

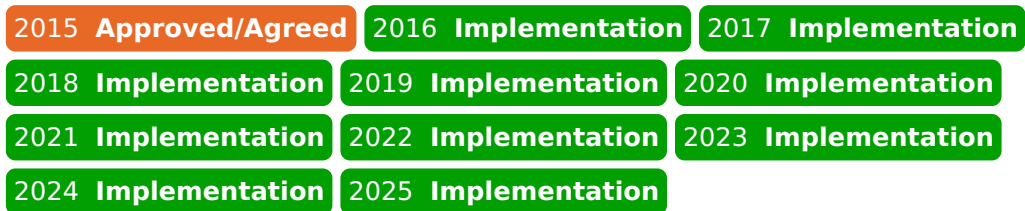
# Measures to prevent early leaving from education and training

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 ROMANIA

## Timeline



ID number 28649

## Background

Early school leaving has vast social and economic implications and is a fundamental contributing factor to social exclusion. Reducing early leaving from education and training is also essential to achieving EU objectives.

In 2015, Romania's early school leaving rate was well above the EU average and its tertiary education attainment rate was the second lowest in the EU.

## Objectives

To reduce early leaving from education and training through actions addressed in the 2015 national strategy:

- to implement prevention, intervention and compensation programmes and measures to address the major causes of early school leaving, with a focus on reaching young people aged 11 to 17;
- to reduce the share of young people aged 18 to 24 and lower secondary graduates not involved in further education or training (early school leavers). The goal is to reduce this share to less than 11.3% by 2020;
- to contribute to Romania's smart and inclusive growth by reducing the number of people at risk of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion.

## Description

The national strategy to reduce early school leaving in Romania was adopted in June 2015. It is based on prevention, intervention and compensation in thematic/policy areas and addresses the following directions of action/pillars:

- ensuring access to quality education for all children;
- ensuring the completion of compulsory education by all children;

- (c) reintegration into the education system of people who left school early;
- (d) developing adequate institutional support.

The strategy targets children and young people (18 to 24), including those from families of low socio-economic status, from rural areas, Roma population and other marginalised and underrepresented groups.

The national strategy for reducing early school leaving promoted social inclusion measures for children at risk, including 'School after school' and 'Second chance' programmes in urban and rural areas. The strategy puts emphasis on quality of materials, quality of staff training, and counselling and career guidance services available to teachers, school mediators and professional school counsellors, and children/students.

School after school programmes are designed at school level and include education activities (remedial learning, increasing school performance, accelerating learning), which are complementary to the didactic activity and which correlate with support for the students and their personal development (psychological counselling, career counselling).

<b>2015 Approved/Agreed</b>
<b>2016 Implementation</b>
<b>2017 Implementation</b>
<b>2018 Implementation</b>
<p><b>2019 Implementation</b></p> <p>Financial support</p> <p>Additional financial support for at-risk children and their families to remove obstacles to higher enrolment was provided by some financial programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Romanian programme for schools 2017-23 (during school courses, according to the structure of the school year). Specific measures are designed and implemented based on the type of target group by age: children from kindergartens and for students from State and private primary and secondary education;</li> <li>(b) School supplies programme addresses students in primary and lower secondary State education and is provided according to social criteria. School supplies packages are designed according to the students' age and contain equipment such as school notebooks, pencils, pens and schoolbags. School supplies were provided to 274 409 students in the 2018/19 school year. Legal framework for the programme: Law No 136/2002;</li> <li>(c) Euro 200 programme: financial support (EUR 200) is provided according to social criteria (family income) for the purchase of a personal computer for students under 26 in pre-university/university education. 4 080 students have benefited from this programme in 2019. Legal framework for the programme: Law No 269/2004, completed and modified; government Decision No 1239/2004, completed and modified;</li> <li>(d) pilot programme for food supplies for pupils in kindergartens and students in pre-university education: the beneficiaries in 2019 were 23 455 students from 50 State schools in pre-university education in urban and rural areas. Legal framework for the programme: government Emergency Ordinance No 97/2018; government Decision No 53/2019;</li> <li>(e) High school scholarship is a national social protection programme that offers financial support of approximately EUR 54 (RON 250 since 2018/19) per month for upper secondary education learners in grades 9 to 12, including those in VET (technological and vocational programmes). The scholarship is linked to family income and is not available for all learners;</li> <li>(f) Professional scholarship for 3-year professional programmes is a national social protection programme that offers approximately EUR 43 (RON 200) per month for all learners on 3-year professional programmes. This scholarship can be combined within grants provided by training companies. The grants usually cover</li> </ul>

transportation and meals.

#### Teacher training programmes for working with vulnerable groups

- (a) 202 teacher training programmes were accredited in 2019, out of which: 10 were for ICT training; 26 for 'management' (educational, of students' class, leadership, quality) programmes; 29 for Inclusive education, equal opportunities programmes. 15 000 teachers were trained by teachers' resource houses;
- (b) 15 teacher training programmes were also accredited and 1 200 teachers were trained in 2019 within CRED project (CRED project addresses training of teachers in lower secondary education). The themes covered are: counselling and personal development; the role of the teacher in the construction and development of inclusive learning environments; open educational resources and online platforms for learning; curricula management at school and classroom level.

Counselling services for students inside and outside the education system, including students with specific learning disorders that were cared for by county centres of resources and educational assistance. Beneficiaries: 237 209 children, out of which 2 993 were children with specific learning disorders.

Further implementation of the School after school programme for students in primary and secondary pre-university education; the programme is not compulsory for students.

School after school programmes are designed at school level and include education activities (remedial learning, improving school performance, accelerating learning), which are complementary to the didactic activity and which correlate with support for the students and their personal development (psychological counselling, career counselling). County school inspectorates are involved in monitoring the implementation of the programme for needs analysis results, the degree of achievement of the objectives proposed in the programme and the quality of the education services offered.

Conclusions from the analysis of the monitoring reports sent to the Ministry of Education and Research by the county school inspectorates about implementation of the programme in the 2018/19 school year: the programme was implemented in 629 schools in primary and secondary pre-university education; 49 737 students benefited from the programme.

Legal framework: National Education Law No 1/2011, Ministry Order No 5349/2011.

#### Second chance programmes

The Second chance programme for primary education aims to support children/young people/adults in completing any missing primary education. It was open to all those who have not completed this level of education and who were at least four years older than the corresponding class age.

The Second chance programme for lower secondary education aims to support people over 14 years of age who have not completed secondary education, so that they could complete their basic compulsory education, as well as the preparation for obtaining a vocational qualification in a certain domain.

Legal framework: National Education Law No 1/2011, Ministry Order No 5248/2011. Specific activities were in progress within the CRED project related to methodology of implementation, curricula and education materials.

#### Programme statistics

Second chance programme for primary education:

- (a) 1 330 students completed the programme in the 2018/19 school year;
- (b) 5 218 students were going through the programme in the 2019/20 school year;
- (c) 236 schools were implementing the programme at national level in the 2019/20 school year.

Second chance programme for lower secondary education:

- (a) 1 670 students completed the programme in the 2018/19 school year, out of which 372 students obtained a vocational qualification;
- (b) 11 493 students were going through the programme in the 2019/20 school year;
- (c) 284 schools were implementing the programme at national level in the 2019/20 school year.

Implementation of ESF joint financed projects:

- (a) The ESF joint financed project Relevant curriculum, education open to all (Curriculum relevant, educație deschisă pentru toți: CRED).
- (b) ESF joint financed projects within School for everyone: 129 projects were contracted in 2019; implementation period 2018-2021; beneficiaries: 57 757 children and 43 141 teachers.

ESF joint financed projects within Motivated teachers in disadvantaged schools: 27 projects targeting less developed regions and one project for the Bucharest Ilfov region were in operation. From September 2018 to the end of 2019, 11 236 teachers and support personnel benefited from training programmes (out of which 10 816 have been certified).

### 2020 Implementation

In 2020, additional financial support for at-risk children and their families to remove obstacles to a higher enrolment rate continued (see details in the 2019 progress description).

### 2021 Implementation

In 2021, national measures to support learners continuing their studies in 2020/21 were implemented at national level: School supplies programme, Euro 200 programme, food supplies for pupils in preuniversity education (from kindergarten to upper secondary level) as well as different types of scholarships (social, merit, high performance, professional scholarship, the dual scholarship, high school scholarship).

Counselling services were provided for students inside and outside the education system, including students with specific learning disorders that were cared for by county centres of resources and educational assistance. Beneficiaries: 265 401 children, out of which 5 856 were children with specific learning disorders.

Provision and implementation of Second chance programmes aiming to support children/young people/adults to complete their basic education continued. For people over 14 years of age this programme is an opportunity to complete their basic, compulsory education and also prepare to obtain a vocational qualification in a certain domain. By completing their basic, compulsory education and possibly obtained also a vocational qualification, young learners/adults could change their social status from inactive to active, becoming more likely to be employed. In 2020/21, the Second chance programme enrolled 4 953 students for primary education and 11 315 for lower secondary education, including VET.

### 2022 Implementation

National measures supporting learners continuing their studies continued in 2022 at national level as regular practice: school supplies programme, Euro 200 programme, different types of scholarships (social, merit, high performance, professional scholarship, the dual scholarship, high school scholarship), counselling services for students inside and outside the education system, including students with specific learning disorders that were cared for by county centres of resources and educational assistance.

'Warm meals' programme for pupils in pre-university education (from kindergarten to

upper secondary level) continued as a regular practice. Based on a national report regarding the pilot programme implemented in 137 schools and the findings considering the positive impact on decreasing early school leaving, especially young students in social economic risk. The education ministry decided to extend the implementation of the warm meal programme and included 300 additional schools, based on the needs analysis signalled by each county school inspectorate.

Revised methodologies of the organisation and implementation the Second Chance programme were developed with the aim to increase access and participation, ensure more flexibility, better addressing student needs (e.g. opportunity to attend a general programme or EQF level 3 IVET programme). Given the former pandemic social context and the update of the national education law, the revised strategies included also the possibility for online course up to maximum 25% per module.

The revised methodologies also included updates complying with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data.

The revised methodologies for Second chance primary education programmes were implemented as of 2022/23. They were set to be implemented in secondary programmes as of 2023/24.

### **2023 Implementation**

Second chance education programme continued to be implemented in 2023 based on the 2022 revised methodologies. It has the following main characteristics:

- (a) open access without upper age limit for learners;
- (b) recognition of prior learning allowing for shorter programme length;
- (c) flexible enrolment and learning schedule;
- (d) possibility to learn online up to 25% of the programme;
- (e) diplomas are equal to other same-level programmes.

In 2023/24, 22 249 learners were in second chance programmes, 6 924 at primary and 15 325 at secondary level.

National support measures continued (school supplies programme, Euro 200 programme, scholarships, counselling services). The provisions for Euro 200 programme were updated. They now offer support to students from families with income of around EUR 100 per family member. A total of 2 174 students benefitted from this programme in 2023.

'Warm meals' programme was redesigned as 'Healthy meals' for pupils in pre-university education (from kindergarten to upper secondary level). It was extended from 300 to 450 schools and additional funding was allocated based on Governmental Decision no.999 from October 2023 (apply as of 2024).

All types of scholarships are described in detail in *Incentives for learners to participate in IVET*.

### **2024 Implementation**

In September 2024, the new education laws package (Law for Pre-university education no.1998/2023 and Law on Higher education Law no.199/2023) came into force.

The package increased access to second chance education and training programmes. Until 2024, the programme accepted learners, who were at least four years older than the corresponding class age. In 2024, learners were accepted to the second chance programmes once they exceeded three years of age difference compared to their peers in primary education, four years in lower secondary education/gymnasium, and five years in upper secondary education / high-school.

The programme offered students the possibility to continue their studies without

interrupting their work to support their families, by organising it in common agreement with them and the school (in the late afternoons/compressed, etc).

Euro 200 programme was applied on request to students coming from families with income around 100 EUR (500 RON) per family member. A total of 1 930 students benefitted from this programme in 2024. Different types of scholarships, social scholarships included, are provided to all preuniversity students based on 2024 updated methodologies (described in detail in *Incentives for learners to participate in IVET*)

## 2025 Implementation

In 2025, Second Chance programme continued and included a total of 25 003 students for all pre-university education levels, out of which 2 924 were enrolled in corresponding courses in IVET/technological programmes. These courses allow students to graduate formal education and later be enrolled in continuous training programmes offered by the national unemployment agency to acquire a qualification for labour market insertion.

The 200 Euro programme continued to be available in 2025 in addition to the scholarship for learners coming from families with low socio-economic/ financial status.

Projects PNRAS targeting lower education students and MATE monitored the data on student academic performance, missed classes, inappropriate school behaviour, risk of repeating the grade, etc.

Counselling, career guidance, prevention of violence or discriminatory behaviour was part of all school culture through the activity provided in each school by specialised school counsellor.

Other actions implemented in schools at national level were:

- (a) programme 'Together we gain courage' that raised awareness about violence on learners in school environments (all levels of education) and outside schools;
- (b) a national plan to prevent school violence (adopted in 2025) for violence awareness and prevention, including VET;
- (c) 'School at hospital' support measure for students at risk of not being able to attend school because of severe/long hospital treatments,
- (d) language courses and priority school enrolment for students who return from abroad with their families or migrant students.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of National Education (until 2021)
- Institute of Education Sciences (until 2020)
- Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-university Education
- Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity
- Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (until 2021)
- County school inspectorates
- National Centre for Policy and Evaluation in Education (Unit for Research in Education)

## Target group

### Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Learners with migrant background, including refugees

Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers

Learners with disabilities

# Thematic categories

## Modernising VET offer and delivery

Using learning-outcome-based approaches and modularisation

Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning; adaptable/flexible training formats

Acquiring key competences

## Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Lifelong guidance

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

# European priorities in VET

## VET Recommendation

VET promoting equality of opportunities

# Subsystem

IVET

# Further reading

[National strategy to reduce early school leaving](#)

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[Law No 136/2002 for School supplies programme](#)

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[Government Decision No 1239/2004 \(and its latest updates\) regarding the Euro 200 programme of financial support for computer acquisition for pupils/students aged 26 and under, enrolled in pre-university/university](#)

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[Project Relevant curriculum, open education for all \(CRED\) web page](#)

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[Report on warm meals programme in pre-university education schools and extension to 300 additional schools](#)

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[Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and the free movement of such data](#)

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[Parliament of Romania \(2023\), Law no. 198 on Preuniversity Education](#)

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[Parliament of Romania \(2024\), Law no. 199 on Higher Education](#)

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[Government of Romania, \(2023\), Government Decision no.999/2023 on the approval of list of 450 pilot schools for National Programme for Healthy Meal](#)

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[Ministry of Education \(2023\), Order of the Minister of education no.4966/2023\\_approval of EURO 200 programme\\_beneficiaries list in 2023 school year](#)

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[Ministry of Education \(2023\), Order of the Minister of education no.5181/2023\\_approval of EURO 200 programme\\_additional\\_beneficiaries list in 2023 school year](#)

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Ministry of Education (2024), Order of the Minister of education no.5580/2024\_approval of EURO 200 programme\_ total 1930 beneficiaries in 2024 school year

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Government of Romania, (2024), Governmental Decision no.24/January 2024\_National Programme for Healthy Meal\_for 2024-25 school year

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Ministry of Education and Research (2025), Order no.3406/2025, approval of the programme for the prevention of violence and crime in schools 'Together we gain courage' ( Impreuna prindem curaj)

## Related policy developments

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**2022 Completed**

### VET responses to the COVID-19 crisis

Rapid changes in teaching took place: using online methods and new applications to create and develop resources. The pandemic also created the opportunity to develop new types of learning communities by learning from peers or sharing good-practice experiences.

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#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

IVET

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**2025 Implementation**

### Promoting IVET

The National Centre for TVET Development, together with the support of the education ministry, runs annual information campaigns to raise public awareness that initial VET can be a first option for young people.

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#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

IVET

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**2021 Completed**

### Youth guarantee implementation plan 2017-20

Since 2016, the Youth guarantee implementation plan has put emphasis on initiatives that combine employment with training of the workforce, which gives young people the opportunity to improve their skills obtained during initial education and to acquire new skills

through participation in apprent

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**Type of development**

Strategy/Action  
plan

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation**

**Incentives for learners to participate in VET**

The government supports the implementation of initial VET programmes by offering financial support in various forms.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET

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<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28649>