru Bratescu Voinesti”, Pucioasa – 3 April 2009

Moderator: Ana Elena Costin

Moderator assistant: Lenuta Dadaci

Participants:

- Rodica Cojocaru, trainer (director Cultural Centre)
- Radu Cojocaru, trainer
- Daniela Neagu, trainer
- Rodica Oana, expert

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the project context • Presentation of the low participation in CVT, in Romania
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For what reasons do you think the trainees participate in the programs? • What do you think are the reasons for those that do not participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The reasons differ by category of the trainees groups, and by the own motivation of individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The unemployed are obliged to participate in CVT programmes, but some of them are very interested, passing the exam with highest marks, hoping to find a job; others are not interested in the course, they want only a job; ○ The trainees sent by the companies or institutions from public administration – most of them are interested in acquiring competences (e.g., project management), but others are interested only in the certificate for having more chance in acceding the European funds; ○ Young and ambitious people participate in courses for a successful career; ○ There are employees, especially from the management of public institutions, who participate in courses paid by the institution, but are not interested in; ○ Other persons, including seniors, participate in CVT programmes for being informed, for adapting themselves to the new life and work conditions. • Do not participate:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your trainees participate actively during the training? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People are not aware on the importance of CVT, it is a mentality problem (“Courses again?!”). - They would accept to participate in training if jobs would follow immediately. The unemployed people are more and more disappointed. - There is not any relation between participating in training and employment, even for high level of education; for 80% of workplaces the recruitment is based on personal relations - CASE STUDY: Young man, overqualified and working in industrial printing sector, wanted to change the company, participated in a job interview, received no answer. Lately, he had met the person hired for that job and had seen that the person was not at all qualified for the job. - People are not encouraged financially (by the state and companies) to participate in CVT and most of people have no money for courses - CASE STUDY: Young girl, unemployed, wanted to participate in training, had no financial possibility, asked only to participate without certificate, tried unsuccessfully to be sponsored, finally receiving a substantial reduction of fee (1/5). - There is not enough trust in the quality of CVT programmes; there is not any real communication between the CVT providers and the potential beneficiaries for a better adaptation of the curricula to the practical needs of companies and individuals. - People have difficulties in choosing a career/learning pathway and there are not career guidance centres at community level for helping them. - Not always the participation in CVT has an impact on the career; people, especially young people, are very disappointed by the recruitment methods (relations, sometimes corruption) • Active participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The courses are interactive, stimulating the active participation of the trainees; usually, they are interested and ask questions, trying to clarify things. - The “VIPs” (e.g., mayors) who have the tendency to speak for audience not for changing ideas are more difficult to integrate in an interactive course. - Some trainers (most of them used to be teachers) consider that interactivity is associated only with the practical part of the course, not with the theoretical part; they are not interested or able to stimulate the trainees’ creativity, to motivate all the trainees to participate in the debates, to encourage the shy ones; usually, the discussions are dominated by a limited number of young and daring trainees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What difficulties do they have, which make difficult the attendance in the programs? • Those who leave from a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For the employed people – lack of time, busy people (especially managers) - For those who pay by their self, the lack of money - Long courses are not attractive • Leaving from the programme:

<p>training program, why do they do it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you help in order more people to participate? • How can the organizers of the programs help in order more trainees to participate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes, the unemployed people, for reasons such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ They have not time anymore – they work on black market. ○ Some, by indolence; they are content only to receive the unemployment benefit. ○ They consider that the course is too difficult for them; they are shy, ashamed, not wanting to be put in undignified situations. • Trainer’s help: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The quality of trainer and the methods used are determinant for attracting new participants. - Explaining them the importance of the specific course and of certification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nowadays, the digital competences are compulsory for all kind of jobs; ○ The competences related to project management are necessary to accede the European funds and for running the projects - Offering them interesting and pertinent information and making them aware of the value of the acquired competences • Help of organisers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offering a flexible program (time table) – working with small groups (“VIPs”) allow to customise the program; - Asking the trainees what other courses are they interested in; - Working with certified trainers and offering the best logistics; - Working in partnership with other organisations, such as: ‘EUROED’ (Cultural Centre from Pucioasa has the status of assessment centre for EBC*L course, promoted by ‘EUROED’), training providers nationally accredited, local public administration, employment agencies (from other counties, not from Dambovita); - Trying to dialogue with the employers of the trainees, to motivate the trainees by valorising the learning outcomes at the workplace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could be changed in the legislation framework for the increase of participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The financial support for CVT has to be directed toward people, not companies; there are employees wanting to participate in training, but they are not sent to courses by the organisations. - The situation is similar within the public administration, the participation depends on the goodwill of the management - CASE STUDY of the mayor in Pucioasa – the foster was aware of the role of CVT, sent the clerks to different courses and supported the activity of the Cultural centre. The attitude of the new mayor is totally opposite, he is again training and consider that the activity of the Cultural Centre is a lost of money and has to be closed. - The enterprises and people, too, are not aware of the facilities stipulated by the current legislation,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could be changed in the way of organizing and in the bodies for the increase of participation? • What could be changed in your intervention for the increase of the participation? • The offer of distance learning or/and e-learning programs would lead to the increase of participation (yes / no and why)? 	<p>especially in the small cities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The legislation does not really promote the loyal competition on the CVT market - CASE STUDY of the foster director of the local employment agency (Dambovita County), who set up his own training centre, in the building next to agency. All the unemployed people are directed toward this particular provider. • Change in the way of organising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Cultural Centre is fighting with the new local administration for continuing the training activity; it has the support of the local mass media. - Information and counselling are essential for persuading people to participate in CVT • Change in your intervention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People are not familiar with this kind of training. - Without personal contacts with the trainer and the other trainees the learning motivation decreases; not all the people are determinate to learn by themselves, most of them need the support of the trainers and of the group.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had exactly a minute with the responsible of the design of the relevant policies, what would you ask so the participation of the trainees to be increased? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The participants agree with the need to increase the participation in CVT, but are sceptical, due to their local experience; local interests and relations dictate the training and employment. • A minute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fair competition and implementation of financial tools for people (kind of vouchers for CVT)

Focus Group 7 – Policy formers, executives and highly standard experts from implementing bodies

Place and date: CNFPA, Bucharest – 01 April 2009

Moderator: Mariana Matache

Moderator assistant: Lenuta Dadaci

Participants:

- Nela Plugarescu, director NATB
- Catrinel Gagea, expert NATB
- Ana Elena Costin, counselor NATB
- Ion Hohan, vice-president UGIR 1903
- Adrian Marin, president TU Federation from Milling and Bakery, member of NATB Board, president of the Sectoral Committee from Food Industry
- Mihai Caramihai, expert NACPFEVT

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the project context • Presentation of the low participation in CVT, in Romania
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which are the reasons we have low participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The statistics are not relevant and the participation in CVT is higher then that reflected in the statistics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The participation in CVT is not reported by the companies/institutions (there is a EUROSTAT survey every 5 years (or more); there is not any permanent survey and the companies do not pay attention to this kind of data, they do not report internal/on the job training, nor even external short training actions); ○ The survey methodology applied for individuals is not appropriate; people in different countries have a different understanding on the “participation in educational and vocational training activities” – for Romanian people, participation in training means participation in organised courses, not at all in not-organised learning activities; sometimes, people are not aware of being part of a learning activity. - This opinion is based on: the high number of HE institutions (state own and private); the number of certificates issued by the accredited training providers (more then 1 million in the last 5 years); the fact that most of the active population is now able to use computers; the large participation of the public servants in ECDL programmes, the large participation in master programmes; the periodical instruction/training of the employees, stipulated by the legislation (e.g., work safety instruction with all the employees, periodical courses for the occupations at risk); the fact that the organisational culture of the multinational companies includes the permanent training of the employees; CASE

- What (specific) happened and mainly what (specific) did not happen for the increase of the participation?

- Where does the legal framework make the participation of the

STUDY of Vel Pitar (bakery) that trains periodically the administrative, but also the technical staff; significant number of training actions organized in touristic areas (usually in autumn), etc.

- The insufficient participation of employees can be explained by the organisational culture/ mentality of employers (excepting the multinational companies), trade unions, and employees:
 - local employers have not yet a tradition in running enterprises and most of them are not aware of the importance of training for their business; in the meantime, they are not stimulated by the state to invest in CVT (deduction from taxes);
 - not always the multinational companies have the interest to develop local business and local human resources (globalisation effect especially during crisis);
 - participation in CVT is not a priority of the trade unions when negotiating the collective work agreement; the CVT plan should be annexed to the work agreement, but it really happen only in a low number of enterprises;
 - the employees are not aware that CVT makes them more employable (more able to preserve their workplaces or to find new ones).
- What specific happened:
 - The new Labour Code stipulates the obligation of the employers to train the employees or to allow the participation of employees in training;
 - There are special stipulations in the National Collective Work Agreement concerning the training plan; these stipulations are present also in the Collective Work Agreements at branch level, less at companies' level.
 - The training costs are deductible when calculating the profit (but are not deductible from the taxes);
 - The new legislation on CVT (Gov. Ordinance no 129/2000) contributed to raise the trust of the trainees and companies in CVT provision and in delivered certificates.
 - The legislation made possible the recognition of the competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning contexts; the institutional and methodological framework has been created and the competences assessment centres are operational.
- What specific not happened:
 - The legislation is not implemented by all companies/institutions.
 - The people have no access to information (the advantages of participation in CVT and of certification for new career opportunities, for working abroad, examples of good practices, etc.); sometimes the TU leaders are not aware themselves or could have problems with the employers if trying to advise the employees.
 - The non-formal and informal system is still insufficient developed (punctual initiatives, mostly private); there is not any state initiative to support/stimulate the system.
 - The CVT certificates (formal, non-formal and informal) are not recognised within the initial VET system.

<p>trainees difficult?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which difficulties do you think the trainees have in order to participate? • Which would be the possible motives of the trainees for increase of the participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation making participation difficult: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lack of financial mechanisms for stimulating the participation and for a better management of the CVT system, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A training fund collected from the companies (maybe from the employees, too) and managed at sector level (the idea was not agreed by all the employers organisations even if the level of taxes has considerably decreased in the latest years and part of them could have been redirected for a training fund); ○ Incentives for employers and employees who invest in CVT (e.g., training costs deducted from taxes). - Incomplete legal framework (e.g., lack of coercive measures for organisations which do not train the employees – as stipulated by the Labour Code – or for organisations being in a conflict of interest or introducing a monopoly on the CVT market) - Lack of coherence of the CVT legislation (confusion introduced by not correlated regulations concerning CVT) (e.g., legislation at sector level in contradiction with the general legislation of the CVT; a significant number of “exceptions” from the general legislation) • Difficulties to participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal: low offer in small cities and in rural area (there are about 3000 of accredited training providers, but they are concentrated in the main cities); costs; duration of qualification courses; lack of (access to) information - Non-formal and informal: not enough competences assessment centres (at the present, there are 42 accredited competences assessment centres for a total of 200 occupations/ qualifications – some are common for more centres); the reasons are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The system is new, not enough known, not enough trusted; ○ Without external support, it is difficult for the private centres to cover the costs (the fees have to be attractive) • Increase of participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial support (from the state or companies) - More coherence between VET systems (initial VET, CVT, formal, non-formal) - More trust in the benefits of the training (effective influence of participation in CVT on career development)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the fact that the policies present uniformity in the EU countries, why do we incline concerning the participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniformity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education (including VET) policies are not similar within the Member States; the tradition is important in educational systems - It is a permanent preoccupation for harmonising the approaches (EQF, ECVET, EQARF, EUROPASS, etc.), but there are different opinions, different priorities, sometimes different understanding even at conceptual level – all these differences are emphasised by the debates of the EC technical working groups, ACVT (Advisory Committee for Vocational Training) or other European structures. - Most of EU acts concerning education and training are “recommendations” and their implementation is not

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons in a macro-level (e.g. mutual overlaps or alterations in policies) that affect (specifically) the participation. • What can the implementation bodies/organizations do for the increase of participation? 	<p>compulsory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The VET (including CVT) coordination approach are different, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The “atomisation” of the CVT provision (in Romania) is not favourable for participation. The CVT market is not at all coordinated by the state/at national level or at least, at sector level; it is the result of the offer and demand mechanism; ○ Countries as Ireland and Denmark have a more centralised approach, as a result of the consultation of the main actors, including the social partners; there are specialised (by occupational areas) VET institutions, combining the training and assessment, able to customise the training and to facilitate flexible learning pathways. - There are significant differences concerning the social dialogue on VET: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The social dialogue on VET in Romania has not yet the expected impact, the structures (sectoral committees) are to be enhanced (considering legislation, funding, human resources) ○ Countries as Denmark or Germany have a long tradition regarding the involvement of the companies in VET (identification/forecasting of the competences needs and, subsequently, of the training needs, partnerships between enterprises and education, etc.) • Macro-level reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The “atomisation” of the CVT provision (explained before); it is difficult for individuals, without counselling, to select the more suitable CVT programme and provider, to alternate in a coherent way training, work and competences assessment. - The majority of the trainer providers are private organisations and their offer is a reactive one, following the current demand; they prefer the training fields that are not resources consumers; the training providers are rarely specialised and their offer is very diversified - Lack of coherence in legislation (explained above); lack of coherence between some reference documents (for example, Classification of Occupations from Romania, Classifications of Qualifications, Occupational Standards, Training Standards); permanent changes in methodological framework (due to on-going Phare projects aiming to develop the National Qualifications Framework) • Implementation bodies (NATB) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new legal status of the NATB: becoming NAQ, financial autonomy, territorial structure for QA, right to initiate laws, closer relationship with the sectoral committees - More involvement of the organisation represented within NATB Board (Government and social partners) for disseminating (through their specific territorial structures) the European/national policies/documents regarding the qualifications/CVT all over the country; the citizens are not informed and, consequently, do not trust the system - To contribute to the creation of a coherent and transparent qualifications framework at macro-level (NATB plays the role of NAQ and run Phare projects for NQF development)
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you mention a “good practice” for the increase of participation that you have implemented or heard? • Can you suggest 1-2 direct measures for the increase of participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To participate in the development of common procedures and tools for competences assessment and certification in VET system, at national level, aiming to a mutual recognition of learning outcomes between the different sub-systems (between initial VET and CVT, between formal and non-formal and informal learning systems) - Moving the accent of QA system from input criteria to output criteria (from the evaluation of the resources to the evaluation of acquired competences and of the training impact) • Good practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the framework of the on-going Phare project, aiming to develop a unique and coherent National Qualifications System, a new approach is implemented for the development of the competences assessment instruments based on “critical points” established at sector level, not by each assessment centre (as done at the moment). - A new law for clarifying the status of the sectoral committees has been adopted. - The Employers Organisation in Milling and Bakery set up a CVT centre that provides accredited courses (even if most of the graduates have migrated for working abroad); unfortunately the information on good practices is not disseminate within enterprises due to the “myopia” of the most of employers and trade unions. - Examples: the approach of FiaTest, as a training provider, is to offer added value to the training, by responding to some working tasks of the trainees (e.g., programme for “trainer” – developing of a curriculum, of an “accreditation dossier” as a training provider, etc.) (e.g., programme for “competences assessor” – developing of assessment instruments, of an “accreditation dossier” as a competences assessment centre, etc.) • 1-2 direct measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of a systematic national survey on CVT, analysis of the collected data; - Development and implementation of a medium and long term strategy based on analysed data; - Enhancing the capacity of social partners (especially the professionalization of the sectoral committees) for being able to identify the competences needs, the training priorities, the action guidelines; - Setting up a “training fund” managed at sector level ; - More attention paid to CVT at company level, by both employers and TUs; training plans to be compulsory annexed to the collective work agreements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which interventions do you propose in order the participation to be increased on legislation level or on design and policy measures level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New regulations for systematic surveys on CVT; responsibilities for data analysis and dissemination - There is, theoretically, a solution for financing the CVT - the Structural Funds - but the access and implementation procedures are too difficult, too bureaucratic, especially for SMEs which have not the needed competences/resources for implementing such complex procedures, and for ensuring the co-financing. The access to funds has to be ensured for small and poor companies, tot only for the large and rich ones - New legislation concerning the QA at decision level (involved ministries, NATB, accreditation commissions) and at provider level (training providers and competences assessment centres)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should be changed in CVT in order for the participation to be increased? • Which motives (financial, certification) should be given to the trainees in order for the participation to be increased? • In addition to the above, measures for vulnerable groups? • The offer of distance learning or e-learning programs would lead to an increase of the participation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in the way of organising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment and certification – more trust and more benefits - Quality of the HR involved in the system – selection based on competences, permanent training, motivation - Effective QA systems implemented at decision level and at provider level - More coherence and updating of the VET/CVT references (e.g., standards) – some are obsolete • Motives to increase participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trust (quality and added value of training, impact of training on the career) - Money (from employers, from projects/programmes, from special incentives, etc.) - Recognition (of acquired competences irrespective of learning context, of certificates between different VET systems) - A new approach at provider level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Matching to the labour market needs (partnerships with organisations/companies, evaluation of the enterprises' satisfaction, following the career of the trainees) ○ Combining assessment, counselling and training ○ Promoting the competition based on quality, implementing self-evaluation and actions for improvement - VET schools - to become CVT providers, too • In addition, for vulnerable groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness - More money • Distance learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The current legislation does not allow the accreditation/authorisation of distance learning programmes (CVT). There are distance learning courses on the training market, but the certificates are not “nationally recognised”. - Distance learning could be used for theoretical parts of the training programmes; - These kind of CVT programmes should be accredited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had exactly a minute with the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are doubts regarding the official figures on the participation in education, in general, and in CVT, in particular. Romania needs to implement real diagnosis instruments, starting with systematic surveys. - The social partners are not mature enough for playing the role they are supposed to play in CVT. - There is not a culture of QA (generally speaking, not only in CVT), of permanent evaluation (of processes/ services/ products) and of feedback for improvement. - People are not enough informed on CVT • A minute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To organise a real debates, at national level, on the CVT legislation for making it coherent;

responsible of the design of the relevant policies, what would you ask so the participation of the trainees to be increased?

- To put the accent on the development of HR involved in the system; to assure the needed competences at decision level (Government and social partners) and at executive level
- Implementation of a new QA system, professionalization/certification of the trainers and evaluators/assessors
- To pay more attention and to formalise the training on the job, including the recognition of the work experience

V. National Workshops

'EUROED' Association organised 2 events:

- Bucharest, 12.06.2009, 9 participants (representatives of central organisations, trade unions, employers' organisations, experts)
- Arcani (location: Popasul Jalesului), Gorj County, 17.06.2009, 27 participants (management and staff from local public administration and cultural institutions from all over the country); the workshop followed another event organised by 'EUROED' association under the project "Citizen first".

The project's poster was exposed and leaflets were distributed to the participants.

The workshops consisted in the presentation of the project, of the research methods and of the main results of the study.

The discussions followed each of the 12 areas of research, but were focussed on good practices as benchmarks for increasing the participation in CVT.

The main ideas from the both workshops are centralised as follows:

1. CVT Policies:

- The social dialogue has been institutionalised in Romania, but in many situations it is only a formal one, there is not any real co-operation; sometimes the trade unions are invited only for legitimising the government's decisions;
- It is necessary to replace the dilettantism by professionalism, to persuade high qualified young people to work within the CVT system, in administration, as trainers, as researchers, etc., but they are not financially motivated and the knowledge transfer between generations is not a usual practice anymore;
- There is a lack of continuity in policies (e.g., following the support accorded by the government to the research, in 2008 the absorption of funds increased considerably, high qualified young people were hired, European partnerships have been created, the Romanian researchers had opportunities to disseminate their results, but in 2009 the research budget was dramatically cut, before the consolidation of the previous results); there is a need of continuity and sustainability of the public policies.

2. Financing schemes for the participation of citizens in CVT:

- Due to the globalised crisis, there are less funds as ever for CVT (it regards public and private organisations' budget, and individuals' budget);
- The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection is going to extend the access to CVT programmes paid by unemployment fund for employees threatened with job loss in the near future due to economic crisis;

- The main financing source is the European funds, especially ESF, but there are obstacles in using these funds or in using them efficiently;
 - The non-profit use of these funds is not very motivating for the private companies;
 - There is too much bureaucracy; less than 40% of funds are used for training, the difference covers different bureaucratic structures and activities. By trying to avoid frauds, more and more bureaucracy has been generated to the prejudice of quality; a reasonable balance between quality and control is needed and the money has to be managed and use as closed to end users as possible;
 - There is a lack of know how regarding the projects' development and implementation; an important number of European projects did not use completely the available budget;
 - In the research field, the large majority of projects are theoretical ones and only an insignificant sum is dedicated to applicative research;
 - Too much money is spent for developing strategies; the institutional/management changes are usually followed by the development of a new strategy (e.g., there are 6 strategies regarding the biotechnologies); efficiency indicators are needed when allocating public funds (The question has to be: Does it worth to pay for these results?);
 - All the European programmes have developed numerous control mechanisms applied during the validity of contracts, but very few for evaluating the valorisation/effectiveness of the results and for acting consequently.
3. National Studies for the characteristics of the participants in CVT:
- The general opinion was that the participation in education and training, including formal, non-formal and informal contexts, is higher than that reflected by statistics.
4. Motives/incentives and counterincentives for participation:
- The “serious” organisations prefer to train their employees than recruiting new people and the internal HRD policies take into consideration the participation in training as a step in career building;
 - People are motivated to participate in training (see examples of good practices).
5. “Good Practices”:
- Post high school course (2 years) organised by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation under a European project, for cadastre qualifications – adult people were very interested to participate in that long VET programme;
 - The “second chance” programme, managed by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, is a good example of link between school and life, of partnership between government and civil society, of how to combine different funding sources (public budget, different projects' budget) for training and motivating people. More than 100

schools are involved at national level in this programmes, the trainers have been trained under different projects for having a new attitude towards the vulnerable people, for being creative in approaching them. Representatives of the vulnerable groups (e.g., Roma groups) have been trained as mediators, their role consisting in discussing and persuading young, but also more aged illiterate people to come to school. It is more difficult to persuade aged people to start learning, but after beginning they are more determined to continue and to succeed;

- The good practices have to become part of the collective mentality – there is a need of policies for raising awareness and increasing receptivity and a need of initiatives for organising concrete actions; see examples of wasted good practices:
 - A very successful Phare programme (pre-accession fund) was run in the late 90's for reorientation and training of people from the huge unprofitable industrial enterprises; a guide of good practice was realised, but it is not known and used nowadays;
 - A guide of good practices for monitoring the polluted areas has been developed by a research institute and presentation events were organised in towns and villages from these areas; neither local authorities nor locals (directly affected by pollution) were interested in learning and applying protection measures;
 - The good practices are closely related with motivation and the motivation is not always related with money; there is a huge potential of voluntary work in all field, including in training (to train other people or to learn for being helpful for other people):
 - Participation in “voluntary work” can be learnt, too; the project “Citizen first”, run by ‘EUROED’ Association, is trying to teach the village population to not wait for administration to solve their problems, but to have initiatives and to find solutions.
6. The contribution of the organizations that implement CVT:
- The certification is important for motivating people to participate in CVT, but financial aspects are determinant (e.g., training foundation accredited for 90 qualifications – the demand has decreased dramatically for the last two months).
7. The role of the trainer/educator:
- All the participants agreed that the quality of trainers is determinant for the participation of people in all kind of training, including the CVT; these examples of “good practice” are easily disseminated, from a trainee to another;
 - A good trainer is able to combine obligation and pleasure of learning, to motivate people to learn.
8. Vulnerable social groups:
- See “Good practices”
9. Alternative training schemes (distant training, mixed/combined systems):

- Alternative training schemes (including e-learning) could be a solution if the system is well organised and the information about these alternative learning schemes is disseminated.
10. The contribution and the role of new technologies (e-learning):
- The e-learning is a solution for people able to learn without being helped by a trainer.
11. Connection of CVT with the European Employment Strategy in a national level;
- The participants agreed that the member states have to correlate their policies and strategies for overcoming the global crisis.
12. Connection of CVT with the labour market in a national level:
- All kind of adult education programmes, not only the CVT courses, could contribute to a better employability; the experience demonstrates that the technical skills are easier to be acquired then the “soft” skills, such as: communication, team working, receptivity for community’s problems, etc.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions do not represent an exhaustive presentation of the SWOT analysis, focus groups and workshops results. Only the main ideas have been selected for each of the 12 areas of research.

1. Continuing Vocational Training Policies

- *Legislative framework for CVT*
- *Points of the Legislative framework for CVT that mention citizens' participation*
- *Involved ministries and supervising/ coordinating bodies (organizations)*
- *Types of organizations providing CVT*
- *Thematic (training) fields of CTV*
- *Target groups of CTV*
- *Policies for the equal participation of man and women in CTV*

Romania has a consistent legislation on different aspects of the CVT: quality assurance/accreditation of training providers and of competences assessment centres, apprenticeship at the workplace, provision of CVT for employees (Labour Code), etc.

Still, some lack of coherence and too many bureaucratic aspects made the implementation problematic; the impact of the new legislation aiming to improve the participation in CVT was not the expected one.

A dedicated institution has been established – National Adult Training Board (NATB) – as a tripartite body, aiming to implement the social dialogue in the field of CVT, but only the Government, through the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection and the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, has the legislative leverage.

Legally, the NATB has a consultative role in the development of CVT policies and strategies, and in the assurance of the legislative coherence, but practically the NATB has only a few means to promote changes and to influence the strategic decisions.

From 2004, the NATB has played the role of National Authority for Qualifications and in this respect it has coordinated the sectoral committees (sectoral partnership structures consisting of employers organisations, trade unions, professional associations, regulating authorities, etc. dealing, among others, with the develop and validation of the qualifications within a specific sector).

Thus, even if legislative and the institutional framework was built up to facilitate the dialogue and the involvement of all stakeholders, the insufficient awareness and interest of the social partners in CVT, the limited institutional capacity (unclear legal status, lack of vision and strategy, lack of funds, insufficient human resources) of the sectoral committees and of other social dialogue structures, all these factors have hindered the social partners to play effectively their role and to stimulate the participation in CVT.

The CVT market consists in a diversity of training providers (most of them private): accredited at national, at sector level or not accredited. The fair competition is impeded by more and more “special regulations” for some “regulated occupations”, advantaging specific institutions.

The nationally accredited CVT providers provide competences based training, assessment and certification. The certificates are nationally recognized and have a “certificate supplement” (Europass model) for précising the acquired competences.

The competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning contexts are assessed and certified through the accredited competences assessment centres.

In conclusion, Romania has already set up a consistent legislative and institutional framework for CVT field (some approaches are quite innovative – see the recognition of prior learning) but this framework needs to be consolidated and valorized through a national policy aiming to invest in people and to promote the professionalism within the Romanian society.

2. Financing schemes for the participation of citizens in CVT

- *Government financing – Financing form the European Union, financing from national resources*
- *Private financing - the degree in which the enterprises/businesses finance the training of their personnel*
- *Special schemes of financing*

In Romania there are not any “training fund” implemented at national or sector level and any incentives aiming to stimulate employers and individuals to invest in CVT. There were periodical discussions on the opportunity to set up a “training fund”, but the idea was rejected by some of the employers’ organizations and not enough sustained by the trade unions.

Some financial incentives are related to the accreditation of the CVT providers. The accreditation costs are partially supported by the state and the accredited training providers do not pay VAT for CVT services.

The Labour Code stipulates the obligation of the employers to train the employees, but not all companies/institutions implement these regulations as long as no coercive measures are previewed.

An important source for financing CVT measures is the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF). The main target group of the measures funded through the UIF consists of jobseekers but there are also facilities for partly funding the training in enterprises. Though, the companies do not use these facilities, considering the procedures too bureaucratic.

The main available source for financing CVT programmes (strategic programmes – at national/regional/sector level or smaller programmes – at local or company level) is the European Social Fund (ESF), through the Sectoral Operational Plan Human Resources Development.

But, there is an important threat regarding the access to ESF: to not use the available funds or to use them inadequately, due to the lack of capacity at all

levels to develop and manage ESF projects, combined with the extreme bureaucracy of ESF management, the insufficient correlation between the strategic projects, and the poor cooperation between the stakeholders. The fact that the control mechanisms are focused on the formal aspects and not on the relevance and the efficiency of the results is another weakness of the European programmes/funds.

3. National Studies for the characteristics of the participants in CVT

- *Statistical data on the participation of citizens in CTV*
- *Information regarding the characteristics of the participants*
- *Information regarding the subjective difficulties for the citizens' participation in CTV*
- *The profile of the trainees that participate in CTV (grouped in categories, unemployed, employed, etc.)*

Two important ideas were stressed regarding the statistics on CVT:

- There are not systematically collected data, at national/sector/company level, on the participation in CVT, covering all the categories and characteristics of the participants;
- Probably, the available data do not reflect the real participation in CVT, which is more important than the reported one (see the opinions expressed by policy formers, executives and highly standard experts from implementing bodies during the focus group from the 1st of April 2009).

The conclusion was that more systematic surveys are needed based on a clear understanding of the concepts. For example, the general understanding of “participation in education and training” consists of “participation in formal (eventually long) education or CVT programmes” and most people give negative answers when being asked on the subject even if they had been involved in a variety of non formal learning actions (at work, home, within the community).

Even if the statistics are more pessimistic than the reality, the participation in CVT is too low. There are a variety of obstacles regarding the participation in CVT, some related to the mentality, other to different objective conditions:

- Insufficient awareness of the state, companies, and individuals concerning the importance of CVT;
- Lack of financial resources of companies and individuals;
- Difficult access to CVT: limited offer (geographically and occupationally), lack of flexibility of CVT offer, required level of education to participate in training, lack of basic skills, etc.;
- CVT offer not responding to the real needs of beneficiaries (of companies and individuals);
- Limited impact of CVT on the career development;
- Lack of career information and counseling support.

The participants in CVT are people of all ages, employed or unemployed, sent to participate in CVT programmes by the employer or by the National Agency for Employment, or participating through personal initiative.

The lack of statistical data makes difficult the characterization of the participants in CVT, but the qualitative research emphasizes some characteristics of the trainees (see details in the Chapters III and IV).

4. Motives/incentives and counterincentives for participation

- *Special measures for the increase of citizens' participation in CTV*
- *Economic/financial incentives for the citizens*
- *Incentives/motives regarding the valorization of participation (i.e., improvement of working condition)*
- *Accreditation/certification of CTV*
- *Research regarding the motives/incentives for the participants*

“Special measures” could be considered:

- the CVT programmes provided by the NAE for job seekers and for some vulnerable categories of population (rural communities, Roma population, post-institutionalised youth, inmates);
- the “second chance” programme managed by MERI for young people characterized by functional illiteracy;
- the SOP HRD, as a basis for acceding the ESF.

There are not detailed statistical data on the motivation of people to participate in CVT programmes, but the qualitative research has stressed the reasons of different categories of people to participate in training (employed or unemployed people, working in Romania or abroad, being sent by companies, NAE or participating through their own initiative, etc.) (see details in Chapters III and IV).

The accreditation of the CVT institutions is seen as a mean of quality assurance and leads to a better participation in CVT. The official recognition of the competences (acquired in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts) through certificates delivered by accredited CVT providers or by accredited competences assessment centres is one of the main reasons for participating in CVT programmes or in independent assessment processes.

5. “Good practices”

- *Recording of good practices for the information of the public regarding training programs.*
- *Recording of good practices for the increase of citizens' access to CTV*
- *Recording of good practices for the connection of CTV with their vocational course/route of the participants*

There are examples of good practices in CVT in Romania (at system level and at provider level – see Chapters III, IV and V), but the “good practices” are

insufficiently disseminated and there are only a few opportunities for making this information public.

The “good practices” are insufficiently disseminated because:

- there is a lack of culture in this respect;
- the public institution neglect this aspect (sometimes their own websites are not updated);
- the companies which are potential beneficiaries of CVT are not interested to make this information available for the employees (not even the trade unions);
- the advertising, in the case of the most CVT providers, is insufficient and non-professional (professional advertising is expensive);
- usually, people select a service based on information receiving from family, friends, colleagues, and less by consulting specific information channels ;
- some advertising is very aggressive and does not reflect any real quality.

Due to the limited capacity for a large dissemination and multiplication, most of the “good practices” remain at the stage of good examples.

Within the CVT field, for improving the situation:

- the “good practices” need the confirmation of a trusted authority; in the case of CVT providers or competences assessment centres, this authority could be NATB or the sectoral committees;
- the initiatives to disseminate the good practices could be taken by sectors, through the sectoral committees, or at company level, by trade unions;
- the networking and the associative process are favorable for the dissemination and integration of good practices.

6. The contribution of the organizations that implement CVT

- *Organizations’ accreditation/certification (processes and range of implementation)*
- *Professional associations of the organizations that implement CVT*
- *Degree of incorporating good practices*
- *Internal planning and evaluation systems that promote citizens’ participation in CTV*

Two different accreditation systems are in place, one for CVT providers and another one for competences assessment centres.

Several critical points of the CVT providers’ accreditation system have been identified, such as:

- lack of quality management systems implemented at provider level;

- accreditation based more on input criteria (resources) and less on output criteria (results, impact);
- lack of certified external evaluators.

The main goal of a strategic on going ESF project is the improvement of the accreditation system, through:

- harmonization with the EQARF – European Quality Assurance Reference Framework;
- implementation of self-evaluation at provider level;
- implementation of a national programme for training and certification of external evaluators

The model implemented for the accreditation of the competences assessment centres is similar with EQARF and the Romanian system of the assessment and certification of the competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning contexts could be recommended as an example of good practice.

The Romanian approach for the prior learning recognition has been confirmed through the participation in two Leonardo da Vinci projects during 2006-2008: “Rear Window – Transparent qualifications in engineering sector” and “VINEPAC – Validation of non-formal and informal psycho-pedagogical competences of the adult educators”. Instruments of assessing competences acquired in different learning contexts have been developed in both projects, but implemented in different occupational area: engineering sector (Rear Window) and adult education (VINEPAC).

Benefitting of a large partnership (Rear Window: Italy, Austria, Czech Republic, Spain, Romania); VINEPAC: Germany, Spain, France, Malta, Romania), the Leonardo da Vinci projects have led to the same conclusions:

- there is a general need for developing and implementing prior learning validation systems;
- the assessment process is competences oriented, based on occupational standards;
- the process consists of three steps: self-assessment (the candidate is assisted by a counselor), assessment (by two assessors, in real work conditions), recognition of the assessment results (by an organization which is responsible for the quality assurance and certification).

The nationally recognized certificates and the certificate supplement (Europass model) issued by the accredited CVT providers and accredited competences assessment centres assure the transparency of the acquired competences and make possible the accumulation step by step of competences within the CVT system (formal, non-formal or informal).

The training providers can organize modular courses and can customize the training programmes to fit the competences profile of the trainees.

The main weakness of the system and a very important obstacle in building up a learning pathway consists in the fact that the CVT certificates are not recognized by the IVET system (by the national education system).

7. The role of the trainer/educator

- *Accreditation/certification systems for trainers in CTV*
- *Processes and systems of initial trainers' training in adult education*
- *Processes and systems of continuing trainers' training in adult education*
- *Research data regarding the contribution of trainers in promoting the citizens' participation in CTV*
- *Degree of professionalisation of trainers (associations, unions)*

The current regulation stipulates the obligation of the accredited training providers to use trainers qualified for the specific CVT programme (qualification proved with diploma/certificates).

Beginning with January 2010, the trainers have to be also trained for working with adult people, but, at this moment, there are not yet any specifications regarding the content, duration, access conditions, etc. of the "training of trainers" programmes.

There are not any special requirements for the trainers working for non-accredited CVT.

An occupational standard for "trainer" was developed in 2001, updated and validated in 2007 by the Sectoral Committee for Education and Training, Research-Development and Sports.

The Romanian training systems for trainers/adult educators envisage both initial (including a Master on Adult Education) and continuing vocational education. There are also competences assessment centres accredited for "trainer", that make possible the recognition/ certification of competences acquired by work experience.

The assessors that work within the competences assessment centres are certified by the NATB, based on the occupational standard for "assessor".

The establishment, in 2006, of the *Sectoral Committee for Education and Training, Research-Development and Sports* was a booster for the qualification related with adult education and a more important contribution is expected from this organization for clearly defining the status of "trainer".

A strategic ESF project recently approved aims to train an important number of trainers, all over the country, for acquiring the needed competences to train adults.

8. Vulnerable social groups

- *Categorization of vulnerable social groups*
- *Measures for positive treatment of vulnerable social groups*
- *Special measures for the increase of access and participation for vulnerable social groups*

There are in Romania specific legal regulations, strategies, programmes and institutions related to the education and vocational training (including CVT) of the vulnerable social groups (see classification in Chapter III and Appendix 8).

There are also examples of “good practices” implemented by the governmental institutions in cooperation with the civil society.

The “second chance” programme, managed by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, is a good example of link between school and life, of partnership between government and civil society, of how to combine different funding sources (public budget, different projects’ budget) for training and motivating people. More than 100 schools are involved at national level in this programmes, the trainers have been trained under different projects for having a new attitude towards the vulnerable people, for being creative in approaching them. Representatives of the vulnerable groups (e.g., Roma groups) have been trained as mediators, their role consisting in discussing and persuading young, but also more aged illiterate people to come to school.

9. Alternative training schemes (distant training, mixed/combined systems)

- *Degree of dissemination of the distant training systems*
- *Degree of development of distant training systems in CTV*
- *Incorporation of distant and combined training systems in the legislative framework*
- *Opinions and views of practitioners and organizations for the contribution of distant training in increasing the citizens’ participation in CTV*

The legislation does not encourage the distance learning forms in CVT; these kind of CVT programmes cannot be accredited and, consequently, the certificates are not “nationally recognised”. Changes of legislation have been prepared for introducing the accreditation of the distance learning programmes within CVT system, but not yet promoted.

The most of trainees’ and practitioners’ opinions are not in the favor of distance learning. They consider that not only the presence of the trainer but also the presence of the other trainees contribute to a better learning process.

10. The contribution and the role of new technologies (e-learning)

- *Degree of incorporating new technologies and the internet*
- *Incorporation of e-learning training systems in the legislative framework of CTV*
- *Recording of good practices of e-learning in CTV*
- *Opinions and views of practitioners and organizations for the contribution of e-learning in increasing the citizens’ participation in CTV*

There is not available information concerning the degree of incorporation of the new technology, including internet, in the CVT.

Concerning the e-learning, the trainees seem to prefer the face to face courses, the permanent presence/ support of trainers and the group interactivity.

The e-learning is a solution only for people able to learn individually, without being helped by a trainer.

11. Connection of CVT with the European Employment Strategy in a national level

The main national strategies (Short and Medium Term Strategy of Continuing Vocational Training 2005-2010) and operational programmes (Sectoral Operational Plan for Human Resources Development) related to CVT have been developed in correlation with the European documents and other national documents aiming to improve both training and employment.

The ESF intervention in Romania is supposed to support the achievement of the general objective and the specific objectives in the field of human resources development, making a real contribution to the implementation of European Employment Strategy and to the overall objective of growth and jobs.

The main weakness of the CVT Strategy is that no concrete financial mechanisms have been previewed in the conditions of an obvious lack of funds for CVT.

Concerning the SOP HRD, Romania is at the beginning of its implementation and the main weakness consists in the limited capacity of implementation at system/management level, at central and local administration level and at company level. The treat is to not be able to use ESF or to use it inadequately, without a proper impact on the CVT and employment.

12. Connection of CVT with the labour market in a national level

Two main measures have been taken, at national level, for assuring the connection of CVT with the labour market:

- The development of curricula, the assessment of competences, and the certification are based on national occupational standards (compulsory only for accredited CVT providers);
- New structures of social dialogue – the sectoral committees – have been set up at sector level, aiming to develop and to validate the occupational standards and qualifications in relation with the sectors' needs.

Still, there are important weaknesses mostly related to the insufficient consolidation of the sectoral committees and the lack of sectoral experts trained to realise occupational analysis, to develop occupational standards, and to define qualifications.

Even if a very new regulation was approved, aiming to clarify the legal and financial status of the sectoral committees, there are important institutional difficulties in implementing that regulation.

Another idea emphasized by the participants in the study was that all kind of adult education programmes, not only the CVT courses, could contribute to a better

employability. The experience demonstrates that the technical skills are easier to be acquired than the “soft” skills, such as: communication, team working, receptivity for community’s problems, etc.

The eight key-competences promoted by the EC documents have been adopted by Romania and included in the occupational standards but future work is necessary for correlating these key-competences with the nature and the level of the national qualifications.

VII. Supplementary information – Stakeholders in CVET, important factors for participation

- What is the role of the state in CVET (financing, legislation etc.)?

The state has an essential role in the development of the CVT legislative and institutional framework. This role is described in the Chapter III (pg. 12-14) and synthesized in the Chapter VI (pg. 69).

The contribution of the state to the CVT financing consists of:

- Incentives related to the accreditation of the CVT providers;
- Partially supporting the training costs of the public employees;
- Training measures funded through the Unemployment Insurance Fund for jobseekers, but also for employees;
- European Social Fund (ESF), through the Sectoral Operational Plan Human Resources Development.

Details are presented in the Chapter III (pg. 17-18) and Chapter VI (pg. 70).

- What is the role of the social partners (are they actively involved in steering, development and evaluation of CVET activities)?

There are different structures aiming to involve the social partners in CVT, at national, local and sector levels:

- Economic and Social Council, tripartite consultative body at national level, for discussing the main legislation;
- Social dialogue commissions, at the ministries’ level (including MERI and MLFSP), for analyzing regulations, policies, strategies;
- National Adult Training Board, tripartite body in the CVT field, playing different roles (including the role of National Authority for Qualifications) and having different responsibilities (including the quality assurance of CVT provision) (Chapter III , pg. 14; Chapter VI, pg. 69);
- Accreditation commissions, at county level, directly involved in the accreditation of the CVT providers (the social partners are represented within these commissions and have the possibility to nominate specialists in the examination commissions);
- Sectoral committees, mainly consisting of representatives of employers, trade unions, professional associations, regulation authorities, at sector

level, for developing and to validating the occupational standards and qualifications in relation with the sectors' needs; at the moment, the sectoral committees are not consolidated enough assuming a more complex role in the CVT activities (Chapter VI, pg. 69, 77).

There are other social dialogue structures at local and regional levels established through Phare projects (pre-accession funds) for the use of initial VET system; these structures are not involved in CVT domain.

- How many % of the workforce is without formal schooling?

Taken into consideration the National Institute for Statistics methodology, the **active population** consists, from the economical point of view, of persons over 15 years old, who offer their workforce on the labour market (employed and unemployed population included).

Economically active population aged 15-64 years, by educational level and gender, in 2006

Population currently active	Higher Education	Post Secondary School	Upper Secondary School	Vocational, complementary or apprenticeship	Lower Secondary School	Primary School	No education
Total 8,572,689	1,239,638 (14.5%)	451,493 (5.3%)	2,835,254 (33.1%)	2,301,644 (26.8%)	1,389,712 (16.2%)	313,143 (3.6%)	41,805 (0.5%)
Male 4,708,441	639,901 (13.6%)	239,257 (5.1%)	1,371,473 (29.1%)	1,584,755 (33.7%)	696,393 (14.8%)	152,613 (3.2%)	24,048 (0.5%)
Female 3,864,249	599,736 (15.5%)	212,236 (5.5%)	1,463,782 (37.9%)	716,892 (18.5%)	693,319 (17.9%)	160,529 (4.2%)	17,757 (0.5%)

Source: Romania, NIS, Household Labour Force Survey

Employment rate of working age population (15-64 years) by educational level, gender and area, in 2006

- % -

Gender Area	Total	Educational level		
		High	Medium	Low
TOTAL	58.8	86.1	64.9	39.6
Male	64.7	87.3	69.8	45.8
Female	53.0	84.8	59.4	34.8
Urban	57.2	86.3	62.3	21.3
Rural	61.1	84.5	69.8	51.1

Note:

Level of education has been divided into:

High: Ph.D (ISCED 6), Long-term university and Short-term university (ISCED 5);

Medium: Post high-school speciality or technical foremen (ISCED 4), High-school, Vocational, complementary or apprenticeship and High-school first cycle (ISCED 3)

Low: Gymnasium (ISCED 2), Primary (ISCED 1) and No education (ISCED 0)

Source: Romania, INS, Household Labour Force Survey

- To what extent is the labour market organised: how many % of workers are members of trade unions? How many % of employers are members of employers unions?

It seems that there are not any official data on the percent of workers affiliated to trade unions and of employers affiliated to employers' organizations.

Taken into consideration the declaration of the Romanian trade unions' confederations (there are 5 TU confederations representatives at national level) to the European Trade Union Confederation, the number of trade unions' members is of 1.6 million (approx. 18.7% of the economically active population and 31.7% of the employed population, age 15-64 – taking into consideration the statistics from 2006).

There are 12 employers' confederations considered as representative at national level, but there are not any data available on the number of companies affiliated to these confederations.

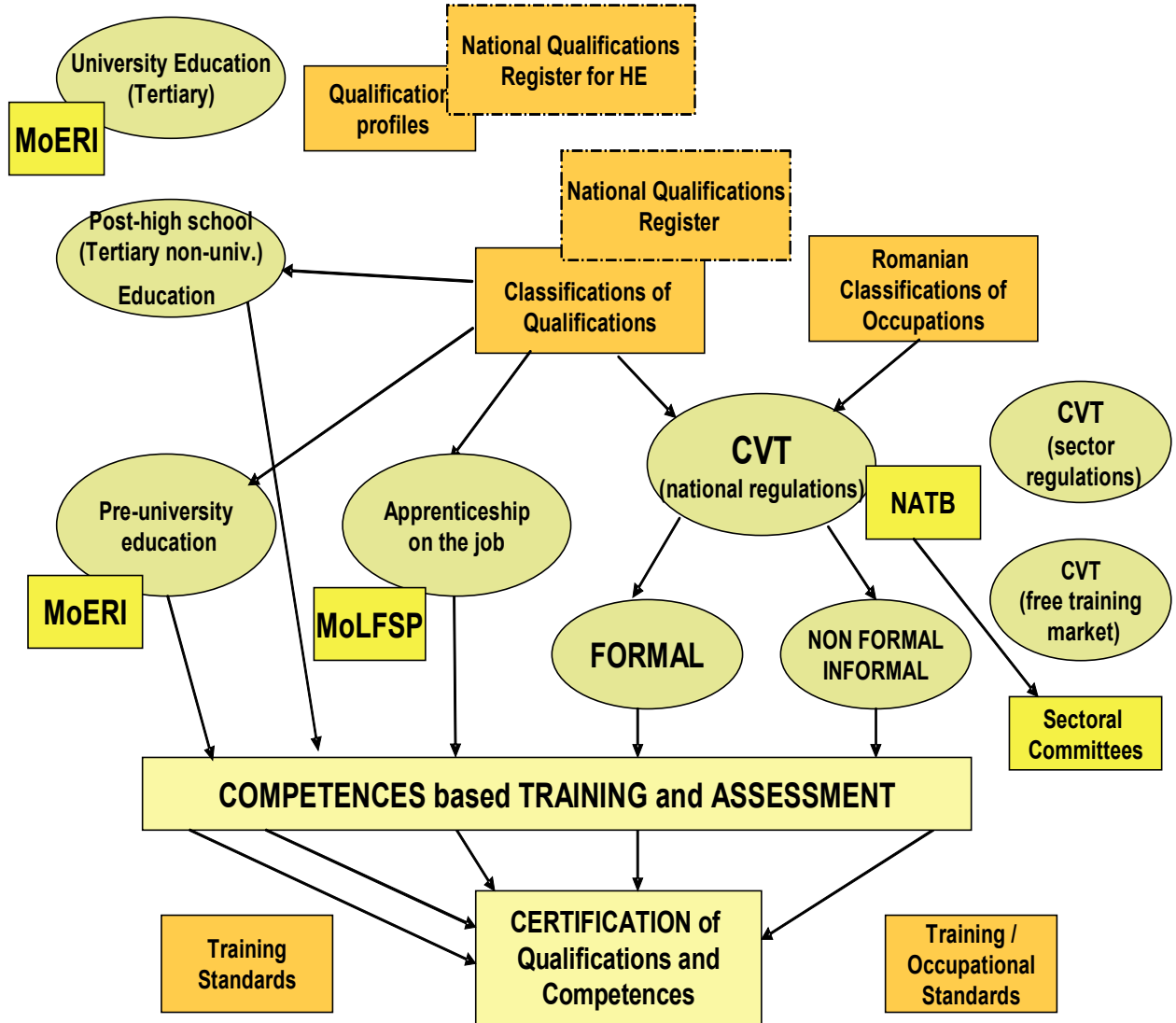
- The economic structure: how many % of the workforce is employed in SMEs?

The percent of the workforce employed in SMEs (enterprises with less than 250 employees) is of 68%.

- How well qualified are the trainers of CVET?

The qualification of trainers involved in CVT is presented in the Chapter VI, pg. 75.

Appendix 1 – The structure of the national education and vocational training system and vocational training system



Education and Vocational Training System in Romania

Appendix 2

Organisation of the education system in Romania 2008/2009
Proposal for the correlation of the current qualification levels in Romania and
EQF reference levels

Age	Grade	ISCED	Education levels				Qualif. Level RO	Qualif. Level EQF
>19		6 5	University education (Tertiary education)				5 4	8 7 6
		4	Post-secondary/Post-high school education (Tertiary non-university education)				3	5
18	XIII	3			Technologic high school (upper secondary)	3	4	
17	XII		Theoretic high school (upper secondary)	High school of arts, sports, theology (upper secondary)	Technologic high school (upper secondary)			
16	XI					Completion year (upper secondary)	2	3
15	X	2 Com- pulsory	Theoretic school (lower secondary)	School of arts, sports, theology (lower secondary)	Technologic school (lower secondary)	Arts and trades school (lower secondary)	1	2
14	IX							
13	VIII		Lower secondary					
12	VII							
11	VI							
10	V							
9	IV		1 Com- pulsory	Primary education				
8	III							
7	II							
6	I							
5	Upper	0	Pre-school education					
4	Middle							
3	Lower							

Appendix 3 – Dimensions of the investigation techniques

AREAS OF RESEARCH / AXIS AND QUESTIONS

	Areas of research	Indicative axis /questions
1	Continuing Vocational Training Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative framework for CVT • Points of the Legislative framework for CVT that mention citizens' participation • Involved Ministers and supervising/ coordinating bodies (organizations) • Types of organizations providing CVT • Thematic (training) fields of CTV • Target groups of CTV • Policies for the equal participation of man and women in CTV
2	Financing schemes for the participation of citizens in Continuing Vocational Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government financing – Financing from the European Union, financing from national resources • Private financing- the degree in which the enterprises/businesses finance the training of their personnel • Special schemes of financing
3	National Studies for the characteristics of the participants in Continuing Vocational Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical data for the participation of citizens in CTV • Information regarding the characteristics of the participants • Information regarding the subjective difficulties for the citizens' participation in CTV • The profile of the trainees that participate in CTV (grouped in categories, unemployed, employed etc.)
4	Motives/incentives and Counterincentives for participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special measures for the increase of citizens' participation in CTV • Economic/financial incentives for the citizens • Incentives/motives regarding the valorization of participation (f.e. improvement of working condition) • Accreditation/certification of CTV • Research regarding the motives/incentives for the participants
5	«Good practices»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording of good practices for the information of the public regarding training programs • Recording of good practices for the increase of citizens' access to CTV • Recording of good practices for the connection of CTV with their vocational course/route of the participants

	Areas of research	Indicative axis /questions
6	The contribution of the organizations that implement Continuing Vocational Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations' accreditation/certification (processes and range of implementation) • Professional associations of the organizations that implement Continuing Vocational Training • Degree of incorporating good practices • Internal planning and evaluation systems that promote citizens' participation in CTV
7	The role of the trainer/educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation/certification systems for trainers in CTV • Processes and systems of initial trainers' training in adult education • Processes and systems of continuing trainers' training in adult education • Research data regarding the contribution of trainers in promoting the citizens' participation in CTV • Degree of professionalisation of trainers (associations, unions)
8	Vulnerable social groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Categorization of vulnerable social groups • Measures for positive treatment of vulnerable social groups • Special measures for the increase of access and participation for vulnerable social groups
9	Alternative training schemes (distant training, mixed/combined systems)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible connections and channels of communication of typical education with CTV • Degree of dissemination of the distant training systems • Degree of development of distant training systems in CTV • Incorporation of distant and combined training systems in the legislative framework • Opinions and views of practitioners and organizations for the contribution of distant training in increasing the citizens' participation in CTV
10	The contribution and the role of new technologies (e-learning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of incorporating new technologies and the internet • Incorporation of e-learning training systems in the legislative framework of CTV • Recording of good practices of e-learning in CTV • Opinions and views of practitioners and organizations for the contribution of e-learning in increasing the citizens' participation in CTV
11	Connection of Continuing Vocational Training with the European Employment strategy in a national level	
12	Connection of Continuing Vocational Training with the labour market in a national	

	Areas of research	Indicative axis /questions
	level	

Appendix 4 – Focus group questionnaires by categories of participants

CARD FOCUS GROUP (type) 1: EXPERTS – POLICY FORMERS

PHASE <i>(estimated duration)</i>	CATEGORY OF QUESTIONS <i>(goal)</i>	QUESTIONS
INTRODUCTION <i>(30')</i>	Opening <i>(Increase of the teams' coherence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions
	Introductory <i>(Initial inputs from all the persons)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which are the reasons we have low participation? • What (specific) happened and mainly what (specific) did not happen for the increase of the participation?
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE MATTER <i>(30')</i>	Transitional <i>(Instruction of the conversation to the main research problem)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the fact that the policies present uniformity in the EU countries, why do we incline concerning the participation? • Reasons in a macro-level (e.g. mutual overlaps or alterations in policies) that affect (specifically) the participation.
MAIN PART <i>(60')</i>	Key questions <i>(Emergence of critical aspects and dimensions of the search problem)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which interventions do you propose in order the participation to be increased on legislation level or on design and policy measures level? • What should be changed in continues vocational training in order for the participation to be increased? • Which motives (financial, certification) should be given to the trainees in order for the participation to be increased? • In addition to the above, measures for vulnerable groups?
CONCLUSION <i>(20')</i>	Conclusive <i>(Audit of conclusions, summary of the participants)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had the responsibility to take measures for the increase of participation, can you tell in a minute what you would suggest?

Following: Krueger, R. A. (2002). *Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews*. St. Paul: University of Minnesota

CARD FOCUS GROUP (type) 2: EXECUTIVES/ASSOCIATES OF ORGANISATIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

PHASE <i>(estimated duration)</i>	CATEGORY OF QUESTIONS <i>(goal)</i>	QUESTIONS
INTRODUCTION <i>(30')</i>	Opening <i>(Increase of the teams' coherence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions
	Introductory <i>(Initial inputs from all the persons)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which are the reasons we have low participation? • Where does the legal framework make the participation of the trainees difficult? • Which difficulties do you think the trainees have in order to participate? • Which would be the possible motives of the trainees for increase of the participation?
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE MATTER <i>(30')</i>	Transitional <i>(Instruction of the conversation to the main research problem)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can the implementation bodies/organizations do for the increase of participation? • Can you mention a "good practice" for the increase of participation that you have implemented or heard? • Can you suggest 1-2 direct measures for the increase of participation?
MAIN PART <i>(60')</i>	Key questions <i>(Emergence of critical aspects and dimensions of the search problem)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which special measures would you suggest for the increase of participation of the trainees from social vulnerable groups? • The offer of distance learning or e-learning programs would lead to an increase of the participation?
CONCLUSION <i>(20')</i>	Conclusive <i>(Audit of conclusions, summary by the participants)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had exactly a minute with the responsible designing the relevant policies, what would you ask from them in order to increase the trainees' participation?

Following: Krueger, R. A. (2002). *Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews*. St. Paul: University of Minnesota

CARD FOCUS GROUP (type) 3: TRAINERS OF PROGRAMS

PHASE <i>(estimated duration)</i>	CATEGORY OF QUESTIONS <i>(goal)</i>	QUESTIONS
INTRODUCTION <i>(30')</i>	Opening <i>(Increase of the teams' coherence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions
	Introductory <i>(Initial inputs from all the persons)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For what reasons do you think the trainees participate in the programs? • What do you think are the reasons for those that do not participate? • Your trainees participate actively during the training?
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE MATTER <i>(30')</i>	Transitional <i>(Instruction of the conversation to the main research problem)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What difficulties do they have, which make difficult the attendance in the programs? • Those who leave from a training program, why do they do it? • How can you help in order more people to participate? • How can the organizers of the programs help in order more trainees to participate?
MAIN PART <i>(60')</i>	Key questions <i>(Emergence of critical aspects and dimensions of the search problem)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could be changed in the legislation framework for the increase of participation? • What could be changed in the way of organizing and in the bodies for the increase of participation? • What could be changed in your intervention for the increase of the participation? • The offer of distance learning or/and e-learning programs would lead to the increase of participation (yes / no and why)?
CONCLUSION <i>(20')</i>	Conclusive <i>(Audit of conclusions, summary of the participants)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had exactly a minute with the responsible of the design of the relevant policies, what would you ask so the participation of the trainees to be increased?

Following: Krueger, R. A. (2002). *Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews*. St. Paul: University of Minnesota.

CARD FOCUS GROUP (type) 4: TRAINEES (PARTICIPANTS) IN THE TRAINING PROGRAMS

PHASE <i>(estimated duration)</i>	CATEGORY OF QUESTIONS <i>(goal)</i>	QUESTIONS
INTRODUCTION <i>(30')</i>	OPENING <i>(Increase of the teams' coherence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquaintance of the participants • Presentation of the problem - instructions
	Introductory <i>(Initial inputs from all the persons)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How useful do you think it is and where does your participation in continuous vocational training programs has helped you? • Are there any personal factors that prevent/impede you to participate in continuous vocational training programs while you wish to?
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE MATTER <i>(30')</i>	Transitional <i>(Instruction of the conversation to the main research problem)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember an element / measure that made your participation easier. • Remember an element that suspended your participation. • The trainers of the programs how much do they help your participation? • The bodies and the organizers of the programs how much do they help your participation?
MAIN PART <i>(60')</i>	Key questions <i>(Emergence of critical aspects and dimensions of the search problem)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which measures do you wish the State to take (e.g. financing, certification, access etc.) in order to participate more? • What else do you think should be changed in order to participate more in continuous vocational training programs? • The organization of distance learning programs or e-learning programs would increase your participation (yes / no and why)?
CONCLUSION <i>(20')</i>	Conclusive <i>(Audit of conclusions, summary of the participants)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of basic conclusions, agreement or disagreement of the participants. • If you had exactly a minute with the responsible which designs and organizes the programs, what would you ask in order your participation to be increased?

Following: Krueger, R. A. (2002). *Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews*. St. Paul: University of Minnesota.

Appendix 5 – Composition of the focus groups

FOCUS GROUPS: TRAINEES

Location, date, moderator/ moderator assistant	No	Name	Age	Work experience	Education	Training programmes
Brasov Chamber of Commerce and Industry – group 1 14.03.2009 Ana Elena Costin / Anisoara Necea	1	Iuliana Cosmina Oavda	28	3	University (Economics) and Master (International Relations)	EBC*L (Level A); training in banking field
	2	Paul Florea	24	6	University	EBC*L (Level A)
	3	Corina Hagima	26	5	University (Economics); Master (International Relations)	EBC*L (Level A); commerce; management; finance; international trade, etc.
	4	Florica Simona Moldovan	38	20	University (Economics and Marketing); Master (Communication and Public Relation)	EBC*L (Level A); management; training organised by the employer
	5	Cristina Mihaela Timbaliuc	27	6	University	EBC*L (Level A); training organised by the employer
	6	Stefan Sandulescu	32	10	University (Economics)	EBC*L (Level A)
	7	Sandor Nyaguly	34	10	University	EBC*L (Level A)
	8	Catalin Honoriu Rosulescu	38	18	University (Economics)	EBC*L (Level A)
	9	Andrei Sebastian Badita	33	9	University (Economics and Law)	EBC*L (Level A); training in the finance field; commerce; training organised by the employer, etc.
	10	Gabriele Popa	28	4	University (Economics); Master (Finance and Banking)	EBC*L (Level A); training organised by the employer
Brasov Chamber of Commerce and Industry – group 2 14.03.2009	1	Mihaela Cornelia Catana	36	18	University	EBC*L (Level A); training organised by the employer
	2	Gavrila Sangiorzan	57	35	University (Polytechnics)	EBC*L (Level A); Microsoft Office
	3	Silviu Suci	28	7	University; Master	EBC*L (Level A); training organised by the employer

Ana Elena Costin / Anisoara Necea	4	Mihaela Simona Gherghel-Butan	34	10	University	EBC*L (Level A)
	5	Raluca Roxana Pandelescu	29		On-going University studies (Economics)	EBC*L (Level A); book-keeper; tourism management; commerce
	6	Raluca M. Popescu	32	8	University (Economics)	EBC*L (Level A)
	7	Vlad Iordanescu	24	3	University	EBC*L (Level A)
	8	Denisa Bucur	24		University (IT); Master (Finances and Banking)	EBC*L (Level A)
	9	Gina Simona Ganea	25	6	University (Economics); Master (Business Administration)	EBC*L (Level A); training in banking field
Pucioasa Cultural Centre "Alexandru Bratescu Voinesti" 27.03.2009 Rodica Cojocar	1	Manuela Zoita	39		University; Master	EBC*L (Level A and B); environment management; business management; project management (on-going)
	2	Dorin Staicu	53		University	Project management (on going)
	3	Robert Mihai Teodoroiu	21		Theoretical high school	Project management (on going)
	4	Constanta Cristea	52	27	University (wood industry)	Project management (on going); PC operator (on going)
	5	Silvia Cosac	24		University	Project management (on going)
	6	Radu Vasilescu	48		University (constructions)	Project management (on going)
Pucioasa Cultural Centre "Alexandru Bratescu Voinesti" 31.03.2009 Rodica Cojocar	1	Ion Danescu	50	33	Vocational school; industrial high school	Vocational qualification; PC operator (on-going)
	2	Marius Georgian Sima	30	13	High school	Vocational qualification; PC operator (on-going)
	3	Cornelia Neagu	53	31	Economic high school	PC operator (on going)
	4	Tiberiu Secareanu	43	24	10 classes (vocational)	PC operator (on going)
	5	Aritina Iordache	28	11	Theoretic high school	Vocational qualification; PC operator (on going)
	6	Ioana Nalbea	32	7	Theoretical high school; medical post high school	PC operator (on going)
	7	Ligia Cristea	26	4	Compulsory education	PC operator (on going)
	8	Constanta Cristea	52	27	University (wood industry)	Project management; PC operator

						(on going)
	9	Ion Banu	41	21	Industrial high school	PC operator (on going)
	10	Alexandra Ungureanu	25	4	University (foreign languages)	PC operator (on going)

FOCUS GROUPS: TRAINERS AND EXPERTS

Location, date, moderator/moderator assistant	No	Name	Age	Education	Training of trainers	Cooperation with institutions	Trainees groups
Brasov Chamber of Commerce and Industry 14.03.2009 Ana Elena Costin / Anisoara Necea	1	Stefan Cornelius Andreescu, trainer	39	Faculty of Economic Sciences, Bucharest	Department for the Training of the Teaching Staff, MoERI	Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Brasov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - employees, some with management position or employers, all ages; - unemployed, all ages
	2	Adrian Paul, trainer	65	University "Politehnica" Bucharest; Faculty of Economic Sciences, Bucharest	Carl Duisberg Koln, Germany	<p>Companies: BASF; Cargill; Robert Bosch; Thyssen Krupp, Linde Gaz; Alstom;</p> <p>Public Administration: County Counsels (Suceava, Bihor, Cluj); County Employment Agency (Dambovita);</p> <p>Universities: University "Politehnica" Bucharest; University "Valahia" Targoviste; Maritime University Constanta;</p> <p>NGOs: DVV International – Project Romania; Chamber of Commerce and Industry Brasov, Culture House Pucioasa; Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - managers; - sale staff - HRD personnel; - project managers; - unemployed people

						House Suceava, etc.	
	3	Flavia Sibianu	Expert, responsible for CVT programmes, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Brasov				
	4	Dan Demian	Expert, responsible for CVT programmes, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Brasov				
	5	Mariana Matache	Expert, director of 'EUROED'				
Pucioasa Cultural Centre "Alexandru Bratescu Voinești" 03.04.2009 Ana Elena Costin / Lenuta Dadaci	1	Rodica Cojocaru, trainer	63	University from Bucharest, Faculty of Philology	Phare Project "South"	Dvv-international - Project Romania, County School Inspectorate, County Centre for Preserving Popular Traditions, County Employment Agency Dambovita, County Employment Agency Teleorman	- employees - unemployed people
	2	Radu-Teodor Cojocaru, trainer	33	Faculty of Economic Sciences (specialization in Management), Bucharest		Company CRONOS SRL ASSOCIATION 'EUROED'	- employees - unemployed people
	3	Daniela Neagu, trainer	33	Faculty of Law, Social and Political Sciences specialization in Public Administration); Master – European Public Administration; Faculty of Law, Social and Political Sciences (specialization in Law) (on-going); Post-university programmes (English language; IT; project management; access to European information)		Cultural Centre "Alexandru Bratescu Voinești", Pucioasa	- employees - unemployed people
	4	Rodica Oana	Expert, 'EUROED'				

FOCUS GROUP: POLICY MAKERS, HIGHLY STANDARD EXPERTS, HIGHLY RANKED EMPLOYEES IN ORGANISATIONS THAT IMPLEMENT POLICY AND PROGRAMS

Location, date, moderator/ moderator assistant	No	Name	Function	Organisation
Bucharest National Adult Training Board 01.04.2009 Mariana Matache / Lenuta Dadaci	1	Ion Hohan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prim vice-president - Director - Member - Member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employers Confederation UGIR 1903 - Romanian Institute for European Education and Quality - CEDEFOP Administration Council - Advisory Committee for Vocational Training (European Commission) Note: foster member of NATB Board
	2	Nela Plugarescu	Director	National Adult Training Board – Phare Programme Implementation Unit
	3	Ana Elena Costin	Counselor	National Adult Training Board – Directorate of Methodology and Quality Assurance
	4	Catrinel Gagea	Expert	National Adult Training Board – Directorate of Occupational Standards and Accreditation
	5	Mihai Caramihai	Expert	National Agency for Community Programmes in Education and Vocational Training
	6	Adrian Marin (Individual discussion based on the results of the focus group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President - President - Member - Member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trade Union Federation from Milling and Bakery - Sectoral Committee for Food Industry - NATB Board - Advisory Committee for Vocational Training (European Commission)

**Appendix 6 – SECTORAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT 2007 – 2013**

Priority Axes	Key Areas of Intervention (KAI)	Financial plan, in EUR
Priority Axis 1: Education and training in support for growth and development of knowledge based society		797,803,989
	<i>KAI 1.1 – Access to quality education and initial VET</i>	
	<i>KAI 1.2 – Quality in higher education</i>	
	<i>KAI 1.3 – Human resources development in education and training</i>	
	<i>KAI 1.4 – Quality in CVT</i>	
	<i>KAI 1.5 – Doctoral and postdoctoral programmes in support of research</i>	
Priority Axis 2: Linking life long learning and labour market		911,775,778
	<i>KAI 2.1 – Transition from school to active life</i>	
	<i>KAI 2.2 – Preventing and correcting early school leaving</i>	
	<i>KAI 2.3 – Access and participation in CVT</i>	
Priority Axis 3: Increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises		450,189,271
	<i>KAI 3.1 – Promoting entrepreneurial culture</i>	
	<i>KAI 3.2 – Training and support for enterprises and employees in order to promote adaptability</i>	
	<i>KAI 3.3 – Development of partnerships and encouraging initiatives for social partners and civil society</i>	
Priority Axis 4: Modernisation of Public Employment Service (PES)		176,656,289
	<i>KAI 4.1 – Strengthening the PES capacity to provide employment services</i>	
	<i>KAI 4.2 – Training of the PES staff</i>	
Priority Axis 5: Promoting active employment measures		476,402,823
	<i>KAI 5.1 – Developing and implementing active employment measures</i>	
	<i>KAI 5.2 – Promoting long term sustainability of rural areas in terms of HRD and employment</i>	
Priority Axis 6: Promoting social inclusion		540,608,927
	<i>KAI 6.1 – Developing social economy</i>	
	<i>KAI 6.2 – Improving the access and participation of vulnerable groups to the labour market</i>	
	<i>KAI 6.3 – Promoting equal opportunities on the labour market</i>	
	<i>KAI 6.4 – Trans-national initiatives on inclusive labour market</i>	
Priority Axis 7: Technical Assistance		122,707,919
	<i>KAI 7.1 – Support for SOP HRD implementation, overall management and evaluation</i>	
	<i>KAI 7.2 – Support for SOP HRD promotion and communication</i>	
		Total
		3,476,144,996

Appendix 7 – Good practices concerning the vulnerable groups

One of the disadvantaged groups is that of the Roma population, who benefited in 2006 from specific programmes promoted by public authorities (Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family, Ministry of Education and Research, National Agency for Roma, National Agency for Employment), civil society or external donors (European Union, Roma Education Fund, World Bank, etc.) who encourage participation in education and training.

The Romanian Government has adopted, through the G. D. no 430/2001, the Strategy for improving the Roma situation, and the National Agency for Employment has been actively involved in its implementation. So, since 2001, NAE has elaborated and implemented training and employment programmes specifically addressed to Roma population. In order to implement these programmes, NAE has designated in each county agency for employment one person responsible with the implementation.

One could notice the following achievements obtained through the implementation of the training and employment programmes for Roma people:

- in 2007, 15,987 Roma persons have been employed and 1,613 Roma persons have been trained;
- in December 2007, the **Social Assistance Centre for Roma** opened in Blaj (Alba region); this centre has been established with financial support of the United Nation Program for Development. The financial contribution of NAE for this centre was 480,000 RON (approximately 130 thousand euro) so far.

The direct beneficiaries of this project are members of the Roma communities from Blaj and neighborhood areas.

The Centre has the following objectives:

- improving the access of Roma to the public services and stimulation of Roma participation to the economical, social, educational and cultural life of the communities;
- increasing the access of Roma to the labour market;
- improving the professional level of Roma people;
- improving the health conditions by increasing the access to the information and medical services, through support for having access to family medical assistance;
- providing training for Roma people in order to achieve organisational and entrepreneurship skills.

As a conclusion, the Roma problem is a complex one and the Roma communities need support in the fields of employment, education and health with a view to help them to reach equal chances with the rest of the population.

In the same time MERY will continue the **legislative initiatives** related to the complex changes of the learning process for Roma, started in 2006-2008; also, the training programmes of Roma human resources in education will continue,

through three weeks summer courses for the future language and history teachers accompanied with open and distance learning, following the example of the period 2000-2008, when 300 Roma teachers were trained by the Universities of Bucharest, Cluj-Napocca and PIR.

In the same time MERY will continue to train non-Roma teachers working with Roma children (500 person each year), but also to train Roma school mediators for the needs of the projects implemented by MERY in socio-cultural disadvantaged areas. In the last three years between 180-380 Roma schools mediators have been trained yearly.

Programmes and measures of Ministry of Education, Research and Youth having an impact on the involvement of Roma human resources in the educational system and in society

1. Human resources involved in the organisation and functioning of the Roma learning system:

- Financing two positions in charge of Roma representation at educational level in to the DGILMRP of the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth;
- Financing the inspectors positions in charge of Roma school issues in each county school Inspectorate (since 1999 until the present);
- training and involvement of 60 Roma educational tutors for the Roma school issues;
- training more than 600 Roma school mediators (through the Phare program of Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, for underprivileged category of people, by the DGILMRP level or in partnership with National Roma Agency);
- annual financing of 420-490 Roma language, history and traditions jobs for the Roma teachers who teach those disciplines in schools.

2. Initial and continuous training of Roma teachers

- initial training of 40 Roma language teachers (3 modules) during the stages 28.08-03.09, 04.09-11.09. 2007;
- training of 60 educational tutors for teaching methodology of Romani language and Roma history;
- training of 60 Roma history teachers;
- training of 260 Roma language teachers;
- training of 42 Roma school inspectors;
- training of 42 regional trainers in educational Romanipen;
- training of 66 Roma school mediators;
- training of 62 trainers for the second chance programmes at the regional level;
- training of 117 Roma school mediators, outside the Phare Program.

3. Continuous training for 420 non-Roma teachers working with Roma pupils and children, from the educational Romanipen perspective

The Educational Phare Programme of the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth (the “Mega-programme”)

1. Employing the Roma school mediators trained in different stages of the Mega-program (64 Roma school mediators for the schools from the 10 counties involved in the project during 2003-2004; 103 Roma school mediators for the new needs of the 2nd stage of the programme during 2005-2006; 280 Roma school mediators for the schools involved in the extension of the project);
2. Training of Roma and non-Roma teachers who work with Roma children and of Roma and non-Roma inspectors;
3. Providing recovery courses for the Roma communities, for children, youths and adults, in the schools involved in the project;
4. Organisation of “schools for Roma mothers” in the Roma communities from the areas involved in the project;
5. Creating educational material support (one of them bilingual, in Romani and Romanian language), for Roma children but also manuals and guidelines for the teachers and students involved in the “Second chance” programme for Romani language and for all the other topics in curriculum.

Measures and strategic directions initiated by the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth especially the strategic partnership with UNICEF - Romania:

1. Publishing in 2006-2007 two studies for pupils and students regarding the Roma deportation;
2. Training of 55 Roma students in three summer courses on history and Roma language, in 2005-2007, in order to support them to teach Roma language and history;
3. Continuation of the National programme for the training of the non-Roma teachers working with Roma children, initiated by MERY in partnership with the NGO “Save the children” in 2004; the follow-up will be based on a new formula with the view to train 150 national trainers in Romanipen educational in partnership and with the financial support of UNICEF Romania, of the Regional Bureau of PER (USA) and of the NGO “Romani Criss”.

All the educational actions having as target-group the Roma population, which have demonstrated their utility and efficiency during 1990-2001 took their place in the *Government Strategies for improvement of the Roma population situation* (approved through G.D. 430/2001 and G.D. 522/2006). Extended measures are included in the action plan elaborated for the **Decade of Roma Inclusion** and specific programmes have been promoted by public authorities (MLFEO, MERY, NAE, National Agency for Roma), civil society or external donors (European Union, Roma Education Fund, World Bank etc.) who encourage Roma participation in education and training.

Appendix 8 – YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES⁷
Based on the Inclusion Strategy of the «Youth in Action» programme
(2007-2013)

1

2 1. **“Young people with fewer opportunities”** are young people that are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because they face one or more of the situations and obstacles mentioned in the non-exhaustive list below. In certain contexts, these situations/obstacles prevent young people from having effective access to formal and non-formal education, trans-national mobility and from participation, active citizenship, empowerment and inclusion in society at large.

2. **Social obstacles:** young people facing discrimination (because of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.), young people with limited social skills or anti-social or risky sexual behaviours, young people in a precarious situation, (ex-)offenders, (ex-)drug or alcohol abusers, young and/or single parents, orphans, young people from broken families, etc.

3. **Economic obstacles:** young people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on social welfare system, long-term unemployment, homelessness, poverty, young people in debt or with financial problems, etc.

4. **Disability:** young people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory or other disabilities.

5. **Educational difficulties:** young people with learning difficulties, early school-leavers and school dropouts, lower qualified persons, young people with poor school performance, etc.

6. **Cultural differences:** young immigrants or refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, young people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, young people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion problems, etc.

7. **Health problems:** young people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions, young people with mental health problems, etc.

8. **Geographical obstacles:** young people from remote or rural areas, young people living on small islands or peripheral regions, young people from urban problem zones, young people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities, abandoned villages...), etc.

⁷ Document elaborated under the Leonardo da Vinci project – Development of Innovation Project „QualiMoVET“ – Quality signet for modular VET for disadvantaged young people