



## Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - Romania

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### Introduction

In Romania, two important networks provide guidance services: the network of educational services and the network of employment services. The development of guidance services is coordinated by the Ministries of [Education and Research](#) and of [Labour and Social Protection](#). A framework methodology for lifelong guidance and counselling was approved by both the Ministry of Education and Research (Regulation 4469/2012) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (Regulation 1804/2012). This legislation aims to offer an overarching framework for counselling and guidance services in Romania. Further information in Romanian, is available [here](#).

In addition, the [national Lifelong learning strategy](#) (2015-2020) has aimed to expand available guidance services, especially for adults, who currently have only the option of accessing public employment offices. Over 100 centres for lifelong learning are planned to be opened by 2021, with guidance among the key services to be offered. However, there is no national level guidance forum at the moment. Each branch of guidance and counselling services tends to have its own development path, while there are also occasional meetings between representatives of different services (Euroguidance, 2019).

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### Coordination and collaboration among stakeholders

The [Department of Counselling and Educational Management](#) of the [Institute of Educational Sciences](#) (IES) in Bucharest has an important role in lifelong guidance; namely:

- a. developing research projects at national level in guidance and counselling, for example:
  - i. Career counselling. Compendium of methods and techniques in career counselling;
  - ii. Graduates' monitoring in the perspective of lifelong guidance;
  - iii. Partnership school- family- community;
  - iv. Communication teachers-parents in schools from disadvantaged areas. Results of a training programme;
  - v. Counselling and guidance in the school curricula for middle school: Comparative study;
  - vi. Counselling and Personal Development. Grade 5. Guide for teachers.
- b. publishing paper works, guidebooks, articles in the field of guidance and counselling;
- c. organising events: conferences, workshops and training courses for school counsellors;
- d. cooperating in international networks: Euroguidance, ELGPN, Refernet, Unesco-Unevoc, CareersNet.

The [Euroguidance Centre](#) – the National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance was established at IES in 1999 with the aim of improving career guidance services, increasing cooperation between career providers and stakeholders, enhancing international cooperation with similar structures, organising career events for practitioners and disseminating career policies and practices. Furthermore, Euroguidance Romania organises training for guidance practitioners, national and international counselling and guidance conferences and workshops, and prepares publications on guidance and counselling. Euroguidance Romania has taken part in the Cross-Border Seminars (CBS) since 2012. These seminars bring together guidance counsellors, policy makers, experts and other practitioners from different European countries to exchange expertise and innovative guidance practices. In 2018, Euroguidance Romania organised the [CBS seminar](#) with the theme *Guidance and counselling in the school curriculum: Experiences, practices, innovations and responses to current challenges*.

The [Romanian Counsellors Association](#) (ACROM) is a professional organisation, founded in 2010, with several aims: supporting the transition from counselling, as an occupation, to counselling as a profession; establishing a legal framework for all Romanian counsellors; developing and implementing an ethical code and quality standards; supporting the development of a national certification in counselling. Other related professional associations include the [National Association of School Psychologists](#) and the [Romanian Association of Psychologists](#).

The [Guiding Cities](#) project brought together policy makers and stakeholders from Greece, Spain, Italy and Romania, within the field of education and guidance, to map and create a model of guidance to promote coherent policy and strategic planning and to respond to the complex needs in the fight against early school leaving (ESL) (see section [Guidance for early leavers](#)).

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## Access to guidance

In Romania, two important networks provide guidance services: the network of educational services and the network of employment services. The development of guidance services is coordinated by the Ministries of [Education and Research](#) and of [Labour and Social Protection](#).

The aim of the career guidance is to reduce the number of dropouts, to ease the transition between education and the world of work, and to help students make informed decisions about their future. Guidance services are developed in schools, universities and PES. Other public entities that offer career guidance and counselling in Romania are probation centres (structures under the [Ministry of Justice](#) aiming to reintegrate the ex-offenders) and social services. Important providers of career guidance and counselling services are various NGOs, who work mainly with disadvantaged communities. There are also services offered in the private sector (private offices, human resources departments of companies).

Guidance services in schools are covered by the Law of education (1/2011, updated in 2019) and by the Order of the Ministry of Education No. 5555/2011. In Romania, counselling and guidance are carried out by specialised institutions, such as the County Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres (CPPAC) in pre-university education coordinated by the County Centres of Educational Resources and Assistance (CERAs). The County Centres of Educational Resources and Assistance (CERAs) have no website at national level. Each Centre of Educational Resources and Assistance (CERA) has its own website at county level. The presentation of the County Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres is included on the website of each Centre of Educational Resources and Assistance (CERA) at county level.

The 42 County Centres for Educational Resources and Assistance (CERAs) were established in 2005 (through the Order of the Ministry of Education, Order of Ministry of Education and Research No. 5418/2005 regarding the Regulations of Centres for Educational Resources and Assistance, rescinded by Order No. 5555/2011) with the main aim of assuring the quality of education services. There are 42 centres at county level based on a framework-regulation. They are connected units in the pre-university education system, subordinated to the Ministry of Education and methodologically coordinated by the county school inspectorates. CERAs coordinate, monitor and evaluate the activity of the county psycho-pedagogical assistance centres, the speech therapy centres, school centres for inclusive education, and specialised services of school mediation.

The county psycho-pedagogical assistance centres (CPPAC), established in 1990 continue to offer services of psycho-pedagogical assistance for pre-school children, pre-university students, parents and teachers. Their main task is to provide information, guidance and counselling for pre-schoolers, students, parents and teachers on knowledge/self-awareness, adapting students to school requirements and school activities to student needs, and improving relationships between school-students-parents (Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport, 2011). The county psycho-pedagogical assistance centres comprise the offices of psycho-pedagogical assistance, organised in schools with a population of at least 800 pupils/400 pre-schoolers or by a group of schools.

In higher education, guidance services are offered in Career Counselling and Guidance Centres (CCGC) which address the following target groups: university students, students in the final years of high school and university graduates. These centres facilitate the socio-professional insertion of graduates into the labour market. A new [methodology of the Ministry of Education](#) regarding the organisation and functioning of these centres came into operation in 2014. CCGC mainly provide counselling and guidance to students:

- offering them the possibility to plan and manage their own educational path;
- supporting students through career guidance with the aim of reducing early academic dropout for personal or professional reasons as well as due to the lack of career guidance or due to the lack of adaptation to the academic environment;
- assisting the relationship between students and the labour market, so they know the needs and challenges of the labour market;
- increasing the employability of students in fields of study completed (Ministry of Education, 2014).

Guidance in public employment offices is regulated by the Law 76/2002 regarding unemployment insurance and employment stimulation. The 42 county agencies for employment and the regional centres for adults' vocational training are subordinated to the [National Employment Agency](#).

The 42 [county agencies for employment](#) offer guidance services through the centres for information and guidance in:

- career information regarding labour market and trends in professions;
- career support in setting career objectives, personality assessment and self-assessment;
- career support in decision making;
- career training in job searching (CV, job interview) (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 2002).

The regional centres for adults' vocational training have the following roles:

- providing, evaluating and monitoring vocational training for adults;
- evaluating the professional competences in relation to the labour market and quality standards;
- certifying adults' vocational training;
- offering career information and counselling for adults.

Projects that have been developed among various stakeholders are presented in the sections Career guidance for school pupils, Guidance for VET participants, Guidance for higher education students and ICT in lifelong guidance.

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## Quality assurance

Quantitative and qualitative quality criteria have been adopted with the aim of assessing the impact of career guidance provision.

In the education sector, the evaluation criteria for the activities of the school counsellor are the following (according with the template for the Activity report of school counsellor in the school year 2018/19 at the County Centres for Educational Resources and Assistance (CERAs):

- number of beneficiaries of individual counselling (pupils, parents, teachers);
- number of beneficiaries of group counselling (pupils, parents, teachers);
- number of beneficiaries of individual and group counselling by field (e.g. self-knowledge and personal development, social and emotional skills, learning management, career management, healthy lifestyle);
- the type of difficulty most frequently encountered in the counselling cabinet (e.g. self-knowledge and personal development, social and emotional skills, learning management, career management, healthy lifestyle);
- number of advised students at risk of dropout, students with parents left for work abroad, students who returned to school from abroad, students with special education needs;
- participation of school counsellor in programmes, studies.

In the labour sector, the annual reports of the [County employment agencies](#), include the following evaluation criteria for the activities of information and career counselling:

- number of sessions for individual and group counselling;
- number of participants at counselling sessions from the following categories: unemployed with or without compensation, people from rural areas, people from disadvantaged categories (e.g. Roma);
- number of participants at counselling sessions who have been recommended and who have been enrolled in vocational training;
- number of participants in second chance programmes.

Attempts have been made to adopt an ethical code for guidance practitioners since 2004, but these efforts were hampered by the fact that guidance practitioners are split between several services, each with its own legislation. The [Institute of Educational Sciences](#) has issued the Code of ethics and quality standards in career counselling (2004). The Code of ethics and quality standards in career counselling (2004) is available in Romanian [here](#).

More recent efforts by the [Romanian Counsellors Association](#) (ACROM), have produced another [ethical code](#), to which its members are bound to adhere, regardless of where they practice. Membership of the organisation is voluntary. It should also be noted that school counsellors are assimilated to teachers. In practical terms, this means that they are bound to the ethical requirements of regular teachers, not those of school counsellors.

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## Career management skills

Counselling has been part of the curriculum, as a compulsory subject in primary and secondary education, since 2004. Reorganisation of the entire curriculum on a competence-based approach took place between 2013 - 2017 and new school curricula have been developed.

The curriculum [Personal Development](#) which aims to develop the CMS has been established for the first three years of primary school, starting with the 2012/13 school year. It contributes to the personal, emotional, social and career development of pupils in primary education.

A curriculum for [Counselling and guidance](#) for vocational schools has been in place since the 2014/15 school year. It includes CMS and strengthens the need to reduce the gap between VET schools and the world of work. Through the subject Counselling and guidance, students from vocational schools receive support to identify their personal resources, practice learning techniques, use information acquired in different contexts, elaborate a personal career project and to develop a lifestyle open to change and adaptation to new contexts.

The curriculum for [Counselling and personal development](#) for the lower secondary cycle (middle school, grades five to eight) has been in place, since the 2017-2018 school year. The curriculum comprises five 'domains' in which students' competences should be developed through the whole middle school: self-knowledge, social and emotional development, learning management, career management, and healthy lifestyle.

[Steps towards the future! Developing career guidance services provided in schools](#) (*Pasi către viitor! Dezvoltarea serviciilor de consiliere și orientare școlară*) is a project aiming to increase the career management skills (self-awareness, self-knowledge, self-understanding, decision making) of seventh grade students, to provide increased access to career information, to help them create career plans, and to ease the process of making informed decisions about their future.

[Your career starts in school](#) (*Carierea se construiește în școală*) is a project aiming to develop students' career management skills through access to job-clubs and job shadowing activities and cooperation with the community and companies.

[How to choose your career? Innovative career counselling](#) (*Cum sa iti alegi cariera? Orientare și consiliere inovativa*) is a project involving partners from, France, Greece, Italy, Romania, Turkey and the UK. The aim of the project was to provide increased access to career services for seventh and eighth grade students, to develop their career management skills and to enhance regional and international cooperation.

[Jobland](#) (2018-2020) is a project funded by the Erasmus plus program that works to improve career learning in primary schools. With new models and innovative resources, it aims to help children explore the world of work, strengthen competences, raise aspirations and broaden horizons. It involves partners from Denmark, Italy, Romania, Spain, Turkey and the UK.

Projects that have been developed among various stakeholders are presented in the sections Career guidance for school pupils, Guidance for VET participants, Guidance for higher education students and ICT in lifelong guidance.

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## Evidence, monitoring and assessment

According to the Education Law (1/2011), universities have the annual obligation to gather data about students' 'satisfaction with the services provided at the university, including the satisfaction with the career provision'. A report of the National Alliance of Student Organisations (ANOSR, 2011) on a sample of 20,000 students from 24 universities across the country analysed the situation of student services in terms of student satisfaction with their effectiveness. In almost all universities surveyed, the percentage of students satisfied with the work of the counselling centres and career guidance was below 20%. The report included some proposals for improvement, such as employing qualified staff, better promotion of activities for students, allocation of appropriate public funding for the centres taking into account the number of university students.

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## ICT in lifelong guidance

Some tools that can be applied regularly in schools during counselling and guidance activities are software instruments: BTPAC, the battery of tests for the assessment of cognitive aptitudes and personality traits; InterOPTIONS, questionnaire items to identify vocational interests; Europass, for European CV, language passport, Europass mobility, certificate supplement, diploma supplement.

The website of BTPAC, the battery of tests for the assessment of cognitive aptitudes and personality traits is no longer available. Some general information can be found here.

The university centres offer students information about their career opportunities, how they could use different websites, gateways or portals providing signposts to resources for work and learning, self-assessments or awareness-raising exercises and psychometric tests, matching systems relating the user's input to work or learning possibilities. These help them be better prepared for their future.

Students and counsellors can also use different applications, such as email, chat, newsgroups, SMS (short text messaging), telephone, software, video-conferences, which support automatic interaction provided by various guidance activities or by other channels for communication between pupil/student and their guidance counsellor.

The portal [Guide to the world of occupations](#) is a result of a European project and is managed by the [Institute of Educational Sciences](#). It contains relevant web links divided into three sections: career test, educational opportunities and job opportunities. A wide range of information is provided, including writing a CV, preparing a job application, preparation for an interview or starting an own business. Text descriptions of occupational profiles are also provided, in several cases with recorded sample work dialogues or links to related occupations including descriptions of similarities specifically focused on the disabled. An innovative approach is pursued towards enabling creation of customised versions of the platform for different national contexts. For this purpose, an international source database has been developed in English language, with an extended database of occupations. This enables flexible activation of occupations relevant to a specific country (700 occupations are currently included).

[Cognitrom career planner](#) (CCP) is a multiuser platform designed for career counselling, information and management, which can be used by pupils, parents, teachers, counsellors and experts (psychologists).

[CAREER4U](#) is an international project developed by a consortium including partners from across Europe:

- Danubius University of Galati;
- CASCAID Ltd.;
- UK Centro Studi Pluriversum;
- Italy DEP Institut;
- Spain University of Camerino;
- Italy County Agency for Labour Force Employment;
- Romanian-American University.

The aim of the project is to enhance access to career information and to support the process of making informed decisions about one's future. The target group includes high school students, university students, the unemployed, and individuals willing to make a change in their career (see sections [Career guidance for school pupils](#), [Guidance for higher education students](#), [Guidance for the employed](#), [Guidance for unemployed adults](#)).

[MYFUTURE](#): Improving digital skills for career guidance at school (*Îmbunătățirea deprinderilor digitale pentru consilierea carierei în școală*) is an Erasmus+ project involving eight partners from Denmark, Italy, Malta, Romania and the UK. It aims to improve the quality of career guidance provision at school with digital resources in order to increase attainment levels and reduce early school leaving. It created the following intellectual outputs: [guidelines for teachers](#), [a quality framework for career guidance](#), web map device, [career guidance App](#) (see section [Career guidance for school pupils](#)). Further information at: <https://myfutureproject.eu/>

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## Training and qualifications

The Romanian National Centre for Training of Teachers developed a credit system for the career training of teachers, which includes courses on:

- a. vocational guidance and counselling;
- b. students with special learning needs;
- c. quality assurance;
- d. school action plans;
- e. transition from school to work;
- f. training standards and curriculum development;
- g. school-based curriculum development.

The Romanian National Centre for Training of Teachers does no longer exist. It became a service named Directorate of Lifelong Learning within a department of the Ministry of Education, the General directorate of Higher Secondary Education and Permanent Education. Further information is available [here](#).

### Master programmes

Starting in 1997, the University of Bucharest developed an MA programme in school counselling. In 1999, Babes-Bolyai University from Cluj Napoca established an MA degree in counselling psychology. Other universities with master programmes in guidance and counselling are the public universities from Iasi, Ploiesti, Suceava and the private universities 'Titu Maiorescu' and 'Spiru Haret', both from Bucharest.

### Global career development facilitator

NBCC (National Board for Certified Counsellors) Romania, an American not-for-profit, independent certification organisation opened its office in Romania, in 2007. Since 2005, they have run the GCDF (Global career development facilitator) programme, which is an international certification in career development. Until now, 450 professionals have been trained and certified as GCDFs, working in human resources departments in companies, school counselling offices, university counselling centres and in private practice (further information can be found [here](#)).

The GCDF credential was first introduced in Romania in 2005. Managed by the National Board for Certified Counselors Romania (NBCC Romania) Office in București, Romania houses over 250 active GCDFs across the country. All inquiries concerning the GCDF Credential in Romania should be made to the National Board for Certified Counselors Romania Office.

The platform [Guide to the world of occupations](#) includes a specific training module designed for guidance counsellors using the programme in individual or group settings. It is managed by the [Institute of Educational Sciences](#) Bucharest, Romania. Information on these modules labour and educational opportunities in the portal can be found in the Career navigator.

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## Funding career guidance

Funds from the European Social Fund (ESF), Sectoral operational programme on human resources development, have been used to finance projects aiming to ease the transition between the school and the labour market and to develop career management skills.

The project [Relevant curriculum, open education for all \(CRED\)](#) is operating at national level during 2017-21 and has a budget of approx. EUR 42 million. It aims to prevent early school leaving through systemic measures of applying the new national curriculum. A total of 55,000 teachers across Romania will be trained on how to apply the new school curricula, including Personal development at primary school and Counselling and personal development at middle school. A total of 7,200 open educational resources (OER) will be created to support the implementation of the new curriculum in primary and middle schools and 18 methodological guides for all school subjects from primary and lower secondary education will be elaborated. Research and pilot actions will be undertaken on the implementation of the new curriculum from the perspective of developing key competences and supporting vulnerable students. The partnership is composed of the [Ministry of Education](#), the [Institute of Educational Sciences](#), three county school inspectorates and eight teachers' training houses. Further information is available [here](#).

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## Career guidance for school pupils

The county psycho-pedagogical assistance centres (CPPAC) provide information, guidance and counselling for school pupils on:

- a. knowledge/ self-awareness;
- b. adapting students to school requirements;



- c. adapting school activities to students' needs;
- d. improving the relationships among school-students-parents.

The *curriculum Personal development* contributes to the personal, emotional, social and career development of pupils in primary education. (The curriculum is available in [English](#) and in [Romanian](#)).

The *curriculum Counselling and personal development* for the lower secondary cycle (middle school) comprises five 'domains' in which pupils' competences should be developed through the whole middle school: self-knowledge, social and emotional development, learning management, career management, and healthy lifestyle (see section [Career Management Skills](#)). (The curriculum is available in [English](#) and in [Romanian](#)).

**Education and career guidance - Let's help the students choose the right career!** is a project implemented in Romania and Turkey with the aim of improving career guidance in school education, to ease the transition between different education levels and between education and the world of work, and to improve career competences of teachers and career experts.

**Job orientation training in businesses and schools (JOBS)** is a cooperation project between the [Zurich University of Teacher Education](#) (PH Zurich), the [Ministry of National Education](#) (MNE) and the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development (NCTVETD) of Romania. It is the goal of JOBS to prepare Romanian students in the last years of compulsory education and during their studies at the technical colleges in acquiring life skills and competences, developing a realistic perception of job opportunities and work life in their region, and taking a decision about their further education and thereby their professional career. This happens by introducing a new cross-curricular approach, adequate teaching-learning methods (task-based learning) and a series of seven booklets for students. JOBS is also providing corresponding support for teachers in terms of training, coaching and constant information via a distance-learning platform.

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## Guidance for VET participants

Romania has invested in establishing inter-institutional assistance networks, by developing a methodology based on business simulation improving the quality of teacher training programmes and by developing second school for ESLs. Namely, the simulation businesses/exercise company is an interactive learning method for the development of entrepreneurship, a modern concept of interdisciplinary integration and application of knowledge, and a teaching-learning approach that provides conditions for the practical exploration and deepening of the skills acquired by VET students. The introduction of the learning method through the exercise company in vocational and technical education in Romania was carried out, starting 2001, through a project initiated under the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and carried out by the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development (NCTVETD) in Romania in collaboration with the then [Ministry of Education and Culture](#) and [Kulturkontakt](#) in Austria - the ECO NET project. The simulated enterprises are integrated into the national network of the exercise firms/simulated enterprises coordinated by ROCT, the Romanian Network of Training Firms ([Romanian Coordination Centre of Training Firms](#)) operating in accordance with OMECT provisions No. 5109/2008. ROCT is a department of the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development (NCTVETD). More information on the network of simulation businesses in Romania is available [here](#).

Through the subject Counselling and guidance, students from vocational schools receive support to identify their personal resources, to practise learning techniques, to use information acquired in different contexts to elaborate a personal project of education and career, and to develop a lifestyle open to change and adaptation to new contexts of learning and work.

Build your career step by step was an EU project developed by Donit Association in collaboration with the Medical School from Targu Mures, Ovidius University from Constanta, Lucian Blaga University from Sibiu, and Danubius University from Galati. The aim of the project was to provide access to career guidance services for students from secondary schools, VET schools and high schools from the centre and south-eastern areas of Romania, to increase students' career management skills (self-awareness, self-understanding, self-management), to facilitate the connection between students and companies through study visits and to promote increased collaboration between schools, companies, and HEIs. Some general information regarding the project can be found [here](#).

**Job orientation training in businesses and schools (JOBS)** is a cooperation project between the [Zurich University of Teacher Education](#) (PH Zurich), the then [Ministry of National Education](#) (MNE) and the National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development (NCTVETD) of Romania. It is the goal of JOBS to prepare Romanian students in the last years of compulsory education and during their studies at the technical colleges in acquiring life skills and competences, developing a realistic perception of job opportunities and work life in their region, and taking a decision about their further education and thereby their professional career. This happens by introducing a new cross-curricular approach, adequate teaching-learning methods (task-based learning) and a series of seven booklets for students. JOBS is also providing corresponding support for teachers in terms of training, coaching and constant information via a distance-learning platform.

**Innovation camps** bring together students from general and vocational education, and from universities. Students work in groups of three to six and focus on finding a solution for a business challenge or a social problem. Innovation camps start with a brainstorming session where participants get to know each other and to learn how to harmonise and work as a team; they continue with the presentation of the challenge. The group has 24 hours to come up with a creative solution which will be assessed by a jury comprising representatives from companies, schools, public organisations and media. Participating in innovation camps helps students develop teamwork skills, creative thinking, problem solving, and interpersonal skills. The project has involved 390 vocational schools and 7800 vocational school students (600 per country) from Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Turkey. Each school calls on a teacher and a business volunteer.

Please see the description of VET system in Romania [here](#).

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## Guidance for higher education students

The career counselling and guidance centres (CCGC) provide counselling and guidance to students by:

- offering them the possibility to plan and manage their own educational path;
- supporting students through career guidance with the aim of reducing early academic or professional dropout for personal reasons;
- facilitating the relationship between students and the labour market, so they know labour market needs and challenges;
- increasing the employability of students in fields of study completed (Ministry of Education, 2014).

The **Living library** is a career guidance event regularly organised at the University of Iasi. The aim of the event is to bring together students and professionals, to increase students' self-awareness and career awareness, and to increase access to information about developing a career, preparing for a specific occupation, working in a certain field.

**Today's students, tomorrow's professionals** (*Studentii de azi, profesioniștii de maine*) is an EU-funded national project aiming to increase the career management skills (self-awareness, self-understanding networking with companies, decision making, creating a CV, letter of motivation, preparing for job interviews) of 5,000 university students across Romania.

**Individual career development programme** (ICARD) is an international project aiming to develop the career management skills of university students by involving them in an online career programme, the European career development programme (ECDP). It involves several higher education institutions across Europe as partners and specifically: the University of Padova, the Melius Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, the Maastricht University, the University of Salamanca, the University of Leuven and the Militsos Queensland University of Technology.

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## Guidance for the employed

Law No. **106/2011** modified and complemented the apprenticeship systems (Law No. 279/2005 on the apprenticeship at the workplace), reinforcing career development components. The employer is now obliged to conduct an evaluation of the apprentice's theoretical and practical training at an evaluation centre. The new regulations also contain a new model for the apprenticeship contract, including clearly defined mutual obligations of the parties. The employer has the obligation to contact an independent centre authorised to evaluate and certify professional competences obtained informally and to ensure that the apprentice is enrolled in the process of evaluation and certification of competences.

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## Guidance for unemployed adults

Amended Apprenticeship Law No. **179/2013** has several main objectives:

- to ensure high quality professional training and competences recognised at national level that promote employment and provide permanent training for the young;
- to ensure the establishment of a qualified and quality labour force, meeting the needs of employers;
- to simplify the attributions of employers who provide apprenticeships at their workplace;
- to increase funds for this type of professional training, including European funds;
- to facilitate social integration of the young in accordance with their professional expectations and labour market needs;
- to increase the contribution to economic growth, to create jobs, social cohesion and personal fulfilment;

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The measures follow the [National Plan for Youth Employment](#) of April 2013. The plan has two main objectives: developing employment opportunities for young people by adopting some specific measures to stimulate the labour market and adapting youth education and vocational training to the labour market demand. Examples of measures are: offering financial incentives for employers who hire young people at risk of social exclusion, providing consultancy and assistance for young people who want to start a business, offering mobility bonuses including for the long-term unemployed people etc.

Law No. [250/2013](#) adopted in July 2013, amends and supplements Law No. 76/2002 regarding the unemployment insurance system and employment stimulation. Registered unemployed persons have access to services of assessment and recognition of competences obtained via non-formal or informal channels, free of charge. Through this measure the registered unemployed (including the long-term unemployed) may obtain a certificate of qualification recognised at national level, thus increasing their employment perspectives. The main aim of the measure is to facilitate transition from unemployment or inactivity to formal employment via the formal recognition of existing skills and competences. The measure also aims at facilitating entry into further vocational training by certifying existing levels of competences for specific occupations. It thus acts as a further incentive for employers to hire groups at disadvantage on the labour market, including the elderly.

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## Guidance for older adults

According to the regulation framework, older adults working in state companies are entitled to access upskilling training. However, studies indicate that only a small percentage of people are willing to develop new skills. Adult vocational training is regulated by the Government Ordinance No. [129/2000](#) on adult vocational training and other acts. Adult training courses are offered by authorised training providers or by employers to adults willing to obtain a qualification, specialisation or key competences. Adult vocational training providers are authorised, in line with Government Ordinance No. [129/2000](#), to carry out vocational training based on occupational/vocational training standards after authorisation by the county commission.

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## Guidance for early leavers

In 2015, the [National strategy for reducing early school leaving](#) was adopted. It includes intervention areas for the period 2015-20. The strategy targets the groups with the highest ESL risk:

- children and young people that will be in the group age 18 to 24 in 2020;
- children and young people coming from families with low social and economic status;
- children and young people from rural areas;
- Roma children and young people and other disadvantaged groups.

The strategy proposes four measures for improving ESL:

- provide access to education and quality education for all children;
- ensure the completion of compulsory education for all children;
- reintegration of early school leavers in the education system;
- adequate institutional development support.

The prevention measures included in the strategy aim at reducing the ESL by increasing the quality of the educational offer and support measures for pupils to obtain better academic results. The intervention measures at individual level support pupils exposed to ESL risk, following the early warning signals received. The compensation measures intend to support the reintegration into the education system of those who left school prematurely and the acquisition of qualifications needed by them to enter the labour market.

Several activities and projects for ESL reduction were implemented by different institutions. Through the projects from the European structural funds in the Operational structural development programme for human resources development, POSDRU 2007-13, a major intervention area targeted the prevention and correction of ESL by financial support dedicated to integrated projects on guidance and counselling services, remedial education, second chance programmes, awareness campaigns, and individual financial support. Additionally, integrated interventions were funded in the framework of POSDRU 2007-13 to increase access and participation in preschool education, primary and secondary education in respect of pupils exposed to risk situations (especially Roma children, children coming from disadvantaged socioeconomic areas, children with disabilities):

- financial support for families;
- second chance type of programmes (10,714 beneficiaries);
- after school programmes (24,325 beneficiaries);
- integrated counselling services for those at risk of ESL (120,385 beneficiaries);
- teacher training programmes;
- curricular and extracurricular activities (Tibu & Horga, 2018).

The [Guiding Cities](#) project brings together policy makers and stakeholders from Greece, Spain, Italy and Romania, within the field of education and guidance, to map and create a model of guidance to promote coherent policy and strategic planning and to respond to the complex needs in the fight against early school leaving (ESL).

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## Guidance for NEET

In order to benefit from specialised employment services and employment incentives, young people must be registered with the PES. As with any unemployed person, a record sheet is created, the individual mediation plan; an occupational profile is also established. Depending on all the above, the most suitable measures are set for being able to be employed on the labour market.

The [Youth guarantee implementation plan for 2017-20](#) regarding the employment of young NEETs and long-term unemployed is to act both by supporting people through bonuses (for graduates), activation premiums (for the unemployed who do not benefit from any financial assistance and who are usually long-term unemployed), mobility bonuses (for all people), or by supporting employers by providing grants.

To identify young NEETs, several actions will be implemented: the electronic register of inactive young NEETs and local intervention teams; a local support network; local intervention teams to implement case management; a call centre at PES; the use of Facebook and of the Youth guarantee website; and the development of a mobile application. The catalogue of services offered by the National Agency for Employment (NAE) (in Romanian: ANOFM) can be viewed on its website: <https://www.anofm.ro/>.

To reduce youth unemployment, especially of NEETs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice developed and introduced the Youth guarantee implementation plan 2014-15. This plan brought together key reforms and initiatives designed to create the appropriate framework for the employment of young people. Guidance and career counselling services are mandatory measures included in customised packages of interventions designed for young people. Since 2016, the Guarantee plan has put even more emphasis on initiatives that combine employment with training of the workforce, which gives young people the opportunity to improve skills obtained during initial education and to acquire new skills through participation in apprenticeships and traineeships. The new [Youth guarantee implementation plan for 2017-20](#) includes the continuation of all the measures from the previous plan (Cedefop, 2019).

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## Guidance for immigrants

[ACTIV/Career Guidance](#) is a regional project developed by the [Social Alternative Association](#) with the aim of increasing access to career guidance services in rural schools from the eastern area of Romania and increasing awareness of career guidance among students, teachers and parents. The project involves 850 teachers, 30,000 students and 19,000 parents and has a special focus on disadvantaged students (with a migrant background, from low income families, children with parents abroad, and at-risk students). Teachers have been involved in career training programs

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## Coronavirus Update

### The education network

In Romania, centralised information regarding the activity of the school counsellors from all 42 County Centres of Educational Resources and Assistance (CERAs) during the Covid-19 pandemic can be found in their [websites](#). The County Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres (CPPAC) are providing the following services:

1. distance psycho-pedagogical assistance services for preschoolers/students, parents/ guardians and teachers;
2. distance career guidance services for students;
3. distance speech therapy and communication services for preschoolers/ students.

By posting specialised educational content the County Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance Centres (CPPAC) ensure the following services:

1. remote assistance for parents/guardians and teachers regarding the evaluation of the students with special needs and career guidance for the students with special needs;
2. providing information in the field of inclusive education for preschoolers/students, parents/guardians and teachers;
3. offering guidance/information for parents/guardians and teachers on speech therapy for pre-schoolers/pupils.

The CJRAE and CMBRAE webpages and social media pages also contain information on:

1. assistance and methodological counselling of the teaching staff;
2. informing parents/guardians, teachers, children, community members about distance services and resources available, prevention and reducing the factors that cause behavioural disorders, at-risk behaviours or other difficulties, adapting students to distance education, adapting the school to the needs of students, optimising school-student-parent relationships;
3. collaboration with the teaching staff of the educational unit in which school counsellors and speech therapists are working;
4. conducting solidarity campaigns through collaboration in partnership with different organisations

The centralised situation regarding the activity of the school counsellors from all 42 County Centres of Educational Resources and Assistance (CERAs) during the Covid-19 pandemic contains a synthesis of information provided on the webpage and social media page of each CERA. Examples of activities carried out by each centre at county level for the period March-May 2020 are:

1. the campaign ALERTalk, including online activities of psycho-pedagogical counselling for students with prevention purposes at the CERA of Alba county;
2. the school psychologists from Arges county CERA provide advice for students on personal development, social and emotional learning, prevention of maladaptive behaviours etc. during the quarantine period at a local TV station;
3. the campaign of the Municipal CERA from Bucharest (MPPAC) "Lonely, but supportive!" and educational resources on the art of being resilient for all education levels ([kindergarten](#), [primary school](#), [lower](#) and [upper secondary school](#));
4. in the county of Bihor CERA, a psycho-pedagogical helpline is available, while the map of the psycho-pedagogical assistance services is available [here](#);
5. the CERA of Hunedoara county offers [free resources for students and parents](#) on: Bullying and cyberbullying, Well-being activities, stress prevention, how to spend your time at home – tips from children, etc.;
6. the CERA of Iasi county offers:
  - advice for students, parents and teachers on various topics (e.g. socio-emotional development, healthy lifestyle, school and social inclusion, effective learning, career guidance) through a Helpline platform named "The counsellor next to you";
  - the section [Career preview](#) that provides access to presentation films offered by the high school and vocational schools from Iasi county.
7. the CERA of Maramures county offers free online counselling and guidance for students, parents and teachers and [useful resources](#);
8. the CERA of Vaslui county provides access to [online counselling and guidance resources](#) for students, parents and teachers.

### The employment network

The coronavirus pandemic has closed all PES office across Romania. As the Romanian economy shows signs of downturn, many people are losing jobs. Employers and employees need support on how to fill the online submission of applications for technical unemployment. Some examples of measures taken at national level:

1. a [national platform](#) for citizens, public institutions and private companies was created by the Authority for the Digitalisation of Romania for online submission of applications for technical unemployment;
2. a [guide on how to use the platform](#);
3. the [National Agency for Employment](#) (ANOFM) initiated a Call Centre to inform citizens about technical unemployment conditions;
4. to debiocratise and digitise the services offered to employers and jobseekers, the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) has submitted to the General Directorate of Human Capital Programs two projects with a total budget of 62,860,087 euros. These projects aim to modernise and adapt the Public Employment Service (PES) to the needs and dynamics of the labour market. One of the two projects is addressing employers, "PES relationship with employers - eSPOR", and the other project addresses unemployed people "Case management".

For young people, schools are closed but learning continues; many young people will soon complete secondary education programmes and will need expert guidance to make decisions about their future. Many children and families need psychological support to deal with this medical, economic, social crisis. Additionally, technically unemployed people are in need of professional support in guiding them to their next decisions about work, vocational training, vocational reorientation to other sectors (e.g. agriculture, e-trade, transportation, courier company) which are in need for workers.

Disadvantaged groups of people (unemployed, ethnic minorities, people returning from abroad because they lost their jobs during the Corona crisis, etc.) need social and psychological support as they face the risk of poverty, marginalisation, criminality, etc.

Both employers and job seekers should be made aware of the new digital initiatives through public television and radio, advertisements on social media and private web pages, and mass mailing of all the partner-employers of the PES. The current situation highlights that training and preparing the

school/PES's counsellors to undertake their work online is absolutely necessary.

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