

Educational system in Romania



Since the overthrow of the former regime in 1989 and the country's transition to a market-based economy, many educational reforms have been implemented. However, not everyone has been happy with the changes. Under communist rule, all Romanians were required to attend primary school. But starting in 1989, mandatory primary school was abolished, and as a result, illiteracy has increased throughout the country, especially in rural areas. The country's successive post-communist governments have attempted to reverse this trend by offering educational programs to young people who abandoned compulsory schooling. These programs have been targeted especially towards children living in rural areas, urban slums and geographically remote communities in addition to ethnic minorities. So far, progress has been slow.

The educational system underwent additional changes. A comprehensive plan of the reforms was drawn up in 1997 and called for the following:

- 1) Modify teaching methodology, academic programs and textbooks, and make the national curriculum more compatible with the rest of Europe.
- 2) Shift from rote learning to "problem solving," and resume research in universities.
- 3) Establish links between secondary and postsecondary schools and their economic, administrative and cultural environment.
- 4) Undertake infrastructural improvements, particularly with regard to the World Wide Web and other forms of electronic communication within the classroom.
- 5) Decentralize secondary and postsecondary schools and grant autonomy to various institutions of higher education.
- 6) Enhance cooperation at the international level.

The language of instruction in schools and universities is Romanian, but Hungarian and German are also used for the benefit of the country's two largest ethnic minorities.

The academic year runs from October to June.

FIRST AND SECOND LEVEL EDUCATION

Based on education reforms introduced in 2000, primary and secondary education is organized in the 6+3+3(4) schema. The duration of studies depends on the type of secondary school. Academic, industrial, agricultural, economic and administrative secondary school and normal schools are 9-12. Forestry, fine arts, sports computer science are 9-13.

The schema prior to the recent reforms was as follows:

PRIMARY EDUCATION

- Type of school providing this education: *Scoala Primara*
- Duration of program: Four years (ages 7 to 11)

SECONDARY EDUCATION

Lower Secondary School (compulsory)

- Type of school providing this education: *Gimnazium*
- Duration of program: four years (ages 11 to 15)
- Certificate/diploma awarded: *Certificat de Capacitate* (certificate of compulsory education)

Upper Secondary School (noncompulsory)

- Type of school providing this education: *Liceu*
- Duration: four years (ages 15 to 19)
- Curriculum: Upper secondary school is divided into science, technical orientation and humanities streams.
- Certificate/diploma awarded: *Diploma de Bacalaureat* (after passing a baccalaureate examination called the *examenul de bacalaureat*).

Technical Secondary School

- Type of school providing this education: *Liceu de Specialitate*
- Duration: Four years (ages 15 to 19)
- Leaving Certificate: *Diploma de Bacalaureat + (Atestat) de (Vocational Certificate)*

Vocational Secondary School

- Type of school providing this education: *Scoala Profesionala*
- Duration: Two years (ages 15 to 17)
- Leaving Certificate: *Diploma de Absolvire a Scolii Profesionale* (diploma of completion of vocational school).

Accreditation of Private Institutions of Higher Education

In 1993, the National Council for Evaluation and Accreditation was created to carry out the accreditation of higher education institutions and the recognition of diplomas.

There are currently two steps institutions must undertake to acquire accreditation in Romania:

- 1) They must obtain legal authorization to operate.
- 2) They must obtain full accreditation after a designated period of time and must submit to re-evaluation after five years.

Private institutions of higher education currently operating in Romania fall into two categories:

- 1) Those that have been authorized by the government to operate based on the recommendation of the National Council for Evaluation and Accreditation (this authorization is the first step to accreditation).
- 2) Those that have absolutely no legal right to operate.

Once a private institution has been accredited, it enjoys the same organizational and functional autonomy as public institutions.

Until a private institution is fully accredited, it does not have the legal right to issue state diplomas. However, students can take the diploma examination at a state university, and if they pass, receive a state diploma issued by that particular institution.

Example: Leadertraining for cultural institutions

Accredited training course of the Culture Center of Harghita County

Goal: to train the leaders (directors) of cultural institutions in Harghita county to change the former “dominant” role of their organizations into the service-like “cultural manager” or “animator” approach. To help the participants to learn and accept this new status and that they have to realise this in their local society.

The program helps the students to assess and solve conflicts, to define and manage their human and infrastructural needs, and to facilitate local action plans in the field of culture.

Exams

Before entering the course, in case of overbooking.

Regular exams, home works, field works and project execution.

Final exams:

One theoretical paper.

One practical paper (case study).

Participants have to reach 30%, under this they can't take the final exam.

Certification

Participants gain a state-level accredited institution leader certificate.

Duration, grouping

8 Months: May-December 2006. One group consists of maximum 25 persons.

Costs: 120 €