



Romania: Main Programmes and Provision in Adult Education and Training

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The Law 133/2000 (approving and amending Ordinance of the Government 102/1998) establishes the framework for providing adult education and training through the education system. Adult education and training through the education system is meant to ensure completion of the basic education, vocational training, and civic education – including education for active citizenship. The criteria and methodology for the accreditation of the providers (public or private institutions), as well as the final examinations, the certificates issued and the certification procedures are established by the Ministry of National Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family and/or the Minister of Culture and Cults – depending on the type of the programme provided. The same authorities are responsible for establishing the methodological norms for the organisation and the duration of the adult education and training programmes through the education system.

Title 5 of the Law of National Education 1/2011 provides the general and integrating regulatory framework for lifelong learning in Romania. Lifelong Learning means all learning activities carried out by every person throughout life in formal, non-formal and informal contexts for the purpose of acquiring or developing competences from a multiple perspective: personal, civic, social or occupational. Lifelong learning includes early childhood education and care, school education, higher education, adult education and continuous training. The main goals of lifelong learning are concerned with the full development of a person and the sustainable development of society. Lifelong learning is focused on the acquisition and development of key competences and of competences specific to an area of activity or to a qualification. Lifelong learning takes place in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts. Funding of lifelong learning is provided through public and private funds based on the public-private partnership, through funding and co-funding from employers, non-governmental organisations, through non-reimbursable European funds, through lifelong learning accounts and contributions from beneficiaries.

The state carries out its responsibilities in the area of lifelong learning through the Ministry of National Education, the Parliament, the Government, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Health, as well as the Ministry of Administration and the Interior.

The organisation and functioning of adult training are governed by the legislation referring to adult training and apprenticeship at the workplace. Adult training is governed by Government Ordinance 129/2000 on adult training, republished, with its subsequent changes and completions, and by its subsequent norms. These refer to measures specific to in-service training, such as: guaranteed access to in-service training for all employees by including the right to in-service training in the collective work contract or, accordingly, in the individual work contract, encouraging employers to invest in human resources and to evaluate and recognise competences acquired in informal and non-formal learning contexts etc. The legislation with regard to in-service training was focused from the beginning on the quality of adult learning, specifying the types of programmes and certificates, the requirements for the authorisation of in-service training programme providers etc. In compliance with the changes and completions brought to Government Ordinance 129/2000 by the Law 167/2000, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly, together with the Ministry of National Education, the National Authority for Qualifications and the Sector Committees must develop the methodology for the implementation of principles for quality assurance in adult training.

The National Authority for Qualifications coordinates and controls at national level the following activities: the authorisation of training providers through the County/Bucharest Authorisation Commissions (structures established with 5 members, as follows: the director of the County/Bucharest Agency for Payments and Social Inspection - chair, a representative of the County/Bucharest School Inspectorate, a representative of the County/Bucharest Employment Agency, a representative of the employers' associations representative at county level, proposed by consensus, a representative of the unions representative at county level, proposed by consensus).

Training for the unemployed is funded from the unemployment insurance budget and it is organised by the National Agency for Employment, being partially delivered through its own centres. In-service training for this target group is specifically governed by the Law 76/2002 on the unemployment insurance system and the stimulation of employment, with its subsequent changes and completions. The Law gives more importance to measures referring to the labour market and strengthens the ability of public employment services to use effectively this kind of measures.

The Law on equal opportunities for women and men (Law 202/2002, republished) underlines the equal right for both genders to participate in training programmes, as well as to benefit from professional counselling and guidance. The access of adults (employees or people looking for a job) to training is a right guaranteed by the Code of Labour (Law 53/2003, republished, with its subsequent changes and completions). Employers must take all measures that are necessary to ensure the employees' access to training programmes; the rights and obligations of employers and employees for the period when the employees participate in training programmes are stipulated in the collective and/or individual work contracts. The Code of Labour also stipulates that the employers must consult the representatives of the unions or of the employees in order to develop training plans in compliance with the development programmes and the sector and territorial strategies.

Admission requirements

According to the legislation specific to adult training (Government Ordinance 129/2000 on adult training, republished, with its subsequent changes and completions), adults are defined as people at an age allowing them to get involved in work relations and can participate in training programmes under the law. Adults have equal rights of access to training, without discrimination based on criteria related to age, gender, race and ethnic origin, political or religious membership. The training programmes can be delivered both in Romanian, and in the national minority languages or in an internationally spoken language. The Law on equal opportunities for women and men (Law 202/2002, republished) underlines the equal right for both genders to participate in training programmes, as well as to benefit from professional counselling and guidance. The access of adults (employees or people looking for a job) to training is a right guaranteed by the Code of Labour (Law 53/2003, republished, with its subsequent changes and completions).

Considering the types of programmes provided and the general provisions of the Law of National Education 1/2011 on the certification of studies, every authorised training provider defines the concrete admission requirements. The completion of compulsory education is a minimum requirement for all training programmes leading to a certification.

Access to adult education and training programmes that are not organised for the purpose of training leading to a certification are not generally conditioned in any way – excepting in some cases by the age of the applicants. Specifically for the completion of basic education, the Ministry of National Education can approve the organisation of "A second chance" educational programmes in order to promote primary education (primary education includes the preparatory grade and the grades 1 - 4) for people who are 4 years older than the age corresponding to a particular grade and who, for various reasons, have not completed this level of education by the age of 14. Moreover, the Ministry of National Education, collaborating with the authorities of the local public administration, through the School Inspectorates, can organise "A second chance" educational programmes to promote gimnaziu education for people who are 4 years older than the age corresponding to a particular grade and who, for various reasons, have not completed secondary gimnaziu education (lower secondary education or gimnaziu education includes grades 5 - 9). For people who are more than 3 years older than the age corresponding to a particular grade, compulsory education can be organised also as part-time education, in compliance with a methodology developed by the Ministry of National Education. These types of programmes are designed for the so called population at risk: people who have never attended school, young people who dropped out school or people who completed primary education, but are not capable of reading or doing basic arithmetic at a satisfactory level. There are no admission requirements for this kind of programmes.

Learner assessment/ progression

The assessment of learners depends on the specificity of the training programme provided.

In the case of activities organised for the completion of basic education, the rules used in school education for students' assessment and promotion are applied accordingly.

In the case of adult training programmes, the procedures for the organisation of examinations for the completion of the training programmes are provided in the Methodology for the certification of adult training, approved by Order of the Minister of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family and of the Minister of Education, Research, Youth and Sports 501/5.253/2003, with its subsequent changes and completions. For the programmes with a module-based structure, the completion examination can be organised for every module, and the participants receive completion certificates. The time allocated to a training programme will be correlated with its goal, objectives, contents and delivery strategies. When, following the initial assessment or based on competence certificates, the participants in the training programme show they already have some competences, the duration of the training will be reduced accordingly.

Certification

The procedures for the organisation of examinations for the completion of adult training programmes, as well as for issuing, managing and archiving the certificates of qualification and completion with national recognition are provided in the Methodology for the certification of adult training, approved by Order of the Minister of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family and of the Minister of Education, Research, Youth and Sports 501/5.253/2003, with its subsequent changes and completions. The completion examination for qualification and re-qualification programmes consists of a theoretical test and a practical test. The way these tests are taken is defined through the training programme and this is: for the practical test – a practical work, for the theoretical test – a written paper and/or an oral examination. The tests of the completion examinations for initiation, advanced training or specialisation programmes are defined by the training provider through the training programme. The results at the completion examination are appreciated with marks from 1 to 10. The training provider issues to the participants who pass the completion examination of a training programme the following types of certificates, accordingly: a certificate of professional qualification for a qualification/re-qualification programmes, a completion certificate, for initiation, advanced training and specialisation programmes, as well as for the completion of every module in the case of training programmes structured on modules. The participants who obtain completion certificates for all modules of a qualification programme can take the completion examination for the award of the qualification certificate organised by any authorised training provider.

The qualification certificates and the completion certificates are printed by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly; they have the header of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly and of the Ministry of National Education and have the regime of acts of studies. The forms of the qualification certificates and the completion certificates respectively are made available to the training providers, with payment, by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and the Elderly through the County/Bucharest Agencies for Payments and Social Inspection. The qualification or completion certificates with national recognition have the same type of printing, are printed on special paper, with security elements, and are issued together with an annex named "The Certificate Descriptive Supplement", which indicates the acquired professional competences.

At the request of a person who wants to be assessed in order to obtain a professional competence certificate, the professional competences acquired in a formal way, with certificates that do not have national recognition, as well as the professional competences acquired in other ways than the formal ones can be assessed in the competence assessment centres authorised by the National Authority for Qualifications. The procedure for the assessment and the certification of professional competences acquired in other ways than the formal ones, approved by Order of the Minister of Education and Research and of the Minister of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family 4543/468/2004, with its subsequent changes and completions, contains both the description of the authorisation process for the assessment centres, and the process for the assessment and certification of professional competences.

Teaching methods and approaches

Adult vocational training can be organised in the following forms:

- Courses organised by training providers;
- Courses organised by employers within their organisations;
- Practical and specialisation traineeships in the country or abroad;
- Other forms of training.

Adult training is delivered through training programmes that include all theoretical and/or practical activities necessary for the development of competences in a field. The training programmes are organised for occupations, crafts, specialisations and professions, hereinafter called occupations, included in the Classification of Occupations in Romania - C.O.R., the Nomenclature of qualifications for which programmes leading to a qualification certificate can be organised (NQ) approved by Order of the Minister of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family and of the Minister of National Education, Research and Youth 35/3112/2004, with its subsequent changes and completions, as well as for professional competences common to several occupations, key competences and transversal competences. The content of a training programme and the teaching methods that are used must ensure the acquisition of competences in compliance with the occupational standards/training standards recognised at national level (documents defining the competences necessary for practicing an occupation, respectively specific to a qualification).

The training providers who request to organise training programmes for occupations for which there are no occupational standards/training standards develop draft occupational standards that are submitted to the Sector Committees for validation, and after validation, they are sent for approval to the National Authority for Qualifications.

Vocational training programmes include the following main elements:

- The objectives of the vocational training program, expressed as professional competences to be acquired by each trainee upon completion of the program;
- The duration of training, necessary to achieve the proposed objectives;
- The minimum and maximum number of participants for a training series;
- The qualification of the persons actually providing the theoretical and practical training (the trainers);
- The syllabus;
- The means and methods that will ensure transmission and learning of the knowledge and acquisition of the practical abilities necessary for the occupation;
- The facilities, equipment and materials needed for the training;
- The evaluation and assessment procedure, in accordance with the specific objectives of the training program.

The syllabus can be structured in modules quantified in transferable credits.

Training providers organising programmes for persons with special needs have to adapt their curriculum accordingly, in order to ensure equal access, without any discrimination. Participants in vocational training programs cannot be forced to participate in any other activities than those specified by the curriculum.

Teaching methods used in adult vocational training as well as in other types of adult education are similar to those used in pre-university education and have to comply with the specific objectives of the programme. Practical activities are usually carried out in concrete work environments (either at the current employers of the trainees or in similar enterprises) or, in some cases, in VET schools workshops.

Adult education and training through the education system is accomplished through specific programmes using interactive methods focusing on a multimedia approach: distance education, video-conferences, computer assisted training, etc. Institutions and networks providing DL based on modern information and communication technology can be organised with the approval of the Ministry of National Education in order to support adult education and training (e.g. pre-primary and primary teachers training, ECDL training, use of ICT and LAN administration, etc.). Financing of this type of programmes is ensured by the beneficiaries and the interested institutions.

