

COUNTRY REPORT

Vocational education and training against social exclusion

Romania



European Training Foundation



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The European Training Foundation is an agency of the European Union which works in the field of vocational education and training in Central and Eastern Europe, the New Independent States, Mongolia and the Mediterranean partner countries and territories. The Foundation also provides technical assistance to the European Commission for the Tempus Programmer.

This report was prepared with the financial assistance of the European Training Foundation. The views expressed herein are those of the contractor and do not necessarily represent any official views of the Foundation.

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Bucharest, July 2000

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1. Introduction

The 1999-2000 Work Programme of the European Training Foundation (ETF) includes actions that support partner countries in their attempts to reduce social exclusion through vocational education and training. One of these actions comprises help given to national Vocational Education and Training Observatories to research the nature, scope and consequences of early school leaving, marginalisation and social exclusion.

The study “Vocational education and training against social exclusion in Romania” fits into this programme. More specifically, the study aims to give a national definition of social exclusion, analyse the present situation, and offer policies and programmes specific to different groups. Its aim is to promote social inclusion at both national and local level. Equally important, the study attempts to alert the Romanian authorities to vocational education and training as a way of combatting social exclusion.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (Marshall, 1998), “Social exclusion is a process by which individuals and households experience deprivation of resources, their ability to fully participate in society is severely curtailed and/or their social links to the wider community or society are broken”. In Romania, we associate social exclusion with both individuals and society. We also relate it to social problems such as unemployment, low incomes, inadequate education and qualifications, poor housing, bad health, ageism, weak social participation, lack of social identity and isolation. We consider social exclusion in relation to social rights, civil society and modern notions of citizenship.

However, in this study, we have largely concentrated on the social exclusion benchmarks of the European Union Observatory: position in the labour market, living standards and access to education. In this context, our study tried to identify how vocational education and training can prevent or mitigate social exclusion as follows:

- prevent drop-outs from primary and secondary education by improving its quality, making it more relevant to the needs of the labour market and more responsive to the needs and interests of individual students, also improving vocational counselling and guidance;
- focus initial vocational education on specific target groups to ease their transition from school to work, and thereby reduce the increasing problems young people face in finding employment;
- create continuing training measures for young adults without initial qualifications, by developing new alternative routes to recognized vocational qualifications, thereby preparing the potential workforce for lifelong learning.

The complex, multi-faceted character of social exclusion and its relationship with various sectors meant we had to have a versatile and expert team. This team had to work well *as a team*. It also had to have a sound communications system whereby information and research results were pooled quickly and efficiently.

For this study, carried out under the auspices of the National Vocational Education and Training Observatory, we recruited just such a team. It consists of experts from governmental, non-governmental and private institutions active in public education, training, employment, social

protection and regional development and in the private consultancy sector. This ensured a balanced and diverse “institutional” approach to the study. Moreover, the educational background and work experience of the team members have ensured a procedure that both transcends and interrelates various disciplines.

The team’s first priority was to reach a common definition of social exclusion and its related terminology. To achieve this, we set up a preliminary workshop in December 1999. During this, we agreed the timetable and deadlines for deliverables; we also assigned specific tasks to team-members. Each expert was to study a specific sector and a number of the groups at risk as follows:

- education and training: low skilled adults, early school leavers, young people failing or likely to fail transition from school to work;
- labour market: long-term unemployed and atypical workers;
- regional development: poor communities, population in remote rural areas, population in areas of decline or radical economic restructuring;
- equality of treatment: women, minorities;
- social protection: children, young people leaving residential care institutions, handicapped people, single parents.

Until 1989, no one in Romania officially acknowledged the problem of social exclusion. And even then there were only sporadic attempts to come to grips with it. Moreover, especially in education and training, there was “a tendency to revert to the supremacy of equity, in parallel with strong endeavours to increase the quality of educational offer” (National Strategy for the Development of Human Resources, Romanian National Observatory, 1999). Sadly, the results were insignificant. The first, more comprehensive study of the issue, “Education for All” by the Institute of Educational Sciences, took place only in 1995.

In general, the experts agreed that we had yet to develop and test a national mechanism of measuring exclusion. They also agreed that we had not specifically analysed the matter apart from studies, reports and statistics on individual factors that might lead to exclusion. So the team decided that the study would identify the individuals and groups most affected by transition in terms of employment opportunities and exposure to social exclusion.

The study is based on the analysis of existing legislation, statistics, documents, policy papers, national strategies, monitoring reports, topical research work, integrated household surveys and interviews with relevant decision-makers and professionals. Annex 1 provides some of the documents consulted for the study.

In several cases, we had little or no information. For instance, there were no official statistics on the duration of unemployment before 1998, no official employment data on Roma and handicapped people, no system to monitor children leaving residential care and no data on handicapped children living with their families. Furthermore, until 1996, statistics were based on counties rather than on development regions; we had no reports on social exclusion factors at regional/sub-regional level and, amongst many more deficiencies, we had very little information on the hazards to which vulnerable women were exposed.

So, instead, we made the most of the team members’ expert opinions and capacity for interpretation. The content of the study is arranged as recommended by the European Training Foundation and according to the conclusions reached at the Turin meeting in January 2000.

2. Context

In the 1990s, the Romanian economy was shaped by various factors. These include the changes brought about by the transition to a democratic society and a market economy. Furthermore, these changes occurred within the context of a prolonged economic crisis, strong structural pressures, and delays in restructuring together with significant social tensions and conflicts. The thrust of the main macro-economic indicators shows that, up till now, Romania's evolution was unstable, unsustainable and poverty-inducing. Frequent changes of strategic aims and priorities led to incoherence in economic policies. The result was less and less development during the years of transition.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) collapsed following the crisis caused by continually changing the system and by the very uncompetitive Romanian economy. Thus, Gross Domestic Product fell by 20% in 1998 as against the 1990 level. Its annual fluctuations were between +7.1% in 1995 compared to 1994, and -12.9% in 1991 compared to 1990; in 1998 Gross Domestic Product fell by 7.3% as against 1997. The Gross Domestic Product/capita calculated in line with the parity of purchasing power, amounted in 1998 to US\$3,679 a decrease US\$565 compared to 1996.

Of all sectors, industry had the most difficulty in adjusting to market economy needs. In 1998, industrial production was less than half its level in 1989 (46.3%), and contributed only 31.7% of Gross Domestic Product. The fall in industrial production has had a bad impact in many other areas, and caused widespread unemployment. At the end of 1998, industry employed just 27% of the working population as against almost 37% in 1990. Moreover, some local economies were very dependent on a few industrial initiatives, and they became very vulnerable to the general upheaval. This especially applies to Hunedoara and Gorj counties (coal mining), Galați county (metallurgy), Ialomița county (food industry), where more than half the workforce is concentrated in just one industry.

In 1998, agricultural production was only 55% of its 1989 level. The investment in technical equipment for agriculture is very low, mainly due to financial constraints and to Romanian-made machinery unsuited to our farms. At the same time, production decreased by two-thirds because chemical fertilisers have been in short supply in recent years. In 1997, the agricultural sector was the main employer (36.8%), because both industry and construction cut their workforces by 5%. In some regions, agriculture and forestry dominate the entire economy. For years, in rural areas, agriculture has been the mainstay of the economy, employing almost 70% of the workforce. It is also the only sector in the Romanian economy where the elderly predominate. Over half our farmers (53.2%) are over 50, and one-fifth are over 65. Only 26.6% of farmers are under 35. 51.4% of all farmers are women.

Tourism contributes much less to the national economy and employment (1.4%), as it has gone into a steep decline despite Romania being a physically beautiful and cultured country. An overriding snag is the disparity between different regions: the ratio between the most developed county and the less developed one was 88:1 in 1998 as regards accommodation and 143:1 in terms of overnight stays. This is mainly due to, first, inequality of investment in the infrastructure; second, uneven transport arrangements that render some parts of the country almost inaccessible; and, third, poor promotion of areas which, if properly advertised, could well attract a significant number of tourists.

Romania has an over-extended and uneven transport system in urgent need of improvement. That said, much has been done over the past ten years to strengthen the institutional and legal framework for transport. The aim is to ensure compatibility with European standards and improve the physical infrastructure, incidentally making currently isolated and disadvantaged places part of the network.

Telecommunications have radically improved in recent years, both quantitatively and qualitatively. However, the level of connections to the phone network is still very low: 15.4% in 1998 and, in rural areas, only 3%.

The private sector's contribution to the gross domestic product grew dramatically from 16.4% in 1990 to 58.4% in 1998. It accounted for over two-thirds of sales on the internal market and one third of exports (1994). The percentage of the private sector in the gross value added of economic sectors is due, first, to agriculture (91%), followed by services (70%), constructions (65%) and, lastly, industry (35%). In recent years, privatisation has accelerated the growth of the private sector; even so, its development is too slow compared to that of other countries. A high rate of inflation in tandem with a seriously devalued national currency, a massive tax burden and legal instability exacerbated the state of an already fragile business environment. While we acknowledge that the private sector is creating numerous jobs, we also note that most private enterprises are not functioning well enough to develop; instead, they are struggling to survive. The conclusion is that the private sector is still weak and incapable of making a significant contribution to Romania's economic recovery.

In a context of chronic economic decline, the inflation rate was high (59.1%); indeed, in recent years, it has shown signs of hyperinflation or even galloping inflation. Inflation seesawed wildly from one year to another or even from one month to another: from 136.7% in 1994 to 32.3% in 1995; from 38.8% in 1996 to 154.8% in 1997 and 59.1% in 1998. Over the years, its character changed: from inflation through demand at the start of the 1990s, to inflation through costs and then to corrective inflation. For most people, consistently high inflation continuously eroded purchasing power.

National currency depreciated continuously. In 1998, the average exchange rate increased from about 23 ROL to 8,895 ROL for US\$1. The evolution of the monetary market swung between remonetisation and demonetisation. This caused crises of liquidities within the banking system, weak investment capacity throughout the economy as a whole, and lack of public trust in the national currency. At the end of 1998, internal public debt was over 31,000 billion ROL, while the external public debt was almost US\$9,000 million. In 1998, the deficit of the balance of external payments exceeded US\$2,611 million, while that of the current account reached the worrying level of US\$3,010 million. These developments directly stem from reduced export volume combined with a deficient export system, failure to adapt to external market needs and uncompetitive export goods. Year by year, we imported more and exported less. In many ways, Romania has failed during the first 10 years of transition. It has not eliminated flaws in the economy caused by despotic development. It has not made the most of its comparative advantages. Its continued use of energy-hungry machinery has resulted in uncompetitive, unsellable goods. Its system of capital is obsolete, and its management is poor. The means of production and the control of capital/financial/monetary markets are in the grip of monopolies. At the same time, we are losing an important share in the markets of intermediary goods.

Furthermore, there has been much internal migration. The post-war years witnessed massive population flows from rural to urban areas as a result of the industrialisation policy then enforced. This resulted in serious age and gender imbalances within the rural population. After 1990, the "opening up" of big cities to all citizens released a new influx of aspirant urban dwellers. At present, the percentage of old people in villages and communes is twice that of those in urban areas. From 1992 on, internal migration continued to be country to town although there was also a counter-flow due to the return of agricultural land and unemployment in urban areas. In 1997, further economic

changes spurred on this counter-flow, and Romanian society became steadily more rural due to the de-industrialisation of the economy which caused many of those made redundant to seek work in the agricultural sector. This trend gathered pace because there was no support for other sectors that might otherwise have absorbed redundant labour.

The population largely comprises native Romanians (89.7%). The most important ethnic minorities are Hungarians (6.9%), Roma (1.8%) and Germans (0.4%). There is a Romanian majority in all counties, except for Harghita and Covasna counties, which are dominated by Hungarians.

The economic decline had crucial *social consequences*. Transition proved costly in social terms, but reform has so far been insubstantial.

During the first years of transition, people were all in favour of it as they expected to be better off almost instantly. But, as we have seen, economic restructuring and the transition to a market economy went the other way: living standards nose-dived while there was an ever-increasing spread of unemployment, poverty, illiteracy and social stress. People were also more and more disaffected when social, political and economic participation made way for a sense of exclusion, indifference, suspicion and alienation. Social cohesion evaporated, their ties with society fell away.

Since the early 1990s, the dominant political forces opted for a gradual approach, in an attempt to minimise the social costs of transformation. While understandable, this strategy failed to produce sustainable gains in economic or social terms. Instead, economic and social imbalances grew apace, and in late 1996 a new administration was elected. This was committed to a “shock therapy” programme of wide-ranging structural reforms.

This involved, amongst much else, closing down companies, lay-offs and the disruption of existing economic networks. These led unavoidably to further pressures and more social strain. Insecurity was rife in numerous areas: employment and income, personal safety, family relations, health and education, pensions and general social protection. Hence, an all-round downturn in demographic trends.

From 1990 on, the old demographic policy made way for legal abortion. This made an immediate impact. The birth rate fell from 16% in 1989 to a mere 10.2% in 1996. Although the Government promoted family and child protection measures, these did not stimulate the birthrate as they were offset by a very precarious economy. Furthermore, family relations deteriorated: marriage rates fell, divorce rates increased, married couples postponed having children.

After 1990, the maternal mortality rate declined dramatically and the infant mortality rate lessened. However, the general mortality rate has constantly risen from about 11% in 1990-1991 to 12.7% in 1996 and the first half of 1998, the highest levels recorded in the last half of the century. For the first time in our contemporary history, the natural growth rate of population went into reverse. Moreover, average life expectancy decreased from 69.76 (1989-1991) to 68.95 (1995-1997).

Transition to a market economy has also influenced employment – affecting labour market volume, structure, efficiency, behaviour, institutions and policies.

Between 1990 and 1997, most economic sectors recorded staff lay-offs. For instance, the processing industry decreased by 42.5%, the extractive industry by 30.0%, and construction by 37.8%. After an explosion in growth (1992-94) and then reduction (1995-96), unemployment began to rise, especially in the second half of 1997. This was the direct consequence of Government restructuring measures in mining, metallurgy and petro-chemicals as well as in *regies autonomes* and other large businesses where the state had a majority share holding. In July 1999, almost 1.1 million people were unemployed, and unemployment was 11.2% nationwide.

Starting 20 years ago, the demographic aging process has accelerated since 1990. However, according to AMIGO data for 1997, 71.9% of the working population was in age groups with high labour potential (15-49) with relatively small differences between the genders but with large disparities between town and country. Over 41% of the working rural population is over 50, as against 13.7% of the urban equivalent.

In the first quarter of 1996, some 53% of the working population had completed secondary education (high school or vocational school), 13.9% post-secondary education, 19.6% gymnasium and 13.5% primary school or no school. Men were slightly better educated than women, and people in towns better educated than those in the country.

Romania is facing a long-term employment crisis due to the restructuring of the state-owned enterprises, economic decline and unsustainable economic growth. Increased under-employment of the work force (part-time and seasonal jobs) is also worrying. These all help to build up conflicts, instability and inequality. Hence, social exclusion and a widespread feeling that life is unfair.

Employment has undergone various changes such as:

- increase in those employed in agriculture due to an ageing workforce increasingly dominated by women;
- fewer people working in industry and constructions;
- a modest rise in workers in the service sector;
- more people working in public administration;
- constant increases in those working in the private sector;
- continuous reduction in the number of employees due to the rise in the number of self-employed and non-salaried family workers.

In real terms, the purchasing power of wages collapsed. In October 1997, it was only 59% of its level in October 1990. The same thing happened to pensions despite frequent re-indexing. In 1997, salaries and pensions accounted for some 35-40% of the total household income as against 70-80% in the European Union. In the same year, the average state pension was worth only 55% of its 1989 equivalent. This was mainly caused by the method of indexing and by failure to allow for rises in wages, especially in the agricultural sector. In 1990, the average pension was 45% of the average wage; by 1998, this figure had declined to 37%. Furthermore, while the replacement rate of wages by unemployment indemnities was 42.9% in 1991, it was only 31.4% in 1998. As the purchasing power of incomes plummeted, so did consumer subsidies contract and the cost of energy, fuel and communications rocket.

The distribution of employees across different wage brackets shows how incomes increasingly polarized. In 1994, about 2% of employees had salaries at the minimum national level, while in 1998 their proportion was 2.5 times higher.

The pattern of *household consumption* in our country is typical of a subsistence economy, whereby 58% of all outlay goes on food and drink as against 17.5% in European Union countries. In this context, the level of individual consumption rose to almost 30%.

The volume and quality of health and social assistance services, together with the funds that pay for them, have gone down. The funds allocated to social protection per capita are 25% of their equivalent in the European Union and their proportion of gross domestic product is 40% of their equivalent in the European Union. The quality of medical care in rural areas is much worse than in towns and cities. The number of inhabitants per doctor is satisfactory in only 12% of the communes.

Human resources capital was subject to dramatic erosion. The phenomenon of “human de-capitalisation” showed up during the transition period for many reasons, even allowing for transition being a learning-by-shock process. Education and vocational training, declared national priorities by law, continue to face serious long-term difficulties. Given our low budgets, it is unlikely that our education system will benefit from more than 4% of Gross Domestic Product, the minimum level established by law.

According to the 1992 Census, *average schooling* lasted 8.3 years for the whole population and 7.7 years for women. Between 1993 and 1997, schools were expected to last about 10 years with small variations, as against 13-16 years in European Union countries. Until 1997, 94 to 96% of adults were literate, the European Union figure being 98-99%. Functional illiteracy reached the alarming rate of about 20%. Compulsory education sustained a high dropout rate, particularly amongst children in rural areas and Roma minority.

On the other hand, a United Nations study that evaluated transition in Romania, reported positive developments. These included a pupil/teacher ratio improving from 20.3% in 1990 to 16.8% in 1996 and, with the advent of private and alternative education, a wider spread of options within basic education.

After 1989, poverty started to spread rapidly, becoming truly disturbing in recent years. Various sources show a poverty rate of over 20% in 1997 with nearly 19% of the population having daily incomes of \$US1, over 12% having only half the necessary minimum of food. The incidence of poverty-associated illnesses including venereal and parasite diseases, has increased. Cases of tuberculosis and trichinosis doubled between 1990-1997 while those of measles by over five times. Food toxic-infections and syphilis also rose. The most affected households are those headed by single mothers, unemployed people, peasants with little or no land, the self-employed in non-agricultural activities, young people without qualifications who can only get odd jobs in the underground economy, the homeless, households of four or more, Roma, and old people with little or no pension arrangement. Poverty is associated with both individuals and communities. Affected communities tend to be those dependent on just one industry that is losing ground. Rural areas are also afflicted, especially within Roma communities. Here, chronic, self-perpetuating poverty, unemployment, low education and poor health are rife, making them breeding grounds for criminality and underground economy.

Poverty affects the country unevenly. The poorest counties are in the North, the North-East, the South and the South-East. Within these regions, real poverty stems from specific economic factors. It afflicts the population in terms of health, human development and life expectancy.

Table no.1 Human development in Romania

Years	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Indicators									
Human development index						0.737	0.738	0.734	0.733
Life expectancy									
Women	72.7	73.1	73.2	73.2	73.3	73.4	73.1	73.0	73.3
Men	66.6	66.6	66.6	66.1	65.9	65.7	65.3	65.2	65.5
Gross Domestic Product spent on:									
Health	2.9	3.3	3.3	2.7	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.6	3.3

Indicators	Years	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Education		3.0	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.3	3.6
Social security		10.7	10.1	9.6	9.3	9.3	9.7	9.3	10.0	11.8
Real wage (1989 = 100)		104.5	84.9	74.1	61.6	61.7	69.1	75.5	58.7	
Poverty rate considering a poverty line of 60% average expenses per person							16.20	11.49	19.16	

Source: National Report on Human Development, Romania 1999

Gini coefficient measures the extent of the distribution of inequality. The larger the coefficient, the greater the inequality, and *vice versa*. If we use two years as points of reference, 1989 and 1996, we see the coefficient has doubled in Romania.

The deterioration of economic performance, delays in restructuring and privatisation and the more baneful effects of transition have eroded living standards and widened the gaps between social and economic levels. Semi-legitimate activities, a sharp rise in the underground economy, lack of legal constraint and general instability created “cardboard and transitional billionaires” who, in turn, greatly exacerbated social polarisation.

Hence, social exclusion in Romania. This phenomenon entailed diminished social cohesion and homogeneity; waste of human resources; instability and social tension; more financial responsibility for the state and the business environment; low social, economic and political participation; and weaker relationships between individuals and groups within society.

Social exclusion is caused by various factors of which more later. As Professor Tony Atkinson said in his recent Presidential Address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, “Unemployment causes social exclusion, but a job does not guarantee social inclusion. Equality of opportunity alone is not the alternative to reducing inequality of incomes.... Social exclusion arises not only in the labour market, but affects many aspects of everyday life. People are excluded by the means-tested benefit system and by the pricing policies of privatised utilities. Social exclusion is not the same as poverty. People are excluded not just because they are currently without a job or income, but because they have few prospects for the future.”

The factors that caused many types of people in Romania to suffer social exclusion include: revised priorities, unemployment, poverty, regional disparities, lack of respect for citizen’s rights and associated matters, and the international situation.

- a) Setting priorities: economic, social and educational policies. All too often, priorities became reversed and the means became the end, the end being the survival of the economic system, and the real purpose - satisfying people’s needs - got overlooked. For example, despite Romania having vast overseas debts, “structural adjustment programmes” went ahead. Their aim was to restore financial stability, but they only resulted in the most vulnerable people being harder hit than ever. They entailed a reduction in wages as a percentage of national income, more inequality, less job security, rising unemployment and a slackening of state commitment to the social sector. No longer a means to an end, competition has now become the prime aim not just of business but also of state and society as a whole. In other words, gains in productivity resulting from technological innovation are seen as progress, and employment is not seen as a key variable in development strategies. As a result, rising unemployment derives from

increasing competition, which is seen as vital to collective survival. So, until the dynamic of unemployment is replaced by one of employment, the link between production and labour will get looser and looser and the economy will create more and more exclusion. Moreover, a policy that creates exclusion today lays the foundations for exclusion tomorrow. There are no social support arrangements for many types of people such as single mothers, children leaving residential care or day-labourers. As for Roma, little has been done to remove the cultural barriers to education, training, employment and their integration into mainstream society. Late 1998 saw the launch of educational programmes for groups at risk. Before 1989, it was forbidden to report school abandonment. By the beginning of 1990s, priorities in education reform had shifted to ideological reviews, textbooks and curriculum development. A systemic approach started in 1995, was updated in 1998. The curriculum gave no scope to personal and professional development based on individual interest and potential - as specified by the reformed vocational education and training system initiated through the Phare RO9405 in 1995.

- b) Unemployment. To understand social exclusion, you must analyse the relationship between macro-economic change and patterns of economic growth on one hand, and, on the other, the changing life circumstances of individuals, households and groups. Central to this inter-relation is the labour market, as its ebb and flow reflect labour surplus and mass poverty. Expulsion from organised labour markets and unemployment is now high among the causes of poverty and social exclusion in Romania. The growth of the informal sector, which is often seen as an alternative to regular, salaried employment, offers many Romanians little more than subsistence gained from unstable activities that produce little. The shrinking supply of real jobs has yielded heterogeneous labour market. Bereft of salaried employment, the economically-excluded cannot obtain property or credit. Furthermore, economic restructuring has reduced or, worse still, closed down many businesses, many of them in coal or steel. That factor and the emergence of new technologies have led to numerous unemployed people with little hope of work in another sector. Some have tried to start a business but that requires entrepreneurial training and credit which are far from readily obtainable in Romania. Many are denied work because they do not have a proper education and specialized knowledge and/or because they are not the right age or even the "right" gender. They often lack job-search skills and fail to spot likely openings. As a result, they become dependent on unemployment pay and social assistance.
- c) Poverty. The transition of Romania towards a market economy was a cue for unemployment, more poverty and increasing inequality of income. In fact, the current reforms have created unprecedented social polarisation and a dual society, where great wealth builds up alongside the most degrading poverty. In recent years, methods of redistribution have spawned financial, banking, managerial and interwar meritocracy elites. These have, in turn, contributed to social polarisation, isolation and aggravation of poverty. The result is a growing need for targeted social assistance, appropriate family allowances, adequate indexing of incomes and social provision against inflation. Associated with poverty are school failures and drop-outs, poor health, inadequate housing conditions or even homelessness, marginalisation and delinquency. Moreover, various factors can render the state of the socially excluded even more baneful: unemployment, poverty, loss of claim to certain social protection rights, loss of control over their lives, ever-weakening links to the wider community, isolation and estrangement. Poverty and social exclusion can also happen through events such as the birth of a child, serious illness or handicap, divorce, imprisonment or death of a family member.
- d) Regional disparities. Social and economic exclusion is more common in some areas than others. Regional policy must help to demolish these disparities and ensure that everyone benefits equally from development measures in their particular area. Once development problems have been spotted in a certain region, we can start building up economic and social cohesion within

the region, even nationally. Data for 1990–1998 show that development in Romania is polarising in both social and territorial terms. This implies two things. First, communities made up of individuals at risk of social exclusion have a higher poverty rate, reduced rehabilitation opportunities and diminished chances to overcome their difficulties; second, a less developed community, with structural problems or lacking resources, cannot always give its members the necessary conditions for a relaunch. In such a situation, problems proliferate and social divisions deepen. In Romania, social exclusion spreads wherever vulnerable groups live in areas that are rural, traditionally-underdeveloped, economically declining or structurally-fragile (see Annex 2a). Recent regional development policies aim to beat this challenge (see Annex 2b). In rural areas, while agriculture is still the main economic activity, productivity has nose-dived in recent years due to obsolete technical equipment, limited use of fertilisers and an ageing population. School infrastructure is poor and the quality of education low. Unsurprisingly, there is little motivation for education and training, and the rural population has the educational level of a lower secondary school.

- e) **Citizenship/human rights.** Romania has introduced various internal regulations designed to ensure respect for human rights and the rights of minorities. Such rights are further confirmed by international conventions, especially, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and the main human rights conventions framed by the United Nations. According to the Romanian Constitution, international conventions ratified by Parliament become part of the domestic legal order, with treaties on fundamental rights taking precedence over Romanian domestic law. However, legislation introduces rights without always ensuring the necessary conditions for their enforcement. Despite much progress, some factors still limit the state's ability to look after every Romanian citizen and see that they obtain basic education, health, employment and social security. Such factors include scarce resources, administrative inefficiency, weak organisation, the wrong economic and social priorities, accountability and planning, a high tax rate and a mistaken expenditure pattern. Moreover, many employers refuse to hire types of people such as Roma and the handicapped. As for women, after pregnancy, they cannot be sure of getting their jobs back, especially if they work for private companies. The Ministry of National Education has taken measures concerning the integration of HIV-infected children into the regular education system. However, teachers and parents of other children sometimes shun these children and prevent them going to school. Furthermore, the judicial system is not working properly. Courts are overloaded, and proceedings can be lengthy. Administrative weaknesses, such as the lack of accessible case studies and court verdicts, work against fair decisions. The fact that the Constitutional Court's rulings can be overturned by a two-thirds majority of Parliament is a major obstacle to genuine constitutional control in Romania and the creation of a People's Advocate has yet to prove itself.
- f) **Patterns of social life and social networks.** Alongside the need for secure employment and adequate social protection, new principles of social policy require people to exercise their initiative, responsibility and capacity for self-help. Unemployment not only deprives a person of an income but also of his status in society. The result is he/she has no social identity which in most societies, including Romania, is directly linked to having a job. As a result, individuals may lose their sense of personal dignity. Exclusion also means they lose their links to mainstream society. In time, this threatens the social fabric and puts the people concerned in the hands of religious fundamentalists or mafia-type networks. In this context, the role of social life and civil society in general becomes vital. Since 1990, Romania has experienced a boost in the development of civil society structures and non-governmental organisations, with huge potential to defend human rights and fight against poverty. There are non-governmental organisations that provide valuable alternative or complementary services to those delivered by the state; their important contribution to the alleviation of social problems faced by the

disadvantaged (especially children) is widely acknowledged. However, public confidence in them has dwindled over the last two years, mainly because of irregularities in car imports. Moreover, the public considers that many of the non-governmental organisations proliferating in civil society are more prone to self-interest. Many “popular” initiatives are less spontaneous than they seem. They often conceal strategies for cornering international aid and then turn them to self-promotion. Many people also question the bona fides of those in non-governmental organisations who claim to speak for disadvantaged groups that did not necessarily appoint them in the first place. To strengthen their credibility, they should apply themselves more vigorously to eradicating social exclusion. As for tripartite arrangements, the search for an agreement with trade unions has so far been a simple way to persuade the population to accept the negative effects of transition, without any ways, means or goals being discussed. To maintain its value, the principle of tripartite bargaining should have adapted to the evolution of civil society and embraced a wide mix of social partners, including the representatives of the excluded so often ignored by traditional trade union structures. Dialogue did not extend to creating economic policy, in which every citizen should take part.

- g) International context. Social exclusion in Romania is inexplicable without reference to the international relationships that impinge on domestic, economic, social and political institutions. International relationships are increasingly part of events in Romania. Reforms that aim to open up economies to competition from the rest of the world have a positive role as do structural adjustment agreements with the international financing institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Sadly, they have also been associated with the erosion of old social contracts that were vital to social integration and to rising unemployment and consequent poverty following collective dismissals by companies being restructured. Here, citizens’ rights have shrunk.

Given the aim of this study and the above facts, those most at risk of social exclusion in Romania are women, children and families with many children, the unemployed and the under-employed.

2.1 Women

According to the National Report on Human Development (United Nations Development Project, 1999), the most difficult problems faced by women stem from various types of social dysfunction. These include reduced participation on the labour market, family collapse, deteriorating medical services and social support for families with children, lack of social services to combat social risk, rising crime and increased conjugal violence.

Women continue to be at greater risk of social exclusion than men. They are more often voluntarily away from work, they rely more on social assistance and it is usually women that head up single-parent families with many children.

More of those who lost jobs were women, while the number of long-term unemployed women is steadily rising. The result is that many of them are no longer entitled to indemnities. Unemployment is higher among unskilled women; those working in commerce, data processing and accounting and among those with higher education in construction and engineering.

Compared to men, women have less access to sources of income. The difference in incomes between the genders is striking: on average, women earn less than men, because they tend to have poorly paid jobs in sectors such as health, education, social services, public administration and agriculture. Many of them have to take on badly paid jobs in the underground economy or based on civil

conventions. In the short term, this reduces their eligibility for unemployment benefit and, in the long run, it reduces their claim to retirement provisions. Gross domestic product per capita is lower for women. In 1997, their salaries were only 76% of those received by men. Moreover, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection published figures that showed that, compared to men, women are sometimes paid less for work of equal value and, even though they have equal qualifications and experience, they also have more difficulties with career development and promotion.

Some studies show that private companies prefer to employ men rather than women because women have family responsibilities that entail higher extra-salary costs.

Women hold few decision-making positions in the top management of public administration, but they are increasingly employed at lower administration levels and in local and regional bodies. The proportion of women managers and women with important decision-making powers in public administration and in socio-economic units was 24.2% in 1998; only in the legal sector did they enjoy parity with men. The reduced proportion of women managers in administration is partly due to there being fewer of them in private companies. According to the reports produced by the Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, only 20% of managing directors and shareholders of registered companies are women.

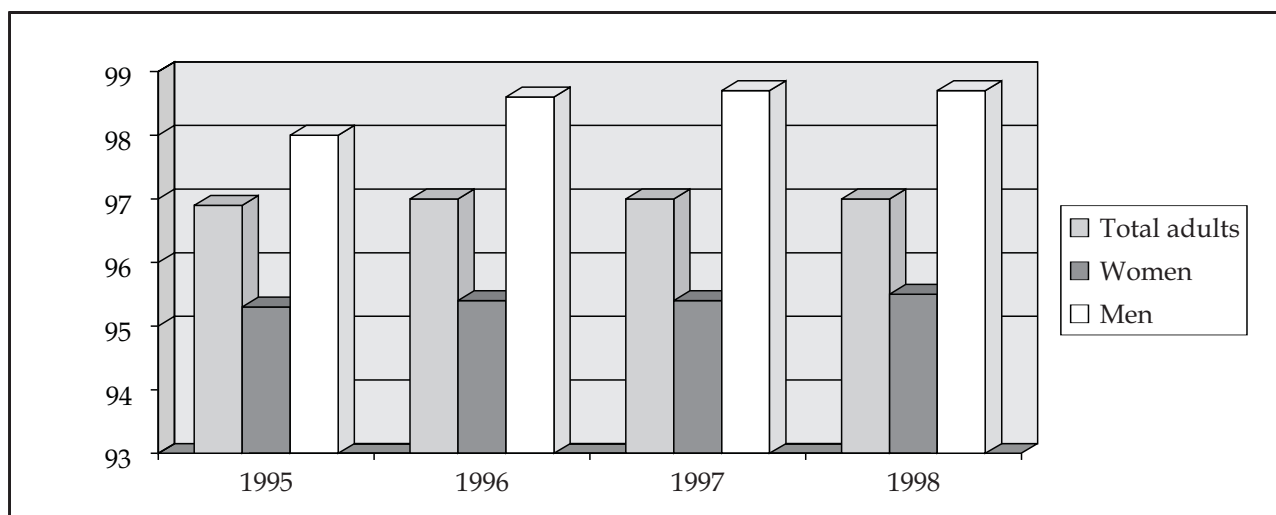
The index of women's participation in social life was only 0.402 in 1998. Their participation in political life is also limited. In 1987, women held 34% of all places in Parliament and, out of 40 ministers, only five were women. They now hold only 3% of the places in the Parliament, and there is only one woman minister.

After 1989, non-governmental organisations and professional associations of women emerged. According to the United Nations Development Programme study, "Status of Women in Romania" published in 1999, there are 54 non-governmental organisations. Of these, 26 are involved in the promotion of women in professions such as law, journalism, business and health care. Four specialise in human rights, two carry out different studies on women, while the rest are concerned with social assistance activities. Despite their positive contributions in the above fields, there is a general feeling that these non-governmental organisations face various development crises and, until they have overcome serious difficulties and become seasoned campaigners, they will not be able to help women that much.

The last Census shows the gender-based level of education as follows:

- 7.6% women with higher education as against 8.25% men;
- 47.1% women with high school education as against 55.1% men;
- 31.4% women who graduated lower secondary school as against 26% men;
- 11.7% women who graduated primary school as against 9.4% men;
- 2.1% women with no school education as against 1.2 % men.

In 1998, the literacy rate was 95.5% for women as against 98.7% for men.

Chart no.1 Literacy rate in Romania, 1995-1998

Source: National Report on Human Development

Poverty, unemployment, dysfunctional families, poor housing, alcoholism and social stress are all causes of prostitution and domestic violence against women.

The medical and family planning services are virtually closed to the poor, to less educated women, to the socially and culturally marginalised and those in isolated rural areas. We expect that the national campaign for women's rights to health at work and to reproductive health would alleviate existing problems but, in the case of unemployed women, there is still much to be done.

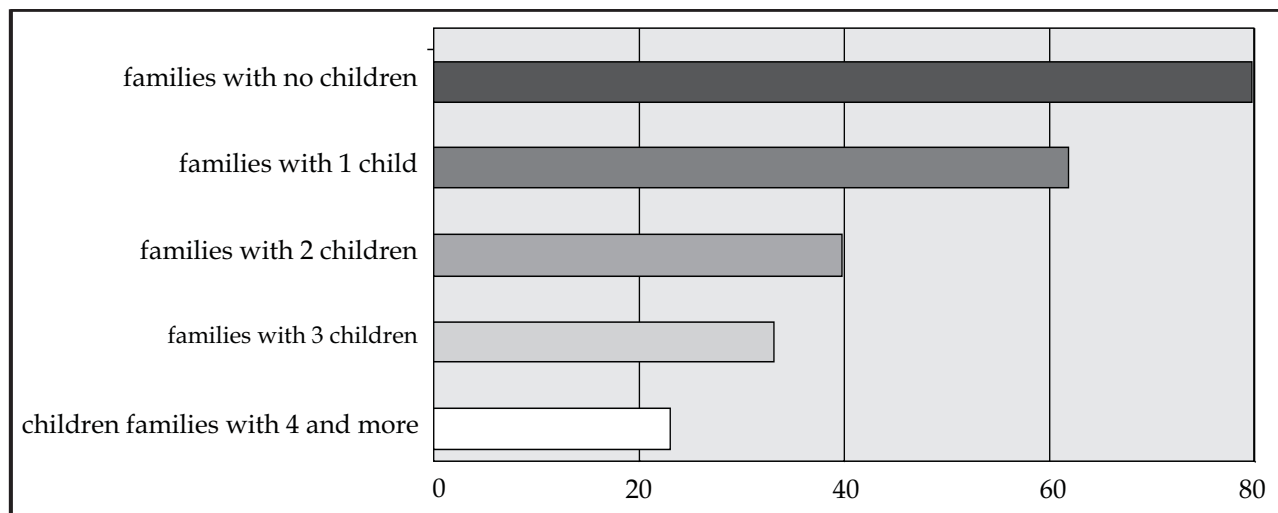
2.2 *Children and families with many children*

In January 1999, Romania had 5,200,000 children, some 23% of the population. In June 1999, the birth rate was 11.5% and infant mortality reached 15.2 %.

In May 1999, the average net wage per economy was equivalent to US\$97 per month and minimum net wage reached US\$29. At that time, an adult needed US\$97 a month for a decent standard of living but 75% of the population had a net income lower than this. In fact, the monthly net income of a family with two children could cover only half of the outlay needed for a decent life.

Families know that their incomes, including direct, traditional social benefits, are less and less able to cover daily household needs. Savings are going down or even vanishing because of inflation. To manage, families resort to cheap food to sustain rather than feed their children. The result is that they are poorly nourished and their health, along with their capacity to learn, declines.

Families with many children are more likely to be below the poverty line (see chart no.2 below), at greater risk of exclusion from the labour market and with less scope for training. This applies to present parents and children now and to socially-excluded adults in the future. In the case of parents, mothers are more at risk, especially when divorced or unmarried and having to bring up their children on their own. Poverty is particularly severe for children in Roma families. In 1992, 80.9% of Roma were living below an acceptable standard as against 42% of the total population of Romania. 63% were below the minimum subsistence level as against 16% of the total population.

Chart no.2 Poverty Rate of Families According to the Number of Children, 1997

Source: National Report on Poverty in Romania, UNDP, 1999

Because their parents are poor with attendant stress and violence, many children leave home to live on the street, are abandoned in institutions or forced to work at an early age. Street children do not have birth certificates or identity cards and are not eligible for social benefit. For them, abandoning school is a “usual” fact of life.

As for poor families, they cannot afford or gain access to medical services for their children, their housing is poor and unwholesome. Precarious living conditions and poor primary medical assistance have caused nearly 45% of infant mortality cases to occur at home (see Annex 3). Analysis of reasons for death of children aged 0-1 during 1989-1998 shows that low birth weight and protein-calorie malnutrition are the main causes of infant mortality (see Annex 4). Despite numerous national campaigns to promote health supervision and despite a ratio of 170 doctors to 100,000 inhabitants, children’s health is still below the minimum standard.

Roma find it hard to obtain medical services and advice on family planning, and the incidence of infant and general mortality and depression is very high. Very few children are vaccinated, and Roma complain about mistreatment and discrimination by the medical staff. Roma are often illiterate and lack qualifications, employment opportunities and decent housing. They swell the ranks of the poor segments, expand the underground economy and reinforce mafia-type networks.

Although there is a legal system to give families social protection, it is not working well. It does not meet family needs, and poor families sometimes cannot reach it. As a result, they do not know their rights – in other words, *info-exclusion*. Of all those denied social protection, children pay the highest price. Any family incapable of nurturing and educating its children is preparing candidates for an orphanage or a placement centre.

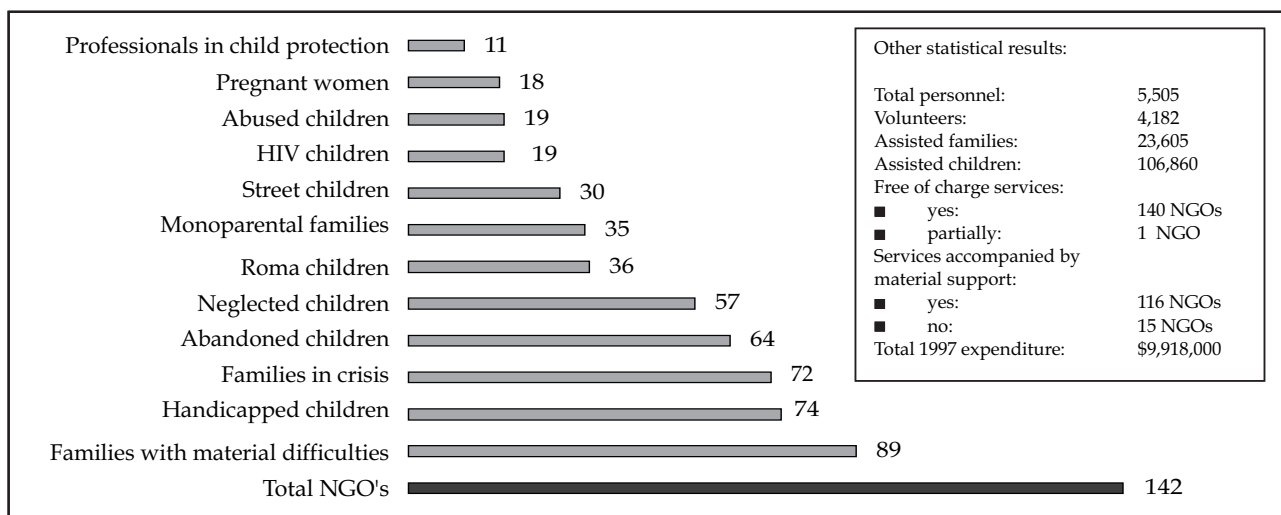
Handicapped children have little access to education. Although the law stipulates that children with sensorial, motor or mental deficiencies must have a special education, the current education system is not suited to them. Ways of assessing handicaps are incomplete, consisting only of a medical diagnosis. This leads to bad “streaming” whereby children with wildly divergent types and degrees of handicap are put in the same schools and classes. Children with learning difficulties or disadvantaged children are frequently considered handicapped.

Non-governmental organisations have fought for child protection, either alone or working with public administration and foreign donors. They have set up early rehabilitation courses for disabled children, counseling activities for parents, day care centres and special kindergartens. They have

also given material support to needy families. The non-governmental organisations have set up alternative services to putting children in institutions and taken steps to prevent children being placed in orphanages. These include the establishment of family support centres, mother-child units and counseling pregnant women. Non-governmental organisations also trained personnel working in child protection and gave vocational training courses to help children in institutions get work. They helped teenagers leaving residential institutions to find jobs or to attend a course geared to the demands of the local economy. In some cases, they were provided social housing and counseling to ease the transition from institution to work and social integration. For street children, non-governmental organisations set up day care centres, residential facilities and street social assistance services. Change of mindset, raising public awareness raising and banishing stereotypes also figured on the agenda of many a non-governmental organisation. Non-governmental organisations also developed models and best practices in child protection that have made a major contribution to framing legislation.

In March 1998, the Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations Active in Child Protection researched a sample comprising 142 non-governmental organisations.

Chart no.3 Non-governmental organisations involved in child protection



However, lack of Government resources and commitment for such projects coupled with feeble policy reforms has undermined the work of the non-governmental organisations carried out with international support, especially from the European Union, the United Nations International Children in Emergency Fund, United States Agency for International Development and World Bank. This is particularly worrying as regards Romania's accession to the European Union, observance of children's rights being central to qualifying for membership.

2.3 Unemployed and underemployed people

Up to 1989, the totalitarian regime developed heavy industry in large to vast units. By ordering each aspect of the individual's life and providing lifelong employment, the regime quashed personal initiative and left people incapable of shaping their careers. The result is that the transition to a market economy caused mass unemployment; 1.5 million in the industrial sector were dismissed during the first seven years, and poverty spread nationwide.

From end-1992 till now, unemployment ranged from 7% to 11%, the maximum being 12% in February 1999 (see Annex 5).

Long-term unemployment mainly affects women and young people of 15-24, workers with single skills exposed to collective redundancy, the poorly educated, graduates of vocational and apprentice schools, the handicapped and Roma. People unemployed for over a year reached 46% in 1998. Annex 6 shows the geographical distribution of those getting various benefits according to the duration of unemployment.

Note that, before 1989, Roma had menial jobs such as seasonal agricultural activities or garbage collection. However, agricultural reforms, including the reclamation of land, have not helped Roma because they had no claim to land. Moreover, their traditional trades are in decline. Often illiterate, unskilled, badly educated and ill-qualified, Roma are working mainly outside the formal sector in unstable and poorly paid jobs. It is still very difficult for them to integrate with the labour market and earn a decent income.

Unemployment was higher in urban areas at 74% and that applies only to those seeking their first job. Vast regional discrepancies emerge between the counties with the highest and lowest unemployment rate: Hunedoara (20.4%) - a county blighted by restructuring, single industries and the incapacity of the private sector to absorb redundant workers -and Ilfov (5.9%) - with a more dynamic labour market. The highest unemployment rates are in the North-East - 14.9% - and the South-East - 13.1%.

Unemployment figures do not reveal underemployment in the economy, now about 33%. This means part-time employees, seasonal workers and day labourers. Moreover, a significant number of those made redundant in the industrial sector return to agriculture to work their own land and thus become unpaid agricultural workers. These categories gradually get discouraged and will face great trouble getting work in the future.

Many young graduates and people with professional experience - women over 40 and men over 50 - work in jobs below their educational level.

In households where the head is unemployed, over 50% are below the poverty line, according to the recent United Nations Development Programme report on poverty in Romania. The unemployment benefit represents only 28% of the average wage and indexation policies have not kept up with rising inflation in recent years. The density, depth and spread of poverty is, of course, highest amongst the unemployed: three times more when compared with wage-earners and four times more in comparison with pensioners.

According to a national inquiry of the Commission for Statistics, 39% of incomes in unemployed households are in kind, making them heavily dependent on self-consumption. Outlay on food absorbs 65% of incomes. However, the actual consumption of milk and dairy products, meat, vegetables and fruits are at least 70% below the nutritional needs cited by specialists. As for housing, the space for living is 25% lower than the national average, while the number of people per room is 33% higher than average.

These alarming figures will get worse as there is little prospect of maintaining existing employment or generating new job opportunities in the short- or medium-term. There are various reasons for this. They include the vast cost of creating jobs, the rapid spread of the underground economy, the government's commitment to restructuring businesses, the downsizing and closure of large loss-making companies and, amongst much else, vague laws that discourage investment in alternative industries. Result: many Romanians are already experiencing long-term unemployment. This spreads chronic poverty, destroys the work ethic, and breaks ties with friends and the community in general. The outcome is alienated, socially excluded people.

Trade unions' activity has often furthered reform. It has negotiated with management and Government to promote the workers' interests: for instance, by preserving workplaces, updating salaries and improving occupational health and safety. However, as we have seen, trade union leaders could not always give their members reasons for the restructuring that led to collective dismissals. The Government was sometimes just as ineffective. Therefore, despite agreements with trade unions, there were strikes and far-reaching social uprisings occurred, for instance the miners' strike in early 1999. This upset the reform process and incited hot political debates between the political parties. Once unemployed, people do not even have feeble support from trade unions. Instead, they must rely on social protection from the Government and from non-governmental organisations with overseas support.

3. Analysis of risk groups

This chapter identifies and describes sub-groups afflicted by a build-up of varying risk factors. It highlights their position in the labour market and identifies the vocational education and training potential of each defined subgroup.

The sub-groups below relate to the main three groups at risk of social exclusion (women, children and families with many children, unemployed and underemployed people), as described in Chapter 2. These sub-groups consist of single mothers, unemployed under-25s, unskilled workers and people with low qualifications, young drop-outs, institutionalised children, street children and teenagers, and the handicapped.

Existing legislation provides every at-risk sub-group with equal access to vocational education and training. The main problems are: does the vocational education and training match their interests and potential? And how well informed are they when it comes to choosing an education or training route?

3.1 *Single mothers*

The number of teenage and extra-marital births rose; so did that of divorces. As for Roma, 41% of all families were not legally established in 1993.¹ The result was a rise in the number of single-parent families. According to some specialists, there were 700,000² such families in 1995, the women usually bringing up the children single-handed. The study, now being developed by the National Commission of Statistics with the support of the United Nations Development Programme, will update information on the number of single mothers and the problems faced by them and women in general.

Different sources (official statistics, studies of the Institute for Quality of Life carried out in 1993 and 1994, expert opinions like those of Borbala Koo presented in an international seminar in 1998, United Nations Development Programme reports, etc.) show single mothers are the most poverty-stricken group in the population.

Young unmarried mothers, especially Roma, face a critical situation when they live in isolated rural areas where traditional views of women's inferiority still live on. In such places, they suffer from acute poverty and are unable to attend school as they have to take care of their children and perform household tasks.

Another risk group is unmarried pregnant girls thrown out by their families because of the social stigma. If they attend high schools, such girls are also shunned by their peers, teachers and the community in general due to mindsets rife with prejudice.

1 E.Zamfir, C.Zamfir - *Țigani în ignorare și îngrijorare*, 1993

2 Source: G.Ghebrea, S.Stroie - *Quality of Life Review*, nos.1-2, 1995.

Romanian law asserts that women, who have had babies, have a right to employment, a secure income and care for the child. So much for theory: in fact - as many studies, experts, project evaluations and mass-media report - single mothers can rarely be sure of returning to their jobs after pregnancy, especially in the private sector. Given an ever-shrinking labour market, the shortage of active employment measures for disadvantaged women and their inability to retrain due to family responsibilities, female single parents face unemployment and poverty. Most employers refuse to hire pregnant women and only hire young women who commit themselves to staying in the job and working overtime. Some surveys show recruitment policies are geared to men rather than women. The obvious conclusion is that, compared to other groups in the national workforce, single mothers have far less hope of being hired or rehired.

But even employed single mothers have difficulties in the postnatal period due to insufficient or poor services for child-care during working hours. That is why more and more of these women opt to stay at home. According to a recent household survey (AMIGO), single mothers represent 65% of unpaid labour working in the families. These women are seriously at risk, as they are not covered by social and health insurance.

Given their limited access to education and the labour market, single mothers are doubly at risk of social exclusion. Difficulties include poverty, family responsibilities, and insufficient social services for family support and unscrupulous employers. Lack of funds and the attendant stress lead to alcoholism, drug addiction, anti-social behaviour, even prostitution and other criminal offences including robbery. These usually entail job loss.

The schooling period of single mothers is two percentage points under the national average, especially those in families in the North-East and South Regions.

The educational system tries to provide vocational education and training fairly in terms of access and opportunity. Evening classes, extramural courses and, especially for higher education, distance learning are attracting considerable interest. For example, high school enrolments for evening classes reached 77,416 students in 1999/2000, of whom 32,220 were female. Extramural courses were attended by 10,082 students, of whom 4,704 were female. According to the National Commission for Statistics study, "High School Education at the Beginning of the School Year 1999/2000", those in evening and extramural classes account for 12.6% of all high school students. Unfortunately, there are no figures for the enrolment rate of single mothers.

3.2 *Young drop-outs*

Poverty, unemployment, lack of information, poorly educated parents, inept social protection, and the high cost of clothes, footwear and school supplies – these are the main reasons for children being left in orphanages and institutions. They are also the chief causes of alienation, school failure, drop-outs and illiteracy.

The percentage of 7-14s not enrolled in compulsory education decreased from 9.5% in 1991 to 5% in 1997. However, evidence already shows their proportion is rising again, especially in the case of school age Roma and others in rural areas.

School abandonment remains high. Between 1993 and 1997, it fluctuated from 5-6% in vocational education. In apprentice schools, it was more serious (over 7%) as against 5.6% in vocational schools in the school year 1997-98. In the same period, school abandonment rates in specialised schools were 4.4% and, in theoretical high schools, 3.8%.

School abandonment often comes about because children are put to work doing household and agricultural activities. Families usually exploit such children to obtain resources through work, begging or theft. Indeed, their contribution is sometimes the sole source of income on which the survival of a disadvantaged family depends. Romanian labour legislation includes the provisions of the United Nations Convention on Children's Rights and the European Social Charter. These cover the minimum employment age, duration of work and annual holidays. However, as we have seen, people do not always respect the law. Between 1999 and 2000, the National Research Institute of Labour and Social Protection, together with the non-governmental organisation, Save the Children, and Gallup International, carried out a survey on child labour. They used a sample of 1,000 children living in the family, in residential care institutions, and in the street. They also interviewed 200 families with children. The results showed that children who work during the school year seldom attend school and often fail. This is hardly surprising because they have to work two to eight hours per day (8% of sample). Many children abandon school altogether or, as a result of their employment, are very tired at school. These children are at risk of future unemployment or of making an uncertain and often inadequate living from questionable activities. Even if they do not end up on the street, they have little chance of getting a job.

Enrolment for upper secondary education decreased from 90.7% in 1990 to 68.6% in 1997, while the average gross enrolment rate at all education levels was relatively constant. In most communes (about 90%), schooling is limited to lower secondary education. Only in 6.5% of communes do pupils attend the full pre-university education cycle, from kindergarten to high school or post secondary school. Most of the rural population only have a primary school or, at most, lower secondary school education. Even more seriously, more and more rural families refuse to send their children to school because they no longer think education is at all useful. Many poor families from rural areas are not interested in helping their children to qualify for jobs nor do they supervise their performance at school. There are many further shortcomings. These include chronically under-funded education, poor infrastructure, scarcity of teachers, inadequate courses, deficient career guidance and - given a limited range of economic activities in the region - virtually no routes to the labour market.

A pilot study was carried out in March 2000 by the Institute for Educational Sciences. Entitled "Rural Education in Romania: Background, Problems and Development Strategies", it relates to three counties (Bacău, Olt and Sibiu). It shows that school failure in rural areas depends on the distance of the school from the urban area; for schools over 50 kms from a town, 15-20% of children never enrol in education; the drop-out rate in compulsory education is under 2% in 20% of the schools researched, over 2% in 10% of other schools, while the rest did not register this factor. In case of upper secondary education, the average drop-out rate is 6.2%. According to another pilot study of the Institute of Educational Sciences in 1995, 20.2% of students in rural areas have no basic skills, i.e. literacy and numeracy.

In rural areas, provision of vocational education and training is 20 times lower than in urban areas, while half of the school population is in communes and villages. Before 1998, there were no remedial education courses for the drop-outs. The Education Law of 1995 allowed for the establishment of apprentice schools. However, they have been set up without regard to local labour conditions, and have therefore failed to reach their goals. It follows that in rural areas there is still much to be done to ensure equal opportunities in education. For instance, provision of multiple options to match different capacities and aptitudes - these would generate the essentials for equal access to social and occupational integration.

For too many Romanian families, poverty prevents their children from getting much needed support. Children in large families often have barely enough to eat or wear. Obviously, such children in dire need of basic health and social care do not have an equal opportunity to learn. Lack of

prenatal care, inadequate nutrition, lack of immunisation and preventive care, exposure to violence, drugs or abuse, foetal alcohol abuse syndrome, and the emotional and mental disorders of early childhood – these are only some of the poverty-linked barriers to learning that no curricular or educational reform can remove on its own.

In a family of two adults and two children, the monthly net income only covered 52.1% of the expenses required for decent living. In 1994, almost 37.6% of children lived in poverty and their number has significantly increased since then. The birth of a child and the subsequent outlay on upbringing and education constitute a significant burden that is likely to push large families over the poverty line. The report on poverty in Romania, published in 1999 by United Nations Development Programme, shows these poverty rates for 1997: 40% for people living in households with two children, 60% for those living in households with three children, 80% for those in households with four or more. These children are at serious risk of malnutrition, abandonment and institutionalisation, going to work at a very early age, vagrancy, sexual abuse and delinquency. The highest unemployment rate is registered in the North-East Region, significantly an area rife with large families.

As for Roma, their families are twice the size of those of the rest of population. Many have no identity papers and no home. Hence, they experience employment difficulties and ineligibility for social benefits. School attendance of young Roma has seriously fallen apart and school absenteeism has rocketed. 27% of Roma are virtually illiterate (19% men, 27% women), while the general education level is low. Only some 50% of 7-10s attend school, and only 4.5% of adults attend high school. School abandonment is especially high among gypsy girls, who are forced into precocious “marriages” so they can have children.

3.3 *Institutionalised children*

During Ceaușescu’s regime, social problems were settled by hiding them. When the state eliminated troubled families that might otherwise have applied for social protection, thousands of children went into so-called childcare institutions. After 1989, Romania found there were 225 institutions, including nurseries (“leagăn”) and children’s homes (“casă de copii”), with a total of 40,500 children. A simple calculation shows that one institution had, on average, 180 children, far too many for personal care to be possible. These institutionalised children “benefited” either from excessive medical care (in nurseries) or educational care (in children’s homes), at the expense of emotional and social relations. There was no specialised staff or scope for the likes of psychologists, psychiatrists and sociologists, let alone for multidisciplinary teams. Hence, the demeaning label, “orphan” or “child from a children’s home”.

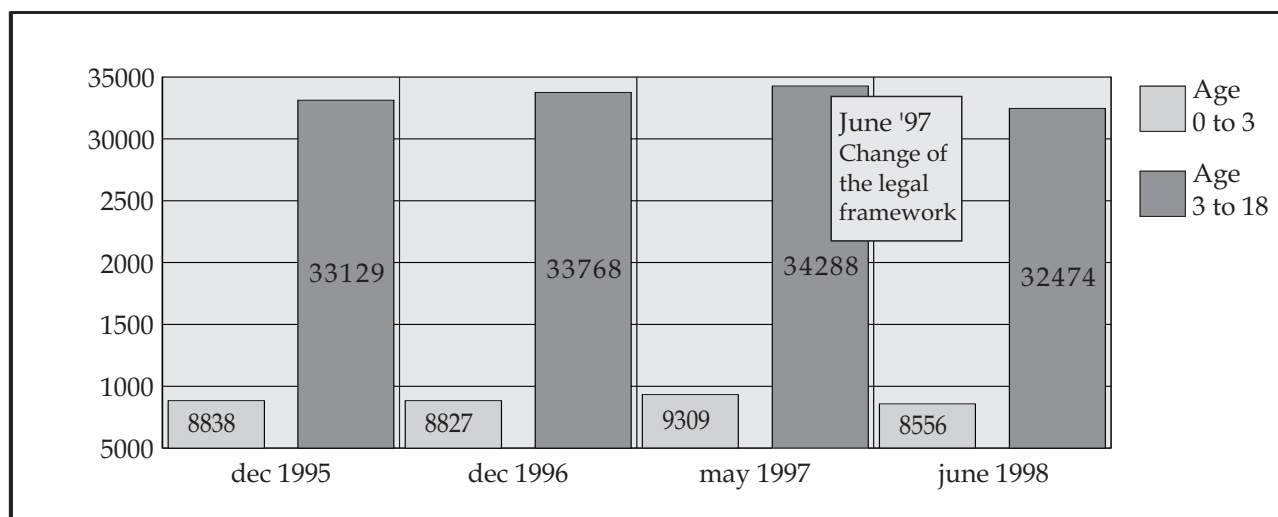
Between 1989 and May 1997, the number of institutionalised children rose to 48,500. The continuous deterioration of family living standards and the current social and economic conditions put 6,000 children into institutions every year. (See Chart no.4.)

Most institutionalised children are abandoned by their families. There are very few orphans. Abandonment usually happens in maternity homes, where mothers give a false name and immediately abandon the child. Lack of identity bodes ill for such children: establishing an identity is a long process, during which the child cannot be adopted, fostered or placed in an institution. A child in a maternity home is in hygienic conditions and has enough to eat, but lacks both affection and education.

Children are also left in the paediatric sections of hospitals. Families bring them in on some pretext and simply leave them there, forgotten.

The number of abandoned children must be rising because the total of those in institutions remains constant despite strenuous efforts over the years on the part of non-governmental organisations to get them adopted and/or find other non-governmental organisation alternatives to institutionalisation.

Chart no.4 Institutionalised children



Source: Department for Child Protection

Romania's experience of institutionalised children stresses key issues that affect future developments: child institutionalisation is expensive (US\$90 per month on average); institutionalisation has a malign impact on the development of most children; children from care institutions are at twice the risk of social exclusion compared to those from a family environment.

Despite all this institutionalisation, Romania is only starting to appreciate how you can prevent child abandonment. The parents who leave children in institutions are usually poor, disorganised, alcoholic, unemployed, divorced, imprisoned or suffering from tuberculosis. According to the United Nations International Children in Emergency Fund, 74% of such parents are unemployed, 62% have insufficient incomes, 58% have poor housing conditions and 40% are unmarried mothers. According to a study by the United Nations International Children in Emergency Fund, 45.8% of the children in nurseries and children's homes are Roma.

Analysis shows that school abandonment is high in rural areas, especially in North-East and South-West counties. This is the result of poverty and badly educated parents with fixed prejudices.

The "culture of abandonment" in Romania is rooted in the communist notion whereby the state was thought to be better equipped than families to take care of children. Family education and the cultivation of general parenting skills are missing from issues that currently preoccupy schools, the mass media and the social protection system. To change mindsets and reduce child abandonment, we need more than legislation, especially in a country afflicted by rising poverty. We need a comprehensive and powerful way to educate families.

After 1990, childcare institutions underwent important changes. In many cases, however, such changes were limited to physical rehabilitation through civil works. Institutions continue to breach the basic rights of children: they do not encourage links with the family, children do not have their personal belongings, many institutions accommodate numerous children, there are no individual

mentors for the children, no-one to make them feel loved and wanted. There are not enough staff and such as there are often lack the right sort of training.

Apart from the disabled, children in institutions have legal access to all forms of education in schools also attended by children living with their own families. However, the schools have no trained career advisers to assess the aptitudes and real potential of the children. Furthermore, the schools often train the children for narrow, old-fashioned occupations; the children have no family support; and they sometimes have no identity papers or homes to go to. Small wonder institutionalised children are at risk of becoming adults that are professionally and socially excluded.

The chances of 16-18s getting work on leaving residential care institutions are limited, especially in underdeveloped areas, zones affected by economic decline or with poor infrastructures (see case study in Annex 7). To back up this assertion with more precise data, we will conduct further case studies. Some non-governmental organisations demonstrated that a good survey of the labour market, mediation services and the establishment of partnerships with local small and medium-sized businesses can produce good results. Chapter V shows how these businesses enable teenagers to qualify for jobs on the market, and thereby ensure future work for them.

3.4 *Street children and teenagers*

After 1989, street children and teenagers presented the most shocking image of Romanian society. During Ceaușescu's regime, policies put children into so-called care institutions. If, during the first post-revolutionary years, children and young people left these care institutions to end up on the street, from 1993 on they were leaving their families to end up the same way.

According to research carried out in 1998 by Save the Children, there are some 2,100 street children in Romania. Most of them live in Bucharest, Constanța, Timișoara, Iași, Târgu Mureș and Galați. The study is not exhaustive, because the facts about street children are, of their nature, so volatile. Some spend all day on the street and return home at night, others just live on the street, and others only live on the street in summer (for instance, on the Black Sea Coast). However, the study gives some idea of the problem.

According to the same inquiry, 52% of street children are 7-15 and 25% are 16-18. The rising number of street teenagers and young people is alarming. 71.3% of them are boys and 28.7% girls.

Chart no.5 *Age of street children and youth*

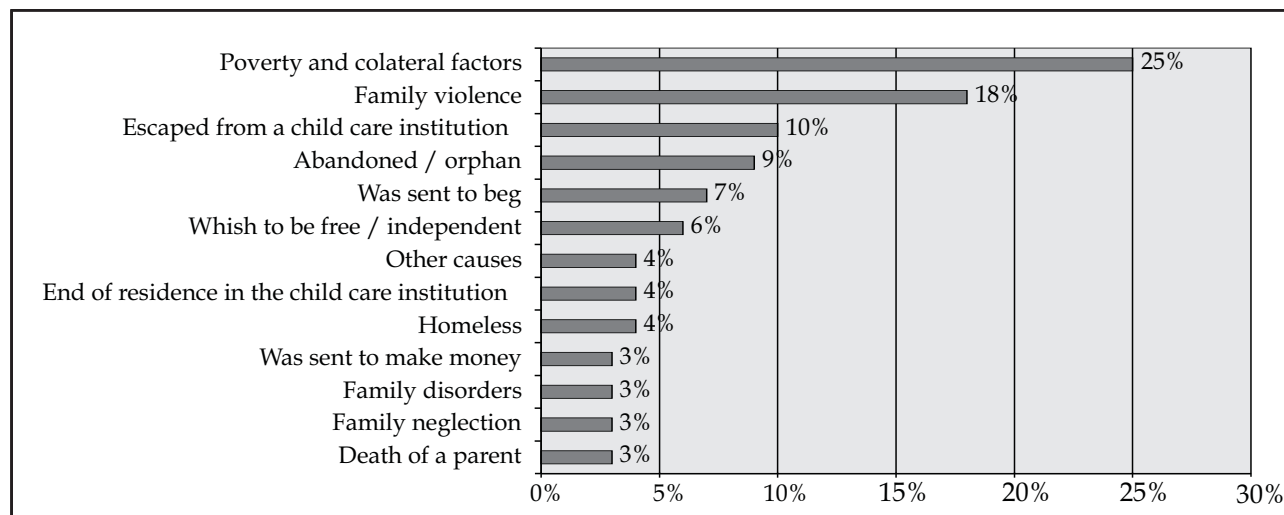
Erosion of social solidarity, reduction of community control, poverty, family disintegration and domestic violence, bad treatment in institutions – these are the key factors that lead to social exclusion, marginalisation and delinquency among minors. Some chose to live off the street, where vagrancy, drug abuse, violence, misery, prostitution, begging and promiscuity comprise a way of life.

As we have seen, the study of the National Research Institute of Labour and Social Protection on child labour used a sample of 1,000 children, of whom 400 were street children. Most of them said they worked without the permission of their parents with whom they had anyway lost touch. The children begged, stole or became prostitutes, being easy prey for economic and sexual exploitation. In 1995, out of 129 prostitutes identified by the police, 87.6% were 15-18 and 12.4% were 13-14.

A decade of transition to a market economy and democratic government swiftly eroded traditional family values. Low incomes, high unemployment, and rising living costs made families very vulnerable. In such conditions, low-income families found it increasingly hard to bring up children. Hence, tensions and violence that prompted many children to opt for life on the street.

Lack of money and social housing put whole families on the street. High maintenance costs and rents sometimes absorb a household's monthly income in full. Behind stories of evictions and lost housing, there are always children with no shelter or family.

80% of children and young people on the streets are there because of their families.

Chart no.6 Main causes of becoming a street child

Street children and teenagers live by canals, in demolished and abandoned houses, markets, garages, cellars, building sites or outdoors. They suffer from malnutrition, heart and chronic respiratory diseases, ear infections, gastro-enteritis and infectious diseases, including AIDS, which can all result tragically premature deaths. They have no identity papers or legal address. As a result, they do not qualify for free meals in social canteens, for employment or, apart from emergency care, medical services. Street children and teenagers are rejected by the rest of society. And the media, instead of alerting people to their state and encouraging them to help the street children, do the very reverse.

Non-governmental organisations are virtually the only bodies concerned with the school integration of street children and teenagers. In fact, that is one of the social services given to the children by multi-disciplinary teams of experts in day and residential care centres. The other services include education, social assistance for family reintegration, school “catch up”, prevention of school abandonment and failure and street social assistance. There are some non-governmental organisations that provide social housing and qualifications for jobs in demand.

The *Guide of Social Services*, published in 1999 by the Information and Co-ordination Centre for Homeless Children, lists 18 non-governmental organisations and six state centres that provide services to street children and teenagers living in Bucharest. These comprise 155 places in day care centres (non-government organisations) and 737 places in residential centres (367 places offered by non-governmental organisations, 370 places in state centres). NB: some state centres take in delinquents, who are not necessarily street children.

Despite these efforts to counter the phenomenon, it is clear that:

- the number of street children and teenagers is relatively constant;
- the process of social (re)integration is very hard due to behaviour developed on the street;
- the average age of street children has continuously decreased;
- there are more and more street teenagers setting up “families” on the street;
- child protection reform “forgot” to include legislation and services for homeless children;
- central and local authorities are not concerned with the problems of this disadvantaged group.

3.5 *Unemployed people under 25*

Almost half our unemployed people are under 25, their unemployment rate being three times the national average (28.2% by the end of 1999, National Commission of Statistics, National Agency of Employment and Vocational Training).

There are important regional and county disparities, the unemployment rate in the North-East Region being 36.8% in comparison with Bucharest-Ilfov which is 20.8%. The counties with the highest rates for this age category are Botoşani (43%), Iaşi (42.1%) and Vaslui (40.9%). Young people in single industry areas are especially vulnerable to social exclusion because the decline of that industry is causing massive redundancies and there are precious few jobs in other sectors. In such areas, vocational training can remove the risk of social exclusion but only when supported by policies specifically targeted to economic growth.

15-24s are likely candidates for long-term unemployment. They represent 43% of all those who have abandoned the search for a job: 44.4% men and 41.3% women. The proportion of 15-29s looking for their first job is 89.1% for women and 70.4% for men.

According to Romanian legislation, graduates of high school and higher education who do not have a job are officially unemployed. They are therefore entitled to active and passive protection measures like the rest of the unemployed. Based on the statistics of the National Agency of Employment and Vocational Training, in December 1999 over 73,200 graduates received professional integration support, an indemnity similar to unemployment benefit (see Annex 5). While drawing this support, they have access to free training. However, they are at great risk of exclusion from the labour market due to lack of professional experience, deficiencies in their school/university education, and their inability to adapt rapidly to labour market demand. Another explanation is poor self-evaluation of the skills and knowledge required on the labour market and attending inappropriate courses.

There are groups of youngsters who cannot afford to go on courses. They have either opted out of the state education system and thereby sacrificed their access to training or, because they are not officially unemployed, they are not eligible for any kind of protection. These groups can be provided with free training, but funds cannot always stretch to cover expenses.

They are also not very good at looking for work. For young people to start their own businesses, they need entrepreneurial training and to raise credit - both of which are hard to obtain in Romania. Note, too, that many of these young people still live with their parents and are too irresponsible to get training, let alone a job.

According to the same sources, 17,600 young people were employed in December 1999 under the 70% wage subsidy scheme; of these, 46% were graduates of higher education, 22.1 % graduates of high school, 8% graduates of post-secondary education, 21.3% graduates of vocational education and 2.6 % graduates of apprentice schools. Almost 58% have been employed in private companies or joint ventures with mixed state/private common stock.

The unemployment distribution, according to education, of 15-24s:

- graduates of compulsory education (32.0%)
- graduates of high school (30.4%)
- graduates of vocational schools (25.4%)
- graduates of higher education (4.7%).

Analysis of the above unemployment and employment figures shows that those at most risk of exclusion from work have little education or training. So Government courses for the unemployed were especially targeted to under-25s who accounted on average for 61.4% of all trainees (data of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 1991-1998). For more details about these courses and their impact, see Chapter 4.

As for the potential of vocational education potential to make young graduates more employable, we will have precise data when the new generation of pupils graduates from the vocational and post-secondary schools that use nationally reformed curricula. These curricula were developed with the support of the European Union/Phare Vocational Education and Training Programme RO 9405 and then launched in a few pilot and demonstration schools. Nationwide dissemination went ahead in all vocational and post-secondary schools once the programme ended in December 1998. First time round, in July 1999, the graduates of the reformed curriculum as introduced in a limited number of schools totalled 2,000 out of 56,640 pupils in vocational schools and 1,400 out of 33,466 pupils in post-secondary schools (sources: National Commission for Statistics "Vocational, apprenticeship, post-secondary and foreman schools at the end of 1997/1998 and 1998/1999 school years", Ministry of National Education "Vocational Education and Training Reform programme"). With so small a number, we cannot draw conclusions on the impact of vocational education and training upon employability until 2002 for vocational schools and 2003 for post-secondary schools when dissemination will be complete. However, the Ministry of National Education will conduct an intermediary evaluation by the end of 2000. This should give some idea of how vocational education and training could help young graduates to develop employment opportunities and get work. Specialists estimate a priori that vocational education and training has an extremely important role (Romanian Vocational Education and Training Observatory "Professional Integration of Vocational and Secondary School Graduates", December 1998), but this has yet to be confirmed by the intermediary and final assessments.

The National Programme "Education for the Second Chance" (see Chapter 4) should prove to be a breakthrough in the social and professional integration of these unemployed under-25.

3.6 *People with handicaps*

Until 1992, the handicapped child was considered "irrecoverable" and cared for in hospital homes or infantile neuro-psychiatric hospitals. Disabled children raised by their families did not receive state support apart from their entitlement to the child allowance being extended until they were 18.

Before 1989, living and care conditions in these institutions were appalling. Huge institutions with an average number of 180 children, poor funding, insufficient and unskilled staff to ensure an acceptable level of care - these factors caused an alarming number of deaths among these children. See Table no.2.

Table no.2 *Number of Deaths in Hospital Homes for Children, 1989-1991*

Year	1989	1990	1991
Number of deaths	706	268	64

Source: State Secretariat for People with Handicaps

1992 saw the framing of a law to provide special protection for the handicapped. For the first time, this gave incentives to families to bring up their handicapped child at home. It also provided family-type alternatives to institutionalisation.

Despite these measures, the number of institutionalised children remained high.

Table no.3 Children in Hospital Homes, 1990-1999

Year	1990	1993	1996	1999
Number of children in hospital homes	3,354	4,349	4,130	3380

Source: National Commission of Statistics

After 1989, analysis of the child protection system produced a series of shocks. These culminated in the “discovery” of 1,037 HIV-infected children. This stemmed from the deterioration of the medical system during the communist regime: transfusions with HIV-infected blood, incorrect sterilisation of syringes, lack of sexual education, limited diagnostic skills, and medical staff knowing little about this disease. The evolution of AIDS paediatric cases over the last nine years is given in Table no.4 below.

Table no.4 AIDS Paediatric Cases, 1989-1999

Year	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Number of cases	252	1,037	501	430	399	425	593	460	500	489	93

Source: Ministry of Health

In October 1999, there were 3,114 children with AIDS or HIV-infected in Romania, of which only 44 were in institutions. The highest number of HIV-infected children is registered in the following counties: Constanța, Giurgiu, Galați, Gorj, Mureș, Iași, Neamț and Bucharest. Given the extent of poverty in Romania and an insufficient state health budget, many of these children benefit from continuing treatment but only if a hospital can be found to provide it free of charge. Furthermore, these children lack a proper diet, and are condemned to poor housing, social disgrace, and discrimination at school and in the community. Parents of the other children and even teachers often turn children with HIV out of school. As a result, they depend on education provided in private schools run by non-governmental organisations. Their access to jobs is obviously limited. The law states that children with AIDS are considered handicapped and can, like other handicapped children, claim similar material support from the state.

Handicapped children have only limited chances of social integration, as follows:

- Children with severe handicaps are placed in institutions that still provide unacceptable care and education. There are few or no therapies to advance the rehabilitation of children with severe handicaps living in institutions or in their own families. Such therapies as there are do not adequately involve their families, although some non-governmental organisations do readily provide home-aid assistance. The state public institutions are not very concerned about the education of these children.

- Children with light handicaps go to special schools. The latter enrolled some 52,430 children in 1998 (National Commission of Statistics). Lack of correct diagnosis and periodical evaluations cause many non-disabled children to be put in these schools. The most frequent mistake is to confuse social “handicaps” with light mental handicaps. Many special schools take boarders, and this encourages poor families to place children there. In time, this practice can exacerbate mental handicaps.
- There is no career advice system for these children, and their chances of finding work are practically non-existent. They are destined, as teenagers, to join the unemployed or to add to the state’s financial burdens by staying in care institutions that rarely provide vocational training.

Handicapped adults have only limited access to the labour market and professional integration services. We have no precise data on this issue and the public employment service has no information on the employment situation of these people. Specialised studies and researches hardly exist, the only data being held by the State Secretariat for Handicapped People. And the latter is too sparse to permit a correct assessment of the extent of the phenomenon. It states that in September 1999 only 8,717 out of 331,147 handicapped people were employed. However, these figures are questionable as the system for assessing degrees of handicap and “certifying” the handicapped is inadequate and frequently abused.

However, discussions with non-governmental organisations in the field of social protection of the handicapped reveal that organisations prefer to pay penalties rather than hire handicapped people, even at the required minimum 4% of the total workforce. This applies to organisations with over 100 employees. Instead of taking on handicapped people, they contribute to the Social Solidarity Fund for the Handicapped an amount equal to the minimum salary multiplied by the number of jobs not filled by handicapped people. Wage tax exemption has done nothing to change their attitude; nor has the chance to hire them on a part-time basis or have them working at home. Tax privileges granted to protected units, such as co-operatives and protected workshops, also had a limited impact.

Moreover, the products made by handicapped people – involving handicrafts such as bookbinding – are in decreasing demand. The blind still successfully provide massage – but even they may soon be replaced by the graduates of the Kineto-Therapy College, the entrance test of which would disqualify blind candidates.

Given the severe poverty of most handicapped people, their access to jobs is often restricted by transport difficulties. Furthermore, despite legal demands, working conditions and access ways within companies are rarely suited to them. Given their low incomes, families with handicapped teenagers can rarely afford the wheelchairs that would enable them to attend vocational training courses, when and if available.

Irrespective of type of handicap (physical or mental), the handicapped are at great risk of social exclusion. There is no culture of social integration for the handicapped, even in cultivated milieus, while initiatives to advance rehabilitation, including family counselling, are scarce. As in other areas of social protection, non-governmental organisations are carrying out programmes dedicated to the education, socialisation, rehabilitation and social and professional integration of the handicapped. These include day centres, kindergartens, family counselling and support, home aid services involving families in the rehabilitation work and protected workshops. Note that the parents of handicapped children and the handicapped themselves have set up non-governmental organisations.

3.7 *Unskilled workers and people with low qualifications*

Unskilled workers and people with low qualifications are usually part-time workers and day labourers. Their jobs are irregular, poorly-paid and produce little.

Part-time workers are mainly hired on the basis of civil conventions. In many cases, the convention implies a “one-off” job, not a regular labour contract. Such employment does not ensure protection against unemployment or incapacity to work caused by accidents at the workplace or illness. Until recently, employers using civil conventions did not have to contribute to their employees’ social insurance fund. In the long run, this reduced the employees’ pension.

Day-labourers are employed in construction, agriculture and sometimes in tourism. Usually, there is no employment agreement and no protection against different types of risk, as most of them work on the black market. The day labourers have few or no qualifications so they must train to reduce the chances of being expelled from the labour market. Such training requires substantial investment.

Unfortunately, statistics concerning atypical workers do not help us to pinpoint the extent of social exclusion. National Commission of Statistics (AMIGO survey) just states that 15% of the employed population works part-time, and another 18.2% works less than the normal working schedule. Over 88% live in rural areas. The above data make no distinction between workers only employed on civil convention terms and those with a regular labour contract and a civil convention. Moreover, day labourers barely feature in any statistics.

According to the AMIGO survey, in 1996 one third of part-time employees worked less than 21 hours per week, and could not earn enough to have a decent standard of living. Significantly, over 90% of the part-time workers were actively searching for a full-time job.

Also in trouble are *workers* with just one skill. This is because they are at risk of collective redundancies in declining industries, such as mining or steel. While some steps have been taken to find alternative employment for them, very few has actually got new jobs. The Government has done almost nothing about their redeployment, and it was a long time before any international support came on stream. As a result, there were several demonstrations in the affected regions and redundant workers set up non-governmental organisations to fight for their rights and restore their well being. Significantly, the National Agency of Employment and Vocational Training reported that at first many ex-workers were reluctant to take up new jobs by mid-1999 as they paid less than their former jobs. These people therefore relied on severance pay, unemployment benefit and child allowances. After using up all their unemployment benefit, these people had perforce to accept the lower-paid employment. In 1999, 268,839 people have been dismissed; of them, 268,839 drew severance pay and 144,514 participated in outplacement initiatives.

As for Roma, it is estimated that only 10% have jobs in the formal sector. According to the sample interviewed for a 1992 inquiry, 88.8% of women and 58% of men had no qualifications. Illiterate or barely educated, Roma are prime candidates for redundancy following privatisation, downsizing or business closure. Only 38% men and 15% women are employed. At present, almost half of the Roma men are unemployed or have no stable occupation to ensure a minimum income. As for gypsy women, the situation is far worse. Traditional trades are in decline because they are very limited and anyway rendered obsolete by technological progress. Even if this was not the case, the sector would be far too over-crowded due to the high birth rate of the Roma. As a result, Roma earn their living by making bricks and in other jobs that need little start-up capital, as unskilled workers in industry or seasonal workers in agricultural farms. 60% of unemployed Roma are unskilled: they are only

qualified for low status jobs and, when businesses are restructured, are highly vulnerable to redundancy. Hence, they are at risk of being marginalised.

According to “Employment and Labour Market in Romania” (European Training Foundation working document, 1999, based on AMIGO survey), only a third of them have completed their compulsory education, if that. This shows just how exposed unskilled workers and people with low qualifications are to upheavals on the labour market. It follows that Roma who do find work, tend to be quite well educated.

Until the school year 1999-2000, vocational education and training as provided by the education system was irrelevant to labour market needs. That year was a watershed as it marked the start of a national approach to realising the policy in the Phare vocational education and training reform programme. As we have said, we will not be able to comment on the new generation of graduates trained according to reformed curricula until July 2002 (vocational schools) and July 2003 (post-secondary schools). Meanwhile, continuing training must offset low qualifications and lack of skills.

4. Policy provision

This chapter gives an overall assessment of the awareness and action of public authorities (both central and local) and civil society groups (local communities, non-governmental organisations) concerning difficulties faced by sub-groups at risk of social exclusion (see chapter 3). We then describe the legal provisions, programmes and special measures related to the vocational education and training undertaken by both state and civil society to overcome exclusion. Recommendations for policy development, measures and actions round off policy provision for each sub-group.

4.1 *Single mothers*

In the past, everyone, regardless of gender or category, enjoyed relatively equal access to basic education, health care and work. This situation was compromised but not completely destroyed during transition.

Various pieces of Romanian legislation - these include the constitution, family code, labour law, health and safety at work, social insurance, social assistance, family allowances, parental leave, health and penal code - include basic provisions for equal treatment for men and women according to international convention as ratified by Romania. Parliament has also drafted a law on paternal leave. This enables fathers to take care of newborn babies and to reconcile family responsibilities with work. Moreover, Parliament is currently debating a draft law on equal opportunities. This will guarantee equal opportunities and treatment for men and women in all sectors of economic and social life. It will also make the public authorities responsible for seeing that it is carried out. This law will apply to the private sector. It will also guarantee compensation to those who justly complain about discrimination over salaries, adult training, qualification and re-qualification, promotion or sexual harassment.

Despite this promised legislation, the chances of its enforcement are fairly remote (see Chapter 2). Currently, the main problem is not the spirit of the law, but finding ways to implement it.

In 1995, the government set up a specialised Department for Women's Rights and Family Policies within the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. Headed by a Secretary of State, this Department supervised the application of the law concerning programmes that protected and promoted the rights of women. Until now, the Department has initiated important draft laws (as we have seen, laws on paternal leave and equal opportunities) and national programmes. For example, campaigns to promote women's health, especially women bearing children and women at work.

A Commission for Equal Opportunities was also set up within Parliament as well as a special Ombudsman's Department. However, none of these structures have the authority to co-ordinate all the social policies related to women's issues in Romania. Moreover, there are no services at local level to address problems faced by women at risk, including single mothers.

So far, most services for single mothers have come from non-governmental organisations. According to an inquiry of the Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations for Child Protection carried out

in March 1998, there are 35 of these involved in social protection activities dedicated to single parent families.

Since 1990, Romania has benefited from a wide range of programmes supported by international bodies, as follows:

- The United Nations International Children in Emergency Fund has financed programmes and projects for mothers and children, especially for disadvantaged women;
- The United Nations Development Programme has implemented programmes to promote equal opportunities;
- The European Union, through its Phare programme and the Council of Europe, has also helped develop non-governmental organisations active in the social protection of women, observance of women's rights, career development and training, etc.

Until now, the problems of single mothers, although acknowledged by professionals, have not been the subject of specific policies, legislation or studies. Non-governmental organisations, especially those involved in child and family protection, set up one-off initiatives to help this group at risk of social exclusion.

In the light of the above, we recommend these policy measures and actions:

- Examining specific statistics and studies about this group so as to identify the real extent of the problem, and take educational and social steps to solve it.
- Mounting a campaign aimed to tell the Romanian authorities and local communities about the difficulties faced by single mothers and their long-term effects on their children. This should inspire the launch of specific policies and generally mobilise community support.
- Legislating for social protection measures to reduce the social exclusion risks of this group. For example, free services to help single mothers bring up their children (crèches, kindergartens, child education centres, baby sitting, home-aid support).
- **Privileged access to parenting education and programmes.**

Too often, society assumes that if people can produce children, they can also look after them. Taking care of a child's development is a complex, demanding and critical task, especially for single mothers. The prenatal months and first five years of a child's life are characterised by rapid growth, environmental needs, great dependence on caretakers and vulnerability. And all too often early failures result in long-term development troubles. The first phase of a child's development has a strong impact on his/her whole life. In this period, a child not only forms attachments that shape his or her approach to human relationships and social skills, but also lays down the foundations of learning skills. Most single mothers want their children to be good at learning. But many are unaware of the simple, but influential and inexpensive, things they can do to further their children's development. Single mothers could do much to ensure a sound education and, subsequently, the economic and social well being of their children. For instance, they could prepare them for school and generate the knowledge, skills and resources to support them throughout their education. Adolescent single mothers in particular need support, counselling and knowledge to meet their infants' and their own needs. Adolescent mothers are likely to have low-weight babies with AIDS and/or addicted to drugs. Having a child can easily blight the expectations of an adolescent mother, condemning her to poverty and dependency on welfare. Given the high incidence of adolescent pregnancies that result in abandonment and institutionalisation, this is a very urgent issue. So we must campaign for schemes that help adolescent single mothers to develop as people in their own right, as well as helping their babies.

■ **Provision of early childhood education**

Early childhood education imparts general learning to children and fosters their physical, social and language development. Today, most young children attend kindergartens provided by public and private resources and implemented in various ways. International social research on early childhood education shows that while it benefits every child, poor children raised by single mothers benefit the most, as they have access to stimulation and experiences that are sometimes not available at home. While there will always be a need for various kinds of pre-school education, public schools must go on providing it as good pre-school courses clearly boost current learning potential and future results. Benefits to society include more children in education, reduced crime and delinquency, better skills and productivity at work, better health and less dependency on welfare. It follows that educating infants is more than just an effective way for individuals and single parents to better themselves, it is also a worthwhile investment in the community and society as a whole. More funds for infant education would be a start.

■ **Development of health education courses and school curriculum**

Schools can do much to help families and especially single mothers to sustain children's health and well-being. To achieve this, they must provide a comprehensive children's health education curriculum that covers violence and accident prevention, community health, consumer health, environmental health, family health, mental and emotional health, nutrition, and personal habits. Health education must include awareness of gender rights, making responsible decisions on sexual and social matters and parental responsibilities; and also, how to avoid unplanned pregnancy, venereal diseases and AIDS.

■ **Improving educational attainment of children brought up by single mothers**

The Government's main aim must be steadily to raise and maintain school attendance figures in all communities. School attendance is vital to educational achievement. Too many pupils play truant, but we must also reduce absenteeism and school abandonment which is especially condoned by poor parents and single-parent families. Non-attendance, under-achievement at school, discrimination, lack of moral and civic values can all lead to other problems such as crime, prostitution, drug abuse, and disregard of ecological norms. Positive stress on making the most of school will develop self-confidence and motivation in young people, prompt positive attitudes to education and better prepare them for the labour market. Special attention must go to creating equal education opportunities and - in case of children from poor families, single mothers and Roma parents - avoiding polarisation at school. We must develop policies to help families keep children in school by providing scholarships, educational equipment and transport subsidies. We must emphasise the link between good education and getting a good job. And we must support out-of-school learning activities such as truancy projects, peer-led counselling, mentoring projects, targeted work, youth crime prevention and skills projects.

- Provision of free counselling services to single mothers that cover economic, career, psychological and judicial matters.
- Tax incentives for employers who hire single mothers.
- Spread good practices in the field by providing state finance to help single mothers by supporting social projects set up by specialised non-governmental organisations.

4.2 *Young drop-outs*

As the previous chapter noted, drop-outs are caused by poverty, unemployment, lack of information, badly educated parents, weak motivation for schooling, etc. Here, we will discuss some of the ways in which the social protection system goes wrong. We will also describe in more detail how public education services have worked with non-governmental organisations and local communities to prevent and reduce this problem.

4.2.1 *Social protection*

Social protection for poor children and families includes cash (family allowances and social benefits) and social assistance services.

The cash support is far from enough to cover their needs. Child allowances for everyone, irrespective of family needs, are in line with the principle of equal rights for all families with children. It also encourages them to have children, and to bring them up in the family. We do not question these principles. However, a child allowance of US\$4 per month for a family with one child is of little use to a reasonably well placed family and almost no use to a poor family as it does not cover even minimum needs. The same goes for the supplementary allowance for the second child.

Social benefit (minimum income guarantee) is based on the social solidarity principle: you qualify by means-testing and do not have to make contributions. Social benefit comprises a small lump sum given monthly to families or individuals with little or no income. The system's inadequacies include high administrative costs, inaccurate targeting of poor families, weak methods of assessment, inflexible eligibility criteria and, due to low council budgets, meagre benefits.

Social assistance services to poor children are usually random. Small social assistance networks have recently started to work in line with the County Directorates for the Protection of Children's Rights. They are mainly solving cases brought to their attention by the needy, and the institutions that should be doing this - schools, dispensaries and kindergartens - are not meeting their obligations. Moreover, these networks function within County Directorates. The result is that the administration and the provision of services get confused, and reduce effectiveness all round.

After 1990, non-governmental organisations were the first to introduce social assistance networks. They developed social services and provided material support (116 non-governmental organisations out of 131 provided social services, according to the Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations in Child Protection, 1998). The results obtained vindicate the provision of both funds and services.

Also note the 1995-1999 SESAM Programme funded by the European Union/Phare (5.5 million Euro) and administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. This programme followed the approach described above. It aimed to help Romanian authorities to decentralise and diversify social services by promoting 41 innovative projects in over 25 Romanian counties. The projects were developed by partnerships between public authorities and non-governmental organisations, and were co-funded, 50% by Phare and 50% by local contribution. Target groups comprised poor children and families, old people, the handicapped, socially excluded long-term unemployed, etc. The social services included meals on wheels, social canteens, day care centres, protected workshops, temporary shelters, home aid support, judicial and medical assistance.

To fight poverty, the United Nations Development Programme has put a national campaign in hand. This involves the Government, the President, scientific circles, local authorities, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. The campaign anticipates: two pilot projects in disadvantaged

areas (improvement of housing conditions, microcredits, employment support, community education, basic education); the development of regional projects to support rural women; institutional development to help Government to implement anti-poverty policies, etc. These projects work together to fight poverty and social exclusion.

Also in hand is the Romanian Social Development Fund. This aims to reduce poverty and encourage community-driven development by: (a) improving the lives of beneficiaries in poor rural communities and disadvantaged groups; and (b) raising their capacity to foster their own interests at local level. It supports small-scale local infrastructure, community-based social services, income-generating activities and the development of employment opportunities. We estimate that 1,200 local projects - developed in partnership with, and co-funded by, local contributions - will be supported, benefiting about 600,000 people. The Social Development Fund is co-funded by the World Bank with a \$US20 million loan matched by Romanian Government funds of \$US5 million.

4.2.2 *Educational policies and reforms*

Educational reform has based its policies and strategies on realities and needs specific to Romania. Educational reform has two aims: (a) to help overcome immediate difficulties facing Romanian society, and (b) to further social, cultural, administrative and economic development and thereby ensure Romania meets European Union standards and policies.

Educational policies therefore aim to make Romanian society:

- an inclusive society, that gives each citizen the chance of fulfil his or her potential;
- a prosperous society, within which everyone develops individually and as a worker, thereby contributing to national social and economic development in an environment rendered competitive by globalisation.

The Ministry of National Education promotes equal access to education to the school-age population through state and private education, by generating educational alternatives and guaranteeing the right to an appropriate education, irrespective of social condition or material status, gender, race, nationality, political or religious affiliation.

The strategic aims that shaped the priorities of pre-university education in 1998-2001 are:

- enrolment of the entire school-age population into education that ensures development along individual education paths; priority going to “second chance” courses for those unable for whatever reason to attend compulsory education;
- ensuring quality of overall education and, particularly, of the classroom environment, using national standards with special reference to equal chances;
- making institutional development central to fulfilling these aims; schools working with the social, cultural and economic environment, and turning into community centres of educational resources. These centres will help develop human resources in local communities. By doing this, they will provide a flexible form of education, including vocation training, that involves various specialists in its development. At the same time, the management of any education unit must encourage public accountability.

We must give everyone a chance to develop as people and as workers according to their aspirations, skills and performance. This means formal education must be up to giving everybody a first chance and, if they missed out on that first chance for any reason, giving them another go. An equally

important point is that educational policies cannot develop beyond the framework of lifelong learning, especially given the limited time assigned to the acquisition of working skills.

The formal context of this study comprises laws, ordinances and decisions from the Government plus orders from the Minister of National Education.

In 1999, Parliament amended the Law on Education no. 84/1995. Some of the amendments aimed to reinforce the provision of equal chances, i.e. education in similar environments, second chance schooling in primary and lower secondary education, better chances for social and occupational lifelong learning.

In 1998, prompted by the Ministry of National Education, the Government promoted Ordinance no.102. This concerned the organisation and function of permanent education within educational units (approved by the Chamber of Deputies, the Ordinance awaits ratification by the Senate). This Ordinance targets basic education, education for democratic citizenship and lifelong learning.

The Ministry of National Education has, in turn, issued specific norms and orders, initiated projects and developed educational programmes. The aim is to enhance equal access to education. The most relevant are as follows.

a) **Implementation and spread of development strategies in vocational and technical education as defined by European Union/Phare Vocational Education and Training RO9405 Programme.**

The legal and normative basis was ensured by the following Orders of the Minister of National Education (OMENs): OMEN no. 5013/1998 concerning the reorganisation of vocational and technical education; OMEN no. 3230/1999 concerning the adoption of the methodology for the generalisation of vocational and technical education reform; OMEN no. 4318/1999 for the organisation of vocational education through apprenticeship school starting with school year 1999-2000; OMEN no. 4176/1999 concerning the approval of the high school curriculum - technical route; OMEN no. 4049/1999 on the new classification³ of occupations, trades and specialisations for whom qualification is ensured through vocational and technical education (upper and post-secondary education).

The European Union/Phare Vocational Education and Training RO9405 Programme and its generalisation have developed some key essentials to combat social exclusion in Romania. Restructuring included the framing of multi-level competence-based curricula. This comprised core curriculum (70%) and locally developed curriculum (30%). Such changes allowed for delays in narrow specialisation as well as vertical and horizontal flexibility. As a result, we can now adjust training to the trainees' interests and potential and to labour market needs. The curriculum includes core competencies, with special attention to individual and social skills, foreign languages and entrepreneurship. Curricula are consistent with training standards drawn up with social partners. The latter must also play a key role in framing parts of curricula devoted to local activities. Another issue is the broadening of qualifications. For instance, the number is now being reduced from 162 to 27 in high schools.

b) **Design and implementation of an educational strategy specific to Roma.**

The Yearbook "Romanian Educational System for Roma in the School Year 1998-1999" put forward a co-ordinated and systematic approach to schooling. OMEN no. 5083/1998 introduced positive discrimination measures to make it easier for young Roma to get into vocational schools, high schools and universities. And OMEN no.3577/1998 set up moves to give Roma access to teacher-training. Other ministerial orders and notifications have regulated partnerships with civic, cultural and political organisations of Roma.

3 This classification has been promoted in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and subsequently approved by Government decision.

Successful strategy measures include : initiatives to place Roma in faculties and university colleges and thereby develop an intellectual coterie of young Roma; setting up a Romani language and literature department at the University of Bucharest; encouraging Romani teaching and learning in pre-university education; organising special Roma teacher-training courses; drawing up curricula and textbooks for Romani language, literature, history and civilisation; appointing inspectors for Roma in each school inspectorate; providing places in camps of inter-cultural education; working with non-governmental organisations to raise Roma enrolment rate at schools.

The Ministry of National Education does not recommend separate schooling for Roma children. When parents asked for children to be enrolled in classes with a compensatory course during primary school, non-governmental organisations and charities arranged free meals, clothing and school supplies. Most active were: Baptist Church for School "RUT" (Ferentari, Bucharest); Association "Gypsy Women from Banat" involved in the activities of the "Educational-Cultural Centre" (Timișoara); Open Society Foundation in many regions of Romania (e.g. kindergarten Bobești, Ilfov county) - see also point 4 below; Caritas (Satu Mare); Foundation "Vassdas" (Cluj Napoca), etc.

c) Relaunching of rural education.

The National Programme "Relaunching of Rural Education" has passed OMEN no. 9228/1999 and the Prime Minister. It addresses almost half the Roma school-age population.

Backed by US\$11.5 million from the Ministry of National Education and the World Bank, a pilot project aims to identify and test some strategies to raise the quality of rural education. It will then frame programmes to generate competencies and stimulate community initiatives that involve a variety of local participants. Solutions adopted at community level will be examined to see if they can be repeated elsewhere.

The Ministry of National Education, supported by the Prime Minister, has also launched specific procedures to get another World Bank loan of US\$400 million. The aim is to relaunch rural education of a quality that meets national, European and international standards. The Ministry of National Education will introduce reforms that are part of the national strategy for rural development and sector policies as promoted by other ministries and bodies (agriculture, health, local public administration, labour and social protection, transport, etc.).

The National Programme "Relaunching of Rural Education" contains measures that allow for the special features and needs of each target area. For instance: rationalisation of school network, learning environments consistent with national standards, fresh approach to school libraries, construction and/or efficient use of school transport networks, introduction and expansion of distance education, organisation of school canteens, incentives for qualified staff to work in rural areas, etc.

d) Provision of second chance schooling and learning.

The National Programme "Education for the Second Chance" (OMEN no.4780/1999) addresses various target groups. They include school-age people who have never been to school or who abandoned compulsory education or did not continue post-compulsory education; unemployed 14-25s, over-25s who never completed compulsory education or whose initial training became irrelevant to the training needs of social and economic development at local level.

The basis of this programme was prepared by several ministerial orders and programmes adopted in 1998/1999. It relates to the following areas: eradication of illiteracy, reduction of school abandonment, improvement of school enrolment; organisation of continuing vocational training by schools; setting up of schools in communes with many pupils; adoption of educational programme "Values and Means of Education Today"; incorporation of lifelong learning principles in programme of educational reform; decentralisation of pre-university education and strengthening of institutional autonomy of schools and high schools; organisation of adult education; experimental programme against marginalisation and social

exclusion of young people who abandoned the compulsory education and have not acquired minimum employability competencies; contract-based integration of schools and high schools within local communities; and contract between the educational establishments and local councils. See points 5 and 6 below for more details.

The National Programme "Education for the Second Chance" becomes effective when conditions for the first chance in education for school-age young people are adequately secured (e.g. rural education). The programme aims to build and strengthen social and economic cohesion and fight against marginalisation and social exclusion. Social and professional integration programmes should complement its specific measures.

One of the programme components is based on the achievements of a successful programme developed by the ministry in close co-operation with the Open Society Foundation – Centre Education 2000+. It concerns the programme "School Development in Communities with Roma Minority", developed in six centres. The programme has focused on: school management; inter-cultural education; oral history so as to retrieve traditions, habits, customs of this ethnic minority; classroom management based on co-operative learning; tutoring and remedial teaching; parents' education.

Other components refer to extending the activities implemented during the school year 1998-1999 in several counties (Gorj, Giurgiu, Olt, etc). These consist of: classes with catch-up education programmes, extra-mural literacy courses, home schooling for people with motor deficiencies, classes of special education, special classes for Roma, distance education to eradicate the illiteracy of over-16s.

e) **Mitigation of youth marginalisation and social exclusion.**

The "Programme Against Marginalisation and Social Exclusion of Youth" approved by OMEN no.4231/1999 aims to help under 25s who have not completed compulsory education but did finish primary education. Curricula developed by this programme give these young people a chance to complete compulsory education and acquire a basic qualification - usually in an apprentice school. The pilot phase was conducted in seven counties. Starting with school year 2000-2001, this programme spread nationwide.

f) **Development of schools multifunctional role in the community**

OMEN no.4521/1999 concerns the Framework Contract between schools and local councils. It states that managements of schools, high schools and school inspectorates must take the necessary steps to make schools into educational community centres.

School management and inspectorates must also mastermind activities now taking place in the Regional Centres of Vocational Education and Training. These initiatives stem from OMEN no. 3407/1998 which covered the organisation of continuing vocational training provided by the educational units. 14-25s, who completed compulsory education or a form of post-compulsory education and have little hope of getting work, have priority access to initial and continuing vocational training programmes organised by schools. In the light of the above, the Ministry of National Education must follow European Union Employment Guidelines whereby the state must provide first job seekers with supplementary training to enhance their employability – and do so within six months of their leaving school.

Schools are encouraged to participate, alone or in groups, in carrying out projects for human resources development within the overall scheme of regional development. The same goes for projects that enable adults to continue training.

We will shortly apply the above Ministerial Orders and carry out projects or activities specific to the National Programme "Education for the Second Chance". In gauging their impact, we will establish criteria for evaluating schools, teachers' houses and psycho-pedagogical centres.

This legal and institutional framework recently came into force. Likewise, second chance schooling. The inference is that Romania is not used to carrying out educational policies that

fight exclusion. Or, come to that, to researching the impact of such policies. So far, efforts have only comprised pilot projects and experiments. The major risk is lack of resources to ensure similar quality nationwide.

So we recommend:

- access for all to education as a first or second chance in the context of lifelong learning;
- enrolment of children in pre-school education and establishment nationwide of preparatory classes in pre-primary education;
- a wider school network to make education available to all in rural and disadvantaged areas;
- learning environments and courses suited to vulnerable groups and the disabled; access for all to information and “hands-on” use of information and communication technology;
- improve partnerships between educational programmes and institutions, public authorities and local communities; complete legislation, strengthen social discussion in rural areas;
- implement second-chance courses for those who temporarily abandoned basic education and missed out on literacy and numeracy; use impact assessments at pilot phase to disseminate the Programme “Education for the Second Chance” ;
- campaign to stimulate active lifelong social participation and personal development;
- recognise non-formal learning, and ensure synergy of non-formal with formal education;
- develop a legal and institutional framework for continuous training;
- extend role of educational institutions within formal education to further the economic and social development of both the communities and the business environment, i.e. transform education institutions into community resources centres.

Make improved vocational education essential to social cohesion:

- Disseminate the positive experience of reforms to vocational education and training; consolidate structure within pre-tertiary, upper and post-secondary education (simplify legislation, procedures and regulations; decentralise and redefine educational structures);
- develop partnerships between local communities, local authorities and the business environment;
- develop quality assurance throughout education (curriculum, teacher training, education management, evaluation);
- give the system more mobility to promote continuation of studies;
- diversify sources of funds to underwrite secondary education;
- ensure continuity of programmes to make structures, contents and professional qualifications more relevant to the interests of individuals, and the needs of the labour market and local and regional communities;
- ratify certification system in vocational education, and ensure wide acceptance for professional qualifications;
- improve policies that ease transition from school to work;
- harmonise policies and practices to do with initial and continuous training (quality assurance through curriculum contents, evaluation and certification);

- improve quality of education services in rural areas (education standards, governance, management of human resources, infrastructure, information and communication tools, libraries, basic teaching aids, student transport, information and career counselling);
- motivate human resources to play an active role in rural development programmes.

4.3 *Institutionalised children*

Public authorities are fully aware of the problems faced by institutionalised children largely through the media, the non-governmental sector and international organisations, especially the European Union. Improvement of the situation of institutionalised children is now a condition of Romania's membership of the European Union.

Approaches to child protection issues have developed impressively over the last ten years. Institutions such as nurseries and children's homes have made remarkable progress. Much of this is due to domestic and foreign non-governmental organisations. At first, these provided material support; they then devised alternative services, delivered staff training and designed care methodologies. We must stress that the positive aspects of the legislative changes below are based on experience and models developed by non-governmental organisations.

Under domestic and international pressure, the Romanian authorities have promulgated regulations, norms and laws designed to restructure the child protection system. Most important was Law no.108/1998 (Emergency Ordinance no.26/1997) on the decentralisation and diversification of child protection services. This was a breakthrough in the reform of child protection in Romania. Indeed, our country was cited as a positive example for other countries in the same situation; in 1998, the United Nations International Children in Emergency Fund intended to carry out a case study on Romanian reform.

Unfortunately, after two years of reform, Romanians realised they had chosen the wrong time for decentralisation. Against a background of economic collapse, responsibility switched from central to county authorities with no experience and scarce resources. This scuppered the idea of reform. In counties with over 30% unemployment, it was hard for local administrations to ensure adequate funding for child care institutions or other social services. On top of this, the management of local administrations was poor and legislation, inadequate. Result: a severe financial crisis in residential institutions in summer 1999 endangered the lives of many children.

The crisis attracted emergency financial support from the European Commission and some Western countries (United States of America, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands). It also prompted more pressure to continue the reforms and provide resources for their implementation at a level that would avoid another crisis. So new Ordinance no.192/1999 emerged. This set up the National Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights, and allowed for the continuation of the decentralisation process and its funding mechanisms. The Ordinance was rapidly complemented by the Governmental Strategy for Child Protection, 2000-2003. This gives priority to restructuring current residential institutions; and to channelling resources into the organisation and diversification of services that offer alternatives to residential care. In this context, the Strategy relates to the ratification and promotion of quality standards, the organisation and validation of complementary training courses for child protection staff and, amongst much else, the ratification of evaluation grids for institutions and services.

Note that the above laws particularly concern reforms of the institutional care system. In broader terms and in terms of children's rights observance, Romania still has many legal shortcomings: an

obsolete Family Code, judicial neglect of juvenile delinquents, lack of a Childrens' Court to replace the current, very ineffective Commissions for Child Protection which proved detrimental to children.

Analysis of intakes at institutions highlighted a rise in the number of abandoned children in recent years (peaking in 1997). Hence, national strategies to prevent this phenomenon. However, government programmes to prevent child abandonment are practically non-existent, so it is non-governmental organisations that delivering most of the services such as counselling centres for pregnant women, family support and counselling and maternity centres.

In 1990, the non-governmental organisations were the first to support children's institutions. Their contribution ranged from simple material help to rehabilitating buildings and equipping them with special resources, from staff training to pilot projects that promoted modern care. Using these models, local authorities and non-governmental organisations have tried to multiply best practices and programmes against child abandonment.

To avoid risks of social exclusion, some non-governmental organisations (Association SOS Copiii, Sântana Arad, ASIS, Pentru Copiii Noştri, etc.) have trained institutionalised children for jobs required on the labour market.

There are no governmental programmes to support teenagers leaving residential care. With no social housing, they have no access to social benefits or medical care. In institutions, there are no career advice services, no ways to learn about available opportunities or their rights in general. So they are denied scope for training and requalification, for entry to schools and apprenticeships. This defines the *info-exclusion* previously mentioned. For teenagers with good minds robust motivation and no money, study at university level can only be a dream. Realising this, the non-governmental sector was the first to initiate family-type social apartments and deliver post-residential vocational training. For example, the Association SOS Copii Sântana Arad, Association Sprijinirea Integrării Sociale and Association "The Door".

Due to non-governmental organisations that train staff, new occupations such as maternal assistant and foster family, have emerged. Former occupations have also regained their social status; for example, social worker and social assistant. Specialists in staff training include the International Foundation for Child and Family, CRIPS and Pestalozzi.

Recommendations for further action:

- Institutions are developing at very different speeds. So are the county environments in which they operate. Moreover, changes imposed by third parties face considerable resistance. So, if each institution involved staff in the development of its own restructuring project, we would progress. Because the project would solve child care needs. Staff would feel proud of their involvement in the changes. And the project would furnish a yardstick to assess the institution's managerial capacity. However, the design and implementation of individual plans must allow for standards and guidelines that can apply nationwide.
- for children in institutions:
 - provision of advice on occupations, career counselling, social rights guidance and training in jobs required on the labour market; this could be done with support from public employment and training services.
- for teenagers leaving or already out of residential care:
 - during the last year in the institution, individual advice on making plans for an independent life (employment, housing, family planning, etc.); systematic monitoring and regular assessment of progress in implementing the plan;

- design and implementation of national programme to integrate teenagers into real life and make possible an independent life based on co-operation between civil society and institutions at central and local level (labour, health, housing, education ministries, local administrations);
- development of public-private partnerships to increase employability by training and to identify job vacancies.
- complementary measures:
 - continue “deinstitutionalisation” efforts and identify family-type alternatives;
 - intensive family education campaign, support and counselling to prevent child abandonment.

4.4 *Street children and teenagers*

Romanian authorities, especially the National Agency for the Protection of Children’s Rights, are aware of the problems faced by street children and teenagers. However, until now, very little has happened to improve their situation.

There is no specific legislation on street children and teenagers. And the Government has only lately given this issue priority for action in its Strategy for Child Protection, 2000-2003. According to this, there must be a national initiative to analyse and mitigate the problems of street children. The Strategy foresees:

- setting up and developing emergency centres for the taking care of street children, and assessment their condition;
- setting up and developing day centres in all towns with these problems. The centres will protect, educate and reintegrate street children into society;
- promotion of partnership with non-governmental organisations active in the social rehabilitation of street children.

We have yet to see how efficiently this strategy will be followed up and implemented. Until now, non-governmental organisations with overseas support have commissioned nearly all the services for this group (see Chapter 3). And, despite their quantity, these services have not covered key issues such as delinquency and drug addiction.

Apart from actions foreseen in the strategy and services already provided, here are some supplementary recommendations:

- Development of services to reintegrate families: identification and counselling of family, placement (foster family, adoption) and monitoring of care;
- The street children appeared in Romania ten years ago, most of them teenagers. Reintegrating them into the family and society raises challenges that are very different from - and much more daunting than - those attendant on small children. Another priority is courses to teach these teenagers occupational skills that would command a living wage. These courses ought to involve businesses that would benefit from tax concessions in exchange of their contribution to training. Subsequently, these enterprises might well benefit by developing qualified labour force and a good public image. Some Dutch investors are already keen to start such an initiative in Romania.
- Continue to raise public awareness to build tolerance and strengthen social solidarity; develop community self-help networks to reintegrate these people into mainstream life.

4.5 *Unemployed under 25*

The National Programme “Education for the Second Chance” provides for under-25 who have not completed compulsory education or have no qualifications or jobs. That aside, various employment and training measures cover the needs of young people switching from school to work.

Unemployed people claim protection according to their contributions to the Unemployment Fund. For young graduates of education institutions, however, protection is initially preventive and subsequently curative:

4.5.1 *Preventive actions to fight unemployment and offset lack of professional experience at time of first employment, through “professional integration support”*

- Financial incentives to employers who hire young high school and/or university graduates for newly-created jobs or vacancies which are not the result of a redundancy during the previous year i.e. one-year wage subsidy equivalent to 70% of the level of net wage established at the time of employment so long as the graduate has a work contract for at least three years;
- young employees can take free courses according to job requirements.

The act which regulates such preventive actions against young unemployment is Emergency Ordinance no.35/1997, approved by Law no.162/1997. Similar policies were developed previously in 1992 and 1995 (Law no. 87, respectively Government Ordinance no.32).

We find it hard to interpret and analyse data on those benefiting from such actions (see Annex 8) because of month-by-month variations in the employment of young graduates and variations in the time education was completed (employment can occur at any time within a year of graduation). The National Agency for Employment and Vocational Training has no statistics concerning the graduates who attended courses (point 1 b) above) because no one took advantage of this initiative.

4.5.2 *Curative actions for the protection and support of young people unable to get a job for a time*

These people could be:

- ordinary unemployed people - young people who gained some job experience during former employment based on a labour contract of six months minimum, who have also contributed to the Unemployment Fund; they enjoy full rights; “assimilated unemployed people” - young graduates unable to get a job for a time; they are registered with employment services and enjoy the same rights and obligations as the insured unemployed.

The difference between the two categories of youngsters lies in the amount of unemployment benefit they can draw. However, there are no differences in employment measures such as:

- qualification, re-qualification and updating of professional skills;
- labour mediation;
- entitlement of small and medium-sized businesses to get credits with subsidised interest rates for job creation and employment of the unemployed.

The legal framework which regulates the protection of the unemployed and their professional reintegration is constituted by Law no.1/1991, republished, amended and completed by Law no.65/1997 and Emergency Ordinance no.47/1997.

As for social exclusion, note that Law no.1/1991 includes some restrictive access conditions for certain people. This is understandable, given its origins and comparable traditions in other countries. Young people who have not completed compulsory education and workers who are not employed with a labour contract (people with civil conventions) do not benefit fully from this system; nor are they entitled to unemployment cash benefits nor to certain active employment measures. However, these people can, on request, get free help from employment and vocational training agencies: simply by registering as job-seekers, they can proceed to find a workplace. Most of these are Roma who have usually not completed compulsory education and are usually not employed with labour contracts. Their chances for integration on the labour market dwindle even more because they rarely appeal to public employment services for labour mediation.

Unemployment in Romania shows that the better educated and trained you are, the more likely you are to get work. So, from the start, employment policies have put a high premium on vocational training – and have promoted it in various forms such as qualification, re-qualification, multi-qualification, specialisation, induction training, instruction, complementary training.

Vocational training is regulated by Law no.1/1991, Government Decision no.288/1991, republished in 1994 and Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection no.435/1995 as delivered in 15 state qualification centres.

Lack of funds rendered the centres inflexible and slow to adapt to labour market needs. So they were complemented by carefully chosen suppliers of public and private training suppliers. Suppliers of courses now comprise the network of Romanian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the association of banks, co-operatives, employers' organisations, professional associations, foundations, private education bodies, branches of multinational companies, consultancies, Romanian businesses and various individuals. Courses are based on a service contract, and delivered at the request of county agencies of employment and training. The agencies establish types of training required for various trades, specialities and positions. They also put a high premium on meeting the needs of local labour markets.

In general terms, vocational training is consistent with the Framework Programme of Training, as annually established to match training needs identified at county level. This programme is very flexible.

Analysis of data illustrates shows how few qualification and re-qualification activities there are for the unemployed. The most important reason lies in the labour market where there is scant scope for employment and/or unappealing jobs. Moreover, unemployed people are not that interested in training: attendance varied between 1.9 and 4.2%, and the average rate of subsequent employment was 20-25%. In case of unemployed under-25s, attendance was 61%. So we raise awareness, change mindsets concerning training and work and prompt people to be more responsible for their own development. Adaptability derives from various factors such as the attitude of the individual, level and quality of education, experience and commitment to vocational training.

Other reasons for the paucity of courses and low attendances are the public employment service's low budget, legal requirements and the lack of economic development forecasts. As a result, the trainees' employment prospects dictated the organisation of the courses. The result is training geared to labour demand at a given moment, with very few courses anticipating future needs.

Unfortunately, we have no data on the net effect of vocational training courses on employability of trainees, including under-25s. Starting with 2000 however, the National Agency for Employment

and Vocational Training has launched a pilot project to pinpoint such net effects. The results will be very useful when we come to set up a permanent working methodology for all future employment and courses.

Policy recommendations:

- strengthen career-counselling and job search skills in schools, high schools and universities while mounting campaigns to make people more responsible for their own development and more aware of courses and their benefits, pros and cons of labour contracts and civil conventions, etc.;
- give each unemployed young person a new start before he/she has been out of work for six months, in the form of training, retraining, work practice, a job, whatever; this is in line with European Union employment guidelines which Romania must follow, given its application for European Union membership;
- mount “anticipatory” vocational courses based on economic development prognoses and abolish legal constraints on using public funds;
- strengthen monitoring and evaluation capacity of public employment and training services, and thereby refine the statistics and qualitative analyses vital to improving future policies for the young;
- persuade local communities to help settle problems facing their labour markets; this means generating the necessary infrastructure and training community officials while effecting key changes in social attitudes and the economic regeneration of the zone.

Finally, we stress that while vocational training is central to fighting youth unemployment, complementary job creation measures are strongly required. They could come from economic growth, which is always essential to employment. Note, too, the evolution of the European Social Fund, which changed from training tool to a way of promoting European Union Member States employment policies. Far from being an accident, this came about through experience over a long time. Romania must learn this lesson very quickly.

4.6 *Handicapped people*

As the previous chapter stated, handicapped people face a worryingly larger risk of social exclusion.

Romanian authorities are aware of this problem – thanks to promptings from the handicapped themselves and from non-governmental organisations, and from several campaigns carried out over the last ten years.

As a result, from 1992 on, the law introduced a range of measures to provide the handicapped with special protection. One of them was direct support to families with a view to avoid their children being put in institutions. This comprised double state child allowance, trusteeship and foster allowances for children brought up by professional carers, trusteeship and foster indemnities for adults taking care of such children, social pensions for the blind, and special education and day rehabilitation centres for children with physical and mental disabilities. As we have seen, these legal incentives were not that successful as the number of children in institutions is still high.

Another range of facilities and social rights for the handicapped includes:

- exemptions from Value Added Tax and custom duties when buying special vehicles;
- education and training at home for those unable to attend normal schools;

- monthly indemnities for the severely handicapped;
- wage tax exemptions;
- indemnities for those who look after the handicapped;
- tax incentives and duty-free raw materials for protected workshops that reinvest at least half their profits in local technology;
- wage subsidies for those who employ young graduates for 18 months as against the standard 12 months; sadly, we have no specific data to enable us to gauge the impact of this scheme on the handicapped or the attendances for subsidised vocational training; the National Agency for Employment and Training administers this scheme, and believes it to be ineffective;
- companies with over 100 employees being made to hire handicapped people in a minimum proportion of 4% of the payroll or pay penalties.

Existing facilities are important but inadequate. No national programme is based on the idea that the best way to help the handicapped is to enable them to shrug off social support, and have not just rights but obligations as socially integrated people.

The State Secretary for People with Handicaps is in charge of their social protection, but he has yet to produce ways of reducing their problems. Some material support aside, the Secretariat has no efficient programmes to support these people. Moreover, the support the Secretary has supplied to handicapped adults, whether direct incomes or tax exemptions, has generated much abuse and led to numerous corruption cases. A significant number of people have obtained "certificates of handicapped individual" with the "support" of the state commissions. As a result, they have drawn incomes to the detriment of those in genuine need. Because the Commissions for Social and Vocational Integration of the Handicapped have only been going since the end of 1999, we cannot assess their achievement yet. That said, we know that institutions are not working together to develop programmes to help find work for this group at great risk of social exclusion. The only organisations that have done this are the non-governmental organisations, some of them set up by handicapped people themselves or by their families. However, their ad hoc contributions cannot improve the situation at national level.

Hence, the following policy recommendations and actions:

- For handicapped children, we must urgently arrange for:
 - rehabilitation at an early age, when it is easier to limit or eliminate the extent of a child's dependency;
 - correct and systematic diagnosis/evaluation of lightly handicapped children at special schools to avoid the handicap being aggravated by institutionalisation;
 - intensive counselling for parents, support and training to help the family keep the child at home.
- The Secretariat in partnership with the National Agency for Employment and Training, the National Vocational Education and Training Centre, other state authorities and non-governmental organisations are to set up various projects. These aim to train the handicapped for jobs required on the labour market; and to launch courses that will swiftly lead to rehabilitation. Involvement of the handicapped in the framing and implementation of these projects is vital.
- Development of career-advice services for the handicapped;
- Reconsideration of entrance exam conditions in universities to obtain access for handicapped candidates wherever possible;

- Support employment in activities suited to the handicapped instead of leaving them to rely passively on state aid that just about ensures their survival. This means setting up partnerships between local communities and state institutions.
- Get chambers of trade and commerce to pinpoint markets and clients for products made within protected units. The aim is to ensure ever-increasing employment for the handicapped and thereby help them to integrate socially and at work.

4.7 *Unskilled workers and people with low qualifications*

In 1995, Law no.83/1995 ratified the protection of part-time workers. This law stated that individuals could be employed on a labour contract or a civil convention. In the first instance, the employer had to pay social insurance contributions. In the second, employers were exempt from this obligation, so their employees were exposed to risks such as ageing, unemployment or incapacity for work because of medical reasons. Civil conventions were permissible for a maximum of three hours per day or for 60 days full-time.

The law was amended in 1999, the civil convention now being applicable to no more than three hours a day at work that is different to the mainstream occupation of the employer. Moreover, the new law released social insurance contracts to those employed under civil conventions, although this arrangement did not include protection against unemployment. This law aimed to reduce the number of civil conventions, which are thought to be half-way between lawful employment and black market work.

2000 saw the framing of a new law on pensions and social insurance. This stated that people exclusively employed with civil conventions and earning a monthly income of at least a quarter of the gross average wage must pay social insurance contributions. This is a breakthrough in the social protection of these workers.

As for day-labourers with no qualifications, until now they have not been subjected to specific employment policies and labour protection. Day-labourers mostly work on the black labour market and therefore have little claim to social protection and health care. At present, for this group, the chances of training to acquire skills and competencies are remote because they lack compulsory education and there are no resources to cover training costs. There are no figures concerning the number of day-labourers. We only have the results of national inquiries amongst households (AMIGO) which include this group within underemployed people as a whole. The inference is that Romanian authorities did not realise the extent of this issue, as witness the lack of specific protection measures.

In the case of workers subject to collective redundancies, including single-skill workers, specific legislation (1997) allowed for:

- severance payments based on length of service and provided monthly or, in the case of entrepreneurial activities, a lump sum; more generous severance pay for those made redundant following restructuring of specific industries such as mining, defence, electricity, gas, petrol, railways, forestry, etc.
- special, and specially funded, active employment measures to support their application.

Emergency Ordinance no.98/1999 cancelled all previous legislation on collective redundancies as a result of conditions imposed on the Romanian Government by international organisations (European Union, World Bank and International Monetary Fund). Amendments referred to:

- severance pay for those made redundant following the restructure of both state and private enterprises;
- severance pay conditional on commitment to outplacement activities;
- private enterprises not legally qualifying to obtain severance pay for their former employees; but instead being entitled to pay this themselves and charge it against tax on profits; scope for restructured businesses to get subsidised loans or wages for job creation purposes.

2000 saw the launch of another amendment. This cancelled further entitlement to severance pay apart from those dismissed in RICOP areas. RICOP is a programme supported by the European Union and Phare. It supports the restructuring of businesses and employment in five large areas that include 14 of Romania's 41 counties.

Outplacement has not been fully exploited. Otherwise, it could have helped redundant single-skill workers to raise their employment prospects by adapting their skills and knowledge. Some outplacement projects are currently under way in the country thanks to the National Agency for Employment and Training and the support of the World Bank Redeployment Programme. However, there are not enough of them to tackle the problem, and there is still much to be done. And that is why the RICOP programme will also finance outplacement activities in the five areas.

So we recommend:

- acquisition of statistics on day-labourers and part-time workers employed only under civil conventions. That way, we can increase awareness and have a basis on which to create specific policy measures, to correct legislation, and implement specific support projects;
- more outplacement services for single-skill workers subject to collective redundancies;
- renaissance of apprentice schools at local level to include a maximum number of unskilled workers and poorly qualified people;
- vigorous and systematic screening of black labour so as to return its "victims" to mainstream labour.

5. Ways of approaching risk sub-groups

This chapter presents some practices related to vocational education and training at national, regional and local level. It also gives a brief evaluation of their effectiveness in fighting risk and prevents social exclusion. This chapter aims to show some of the successful methods, measures and instruments we have used so far, or are currently investigating, to approach sub-groups at risk and reduce their difficulties. Some of the practices and programmes below relate directly to vocational education and training but others, while linked to the system, are not provided by it. Both types demand strong commitment from local communities if they are to strengthen social ties with mainstream society, and make it easier for those at risk of exclusion to return to normal life. The ultimate aim is to develop social solidarity.

5.1 *Young drop-outs and unemployed people under 25*

As we have seen, current reform of vocational education and training aims to counter social exclusion factors by helping those at risk to reintegrate socially and professionally.

Below, we consider the risk of under-25s becoming unemployed because of incomplete or unsuitable initial training. Bearing in mind the limited number of vacancies on the labour market, obsolete and basic education and qualification are still key factors.

Reform of vocational education and training started in 1995 with the support of the European Union through its Phare Vocational Education and Training RO 9405 Programme.

“The programme in Romania has successfully achieved its four immediate aims. It launched new curricula that do much to adjust vocational educational and training in Romania. This training now increases initiative and flexibility. It also gives graduates stronger qualifications so they can match up to jobs altered by upheavals on the labour market. The new training has also increased student choice, and they do not have to specialise until the second or third year of training.” (Final Evaluation of the Phare Vocational Education and Training RO9405 Reform Programme 1999 Report, European Training Foundation, page 6)

Standardisation of vocational education and training aimed to give everyone equal access to training. Meanwhile, the curriculum consists of 70% core syllabus and 30% for local development. The aim is to allow for students’ interests and make training more relevant to local labour market needs.

Vocational qualifications were defined in terms of competencies and vocational training standards including basic levels. We have classified vocational competencies in relation to the evaluation and examination of training levels. These competencies now embrace three types of integrated capacities (both theoretical and practical):

- a) knowledge;

- b) skills/practice;
- c) personal and social competencies.

The multi-level curriculum - with its key skills and personal and social competencies - makes graduates more employable while increasing their access to training throughout their working lives.

“General education gives functional background to vocational content. For instance, languages, mother tongue and foreign, are communication skills; science, computer classes and entrepreneurship are all in the curriculum; there are cross-curricular themes, optional modules and projects that merge general education with specialised vocational content; vocational guidance and counselling is a new compulsory subject.” (Final Evaluation of Phare Vocational Education and Training RO9405 Reform Programme – 1999 Report, European Training Foundation, page 18)

Developing the curriculum actively involves teaching staff, particularly in the recreation of teaching methods, the organisation of learning, the development of teaching materials and the switch to a student-oriented approach. All these changes have made learning more easy for individuals and provided students with more scope.

Social partnership was a key thrust in vocational education and training as newly developed for the community. Social partnership was institutionalised, and new laws meant vocational education and training became a legitimate part of management consultancy at national, regional and local level. In vocational education and training, social partners had key roles to play. These mostly comprised setting vocational training standards and a school-based curriculum, participation in the school leaving examination (part of the new certification system) and in yearly education planning. With social partners involved, training is more relevant to the labour market, and graduates can find jobs more easily. Links between schools and businesses are now more robust, even though the economy is still not conducive to the development of “social dialogue”.

Following the Minister of Education’s decision in 1998, reform of vocational education and training has continued systemically, with much stress on school systems revised to deliver technical and vocational education courses. Based on the results of restructuring the vocational and post-secondary schools, high schools and apprentice schools were also “redesigned”.

“When we proposed the restructure of vocational and technical education, we mainly wanted to prevent people with high school and vocational education becoming redundant. We mean to offer a practical education: a technological high school to meet the needs of anyone with a bent for technical and economic subjects; for services, natural resources and techniques. We think a sound technological final examination will ensure an effective career path with an excellent chance of high level qualifications... Apprenticeship can best develop at community level with the support of local administrations and education authorities. It will also compensate badly streamed pupils who failed to get the basic knowledge certificate at the end of their compulsory education”(Technical and Vocational Education System, Romania 1998, foreword by Andrei Marga, Minister of National Education, page 12).

Amendments to the Law on Education no. 84/1995 have established the new vocational education and training structure in Romania.

Technological high schools now provide 27 qualifications as against 162 in the past. They are part of an education system “tree” whose trunk consists of prior technological fields and which then provides broader specialisations corresponding to pre-qualification for level 3, as accepted on the European labour market. The curriculum of the technological high schools is based on, and consistent with, the one that usually applies to high schools. In other words, it relates to the cultural hierarchy and selection principles. It is also functional, clear, flexible, reliable, decentralised and gives everyone an equal chance.

The school-based curriculum for technological high schools is developed locally. Social partners take part in this, thereby ensuring the curriculum relates to the needs of the local and regional labour market. The first year in these high schools (9th class) completes the cycle of advice on career development. The second year (10th class) provides general training in services, resources or techniques and also a core curriculum for technical knowledge / technologies. The next two to three years (11th, 12th and even 13th classes) provide specific knowledge and abilities. They also build skills and attitudes vital to social integration and career development.

Note, too, the redefinition in 1999 of the role of apprentice schools and the modifications brought to their organisation. They are now run by communities, which can set up their main development areas. The role of these schools is to prepare apprentices for occupations, groups of occupations or traditional trades relevant to social and economic development at local or regional level. According to the law, enrolment and attendance at these schools are free.

The contract-based partnership between schools and businesses alerts schools to priorities for local or regional development. The county network of vocational education and training (including the apprentice schools) is organised at the request of school inspectorates. It is also based on proposals issued by the Local Committees for the Development of Social Partnership in Vocational Training. As we have seen, these committees were set up with the support of the Phare Vocational Education and Training Programme. The Ministry then consults the National Council for Continuing Education and Training before deciding which way to set up the apprentice schools: within an education establishment or at the workplace, as a contract business-apprentice unit or a contract business-education unit. In the second case, the education unit mediates between the two parties. The setting up of apprentice schools within an education establishment depends on the availability of specific teaching materials. Or it hinges on the existence of a co-operation agreement with businesses committed to installing at their premises the necessary conditions for practical training. Setting up these schools also requires qualified teaching staff that can train competently according to the technological curriculum.

In rural areas that do not meet the above conditions, students can train at apprentice schools or acquire vocational training in technology in the nearest towns. The latter must, of course, meet all the technical requirements, be easily accessible by transport and have boarding schools. If students come from families that cannot afford transport and boarding costs, school inspectorates must work out ways to help them in co-operation with local authorities, non-governmental organisations and businesses.

The school year is suited to current conditions for theoretical and practical courses. This “sandwich” course, as it is called in the European Union, gives pupils apprenticeship/labour contracts. Training lasts from one to three years, according to the type of occupation, group of occupations and trades, and the standards attendant on them. Those who pass the capacity exam may continue to study at high school according to current law.

In brief, the organisation of apprentice school prompts these conclusions:

- the educational system is flexible and adaptable to the needs and interests of young people;
- scope for lifelong learning is supported by recent legal and institutional developments;
- practical training at the workplace eases transition from school to work;
- social partnership is vital to the running of this type of school.

After one year of the Phare Vocational Education and Training Programme, assessment showed that 97% of schools had introduced the new curriculum. Of these, 42% had no problems, and 43% encountered difficulties.

The main problems were:

- a) inadequate teaching equipment as required by the new curriculum accounts for 29% of problems (13% totally inadequate, 34% inadequate, 4% partially adequate, 17% adequate, 32% totally adequate);
- b) poor teacher training for the new curriculum - 22% of difficulties;
- c) insufficient teaching/learning materials including textbooks - 20% of difficulties;
- d) scarcity of co-operation agreements between schools and businesses - 15% of difficulties;
- e) poor knowledge of labour market needs and forecasts of economic development at local and regional level - 14% of difficulties.

This just shows how the mindsets of those involved in vocational education and training have changed since 1994, when they thought the chief advantage of this type of training was the appearance in schools of specialised equipment (around 89% of those interviewed).

Due to the combined strengths of the Ministry of National Education, the school inspectorates and the National Centre for the Development of Technical and Vocational Education, considerable savings have been achieved. However, we must go on making education more consistent nationwide; that way, we will ensure that every student has an equal chance of enrolling in vocational education and training school. Unfortunately, we have not been able to do this so far because of the low state budget allocated to education and vocational education and training in 1998-99. However, due to the nationwide spread of the Phare Vocational Education and Training Programme, the essentials for fighting social exclusion in Romania became stronger. However, there are still too many decision-makers in Romania who do not take initial vocational training seriously enough as a way to combat the social exclusion of young people. In most cases, adults take priority - for example, severance payments and passive measures - largely to keep the peace. Moreover, we have no more support from the European Union.

5.2. *Single-skilled workers*

Main Implementing Organisation: Office of the Prime Minister

Programme: RICOP (Enterprise Restructuring and Employment Conversion)

Aim: This programme supports the Government of Romania in a key part of its economic reform programme: the restructuring, privatisation and closure of loss making enterprises. Since 1990, governments have tried to do this, but with only limited success. These businesses receive large subsidies from the state, and continue to amass unpaid arrears. This throws the tax system off balance, spurs inflation and reduces the value of the Romanian currency. It also leads to a net loss of resources, as the net value added of these businesses is less than nothing.

The Programme covers five areas destined for business closure. The Government has earmarked the types of business destined for closure or restructure and their locations.

Activities (only those relevant to this study):

a) *Outplacement*

Outplacement aims to help redundant people as soon as possible. That way, we can find alternative employment for them or at least help them look for work. We estimate some 5,000 workers under notice will be counselled in this way.

b) *Public works*

Aim: to create short-term employment (combining training) for single-skilled workers through public works projects. These should improve the quality of life in communities ravished by industrial restructure, also making them more attractive to investors. Estimated outputs: 140 projects, resulting in 4,600 work placements.

c) *Active employment measures*

Aim: to provide vocational training opportunities and/or sustainable jobs in new and existing businesses or projects. To achieve this, locally generated solutions will ensure diversification of the local economy and employment market. Envisaged outputs: 8,000 jobs created / supported and 6,000 training places to be filled by 80% of redundant workers.

d) *Small and medium-sized businesses support*

Aim: to provide incentives for the formation and development of small and medium-sized businesses and micro businesses. Locations: areas worst affected by business closures and the ensuing redundancies. Further aim: to create jobs and ease transition to an effective market economy. Estimated outputs: 10,000 jobs created in small and medium-sized businesses and micro businesses.

e) *Social response measures*

Aim: to provide social support and employment opportunities to those hardest hit by industrial restructuring. To achieve this, there will be social services to reduce the distress caused by unemployment. The services will also maintain enough social stability to set up the whole economic transition programme. Outputs: 50 social centres, 10 reintegration centres and 10 emergency centres; assistance for deprived people at the centres – 17,500 more new jobs of which 1,300 will be taken up by at least 900 redundant workers or members of their families; vocational training to help 900 people find work.

Implementation arrangements: The national implementing authority for this programme is the Prime Minister's office. The Prime Minister may delegate implementing responsibilities to the official in charge of the restructuring plan under the conditions described above. A national advisory committee comprising representatives from public bodies will advise on the way the programme is carried out. Local steering committees will function in each of the programme's target locations. A wide range of organisations and ministries each have a role to play: these include the National Agency for Employment and Vocational Training, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Finance and local public administrations.

Results: started in the second half of 1999, this programme is at its first stage – tendering for technical assistance, preparing grant manuals, launching of national calls for proposals, etc.

5.3 *Single mothers*

Implementing organisation: Association Sinergii

Project: Maternity Centre "Little Prince" - Bucharest

Aim: to prevent child abandonment by giving various types of help to young mothers in difficulty for six to 12 months.

Activities:

- a) *Setting up of a centre with a capacity of 10 places (10 single mothers with children). Most mothers had newborn babies. Eligibility is having a child under three.*
- b) *The centre provided these services:*
 - shelter, meals, clothing for mother and child
 - cash (pocket money)
 - psychological counselling
 - support in developing the mother-child relationship
 - support in re-establishing relations between mothers, families and the child's father professional and social advice
 - support in finding housing and work
 - baby-sitting when mothers start work

Results: in a year, 22 young mothers were socially and professionally integrated, with no child abandonment

Decreased risk of single mothers abandoning children in the interests of personal survival and of social exclusion of mothers wishing to bring up their children themselves.

Partners: main funding came from the European Union (Phare Child Protection Programme) and Handicap International, Lyon, France. The Ministry of Health provided the necessary premises. The centre works with a nearby nursery and the police. The county health dispensary and the Institute for the Protection of Mother and Child are in charge of medical assistance at the centre.

Possibilities for dissemination nationwide: the project is currently being repeated by the National Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights and the county directorates. The staff at the Centre have helped with this generalisation process.

5.4 Institutionalised children

5.4.1 Implementing organisation: Association SOS Children Sântana Arad

Project: Restructure of the Children's Home in Sântana (a village in Western Romania with a home for 170 children)

Aim: to create family-type living conditions for children in the home and integrate them socially as soon as they leave.

Activities:

- Setting up family-type houses for children of different ages, where brothers and sisters live together, likewise staff and their families;
- Setting up houses for over-18s as a form of transition to an independent life;
- Setting up protected workshops for young people where they get vocational training and work experience;
- Setting up links with private companies destined to hire these teenagers soon.

Results: 10 family-type houses, each with a garden and animals, and small-scale equipment to work the land. Each one takes 8 to 10 children, and staff come from and are paid by the Children's Home. Staff and their families sometimes live in the house. In addition, three collective flats were built for 12 teenagers each (total 36) and five houses for six largely independent teenagers each (total 30). Five protected workshops for six teenagers (total 30) each were also built.

Aim: to train young people to be bakers, carpenters, plumbers, bricklayers and house painters. Furthermore, these activities prompted the community in Sântana village to deal with the children's problems. The success of this initiative is all the more impressive, given the immensity of the task and the size of the village.

Decreased risk of social exclusion for these teenagers while they find their feet and after leaving the Children's Home.

Partners: private donors from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, the Town Hall, European Union, private companies from around Sântana and the community itself.

Potential for dissemination: this initiative could be set up in other places. True, local conditions in Sântana made success more likely: the Town Hall bought, or presented the project with, some houses left by Germans and, amongst other factors, the people in the village had the right spirit. Clearly, to establish such a project elsewhere demands considerable material resources. As concerns the staff, the project's organisers provided them with decent living conditions in return for their efforts. The Sântana model could well inspire a national programme of institutional restructuring that should perhaps concentrate on villages with a mostly elderly population.

5.4.2 *Implementing organisation: Foundation "Lumina"*

Project: Social Centre "Lumina"-Braila

Objective: Social integration of teenagers who left residential care

Methodology: Social and psychological treatment suited to each individual

- Creation of family-type environment
- Involvement of local community in carrying out the project
- Building up of relationships between generations
- Use of procedures to administer and apply treatment
- Rebuilding family links

Obs. 1. Teenagers must earn their meals and pocket money by working.

2. Social housing is provided for one or at most two years, depending on each individual's social problems.

Activities:

- Setting up a Centre for six girls and six boys. Initially, most of them came from special schools. But later the Centre also welcomed 10 young people from children's homes. The target group comprises teenagers generally defined as homeless, without family or abandoned by their parents, without qualifications or with very little education and qualifications, dependent on residential institutions, with challenging social handicaps.
- The Centre provides these services:

- shelter (1-2 persons/room), access to kitchen and dining room
- preparation for life and living in society
- health and sexual education
- psychological support
- support for family reintegration (where possible)
- leisure activities
- support in finding a job
- monitoring professional development

Setting up protected workshops in the social centres where teenagers can make boots and harnesses or tailor clothes. Most of them are well qualified in such work, but unable to exploit their skills on the free market.

Results: All the teenagers have a workplace: the less qualified can clean and/or maintain the block of flats, the others can use the protected workshops. Those from children's homes (and with minor social handicaps) can pay a small rent for the shelter. All teenagers are responsible for their personal belongings and the centre, and help keep the common spaces clean. Five people left the shelter after a year, and three of those five achieved economic and social independence and then rejoined their families. The other two got married.

Decreased risk of teenagers taking to the streets and, through recourse to crime or begging, becoming socially irredeemable.

Partners: Main donors were the European Union (Phare SESAM Programme - 42,000 Euro), the Romanian Fund for Social Development (US\$19,999) and the Town Hall of Braila which provided premises (two floors of a student hostel) and helped to sell most of the products made in the protected workshops to other institutions. The Foundation works with the local inspectorate for handicapped people, the education inspectorate and the county directorate for youth and sport. It has also raised funds from private companies to cover some expenses not covered by international financing. 40% of running costs are covered from the profits of the protected workshops.

Human resources: 7 persons

Possibilities for dissemination and extension: given its success so far, the Foundation will now have the whole hostel to extend the activities of the social centre, as follows:

- a) first floor – reception, induction, learning how to live independently; second and third floors – psychological stabilisation, identifying permanent jobs, counselling- guidance, monitoring occupational development; fourth floor – social flats.
- b) Setting up car-wash area to ensure workplaces for teenagers at the centre.

5.5 *Street teenagers*

Implementing organisation: Association for Social Integration Support (ASIS)

Project: Residential Centre to support the social integration of disadvantaged youngsters

Aim: full and sustainable social and professional integration of at least 20 disadvantaged young people per year.

Activities:

- Early identification of professional abilities;
- Efficient counselling (e.g. preference for stable jobs that pay less, have a workbook, etc.);
- Support in getting onto courses that requalify them for jobs required on labour market;
- Support in finding a job;
- Maintain permanent contact with the respective trainer/employer;
- Preparation for supplementary occupations (gardening, household activities);
- Building up and consolidating attitudes and skills to maintain employability;
- Preparation for social integration: communication, preparation for family life, budget management, a good procurement policy of durables.

Results: After 18 months, 15 out of 27 the teenagers who were on the programme are equipped to earn enough to live independently outside the centre, seven teenagers finished the course, 18 teenagers had a job for more than seven months.

Diminished risk of living on the streets or in institutions.

Partners: other non-governmental organisations (religious organisation AIDROM, Foundation for the Development of Civil Society, Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations in Child Protection) and various private companies.

Potential for dissemination: this project could apply to teenagers who leave residential children's homes; this would require more staff specifically trained to help such children.

5.6 *Handicapped people*

Implementing organisation: The Society of Locomotor Handicapped People of Romania

Project: "Through ourselves" – Intensive induction and qualification courses in information technology for young people with physical handicaps.

Aim: Training in use of computers to make the target group more employable.

Activities:

- Setting up a Computer Centre with two functions: first, to provide fully equipped training premises for the free use of organisation members who do not have a personal computer at home; second, to enable them to carry out contract work.
- Courses for qualification and updating of skills
- Monitoring to see how trainees use newly acquired knowledge.

Results: between 1997 and 1999, 120 young people with physical handicaps trained at the centre. 25% of them found a permanent job, either at home or in town, while 30% of them obtained contract work in text editing, databases, computer-based presentations, etc.

Decreased risk of these youngsters being excluded from the labour market and social life.

Partners: The main donor was the European Union (Phare LIEN Programme).

Possibilities for dissemination: this project shows how special training - in computers and other fields - can enable physically handicapped people to generate skills of marketable value. Obviously, you have to assess the potential of these people in relation to labour market needs, before you train them. The success of the programme stresses why you have to relate the skills of the handicapped to the needs of the labour market.

6. Draft project proposal to prevent social exclusion

6.1 *Justification*

Every year, 2,000 teenagers leave residential care institutions and face appalling problems. Yet the Romanian authorities do virtually nothing. As we have no figures or monitoring system to examine this issue, we do not know the full extent of those problems. But it's clear that practically no one takes responsibility for these young people once they are 18. The county directorates for the protection of children's rights are no longer in charge, and the teenagers themselves do not know how to get support from public employment, training or social assistance services.

Moreover, most of the courses they take in institutions are in trades no longer wanted on the labour market. They can re-qualify in apprentice schools. Or they can attend state-paid evening classes in vocational schools which could also be run in rural areas. And the National Programme "Education for the Second Chance" is another possibility. The main problem lies in institutions offering training for the wrong kind of qualifications. Nor does it help having these young people cramming institutions in poor or rural areas where there are very few jobs. For political reasons, the former regime put most children of this type in institutions far from the public gaze.

Some non-governmental organisations and projects have tried to help these young people to integrate socially, but the state has done nothing. To help them, we have devised a skeleton project, based on available books, case studies carried out in three places (Annex 8) and good practices (see chapter V).

6.2 *Aim of the project*

The project's main aim is to help teenagers leaving residential care ("the target group") live independently and integrate socially and professionally.

6.3 *Project activities*

To achieve this, we must:

- Carry out research using a nationally representative sample. That way, we can pinpoint the situation of the target group after they have left the institutions. We can also see how different institutions affect this situation and their prospects of employment and training.
- Set up a national strategy and action plan for the social and professional integration of the target group. This strategy would identify the most appropriate institutional arrangement and establish

clear responsibilities and financial solutions. It would also define incentives for involving businesses and other non-state partners to help realise the strategy. The strategy would have to monitor the target group nationwide and support them for at least two years after they have left care. Heavily reinforced vocational counselling and career advice would also be vital. These services would help to define vocational training needs, each teenager's potential and his/her career choice.

- Arrange public debates on strategic topics and approach, followed by amendment of strategy and action plan if necessary.
- Carry out one or two pilot projects to test the solutions proposed by the strategy.

6.4 *Duration and implementation arrangements*

For the evaluation work and study:

A research institute with experience of similar-scale studies/surveys and equipped to handle modern social and sociological methodologies. Possible candidates include the Institute for Educational Sciences, the Institute for Quality of Life, and the Institute of Sociology.

Duration: 6-7 months.

For strategy and action plan:

A working group comprising representatives of relevant ministries (education, labour and social protection, finance, public works, etc.), governmental agencies and departments (National Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights, National Agency for Employment and Vocational Training, National Agency for Regional Development, department for local public administration), non-governmental organisation practitioners, different professionals, etc.

Endorsement: the Government.

Duration: about 1 year.

For the pilot project(s):

A consortium including, according to the nature of the project, the county directorate for the protection of children's rights, the residential institution, local employment and education services, town hall, non-governmental business and businesses. The project may be initiated and co-ordinated by any of the above.

Duration: 1-2 years, depending on the project's scope and aims.

6.5 *Estimated outcomes*

National study/survey

National strategy and action plan

For the pilot project(s), these are possible indicators:

- Young people attending a qualification/re-qualification course

- youngsters who continue studies after they leave institutions
- partnership conventions concluded with local employers
- youngsters employed through labour contracts and collaboration agreements
- youngsters independent of social support, etc.

Annexes

Annex 1

Research works and studies

Listed below are some research projects and studies carried out in Romania that are relevant to understanding some causes and effects of social exclusion. NB: they do not accurately reflect its extent for the reasons given in Chapter I.

- Education for All, Institute of Educational Sciences (1995); other relevant studies of the same Institute;
- Studies on educational opportunities and their relevance to labour market needs, the Ministry of National Education with the support of the Phare Vocational Education and Training programme (1994-1997);
- Statistics from secondary processing of data concerning unemployment and vocational training courses from the National Agency for Employment and Training;
- Regional development studies for Jiu Valley and Gorj county, coal mining areas which have experienced massive redundancies in recent last years; these studies were carried out by British experts with the support of a Phare programme co-ordinated by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (1999);
- Green Paper on Regional Development in Romania framed with Phare support (1997);
- National Strategy for Human Resources Development of the Government of Romania (1999), funded by the European Training Foundation;
- Monitoring of child education in Central and Eastern Europe within the MONEE project of United Nations International Children in Emergency Fund (1996-1997);
- Yearly National Reports on Human Development, initiated by United Nations Development Project, co-ordinated by the Romanian Academy;
- National Report on Poverty, with the support of United Nations Development Project (1999);
- Researches, and studies on child protection, poverty, diagnosis of quality of life, consumption, situation of young people, Roma and unemployed, the Institute for Quality of Life (1991-1999);
- Integrated survey on households, carried out annually by the National Commission for Statistics;
- Census of institutionalised children completed by the Department for Child Protection within a Phare programme (1997); *ad hoc* assessment of child protection situation carried out by the European Commission (1999);

- Monitoring of the nutrition status of children carried out annually by the Institute for Mother and Child Protection with funding from the United Nations International Children in Emergency Fund;
- Study on street children conducted by Save the Children (1999) and constant monitoring of them by the same organisation's Centre for Information/Co-ordination for Homeless Children;
- Research carried out by the Institute of Hygiene, Public Health and Management (1991-1999).

Annex 2a

Outline description of areas in difficulty

Rural areas

The first category of problem areas includes the rural zones. Analyses⁴ highlighted, in general, more insecurity in rural areas. This stemmed from the compulsory formation of co-operatives, industrialisation and urbanisation from 1950 to 1990. And the rural population migrated en masse to urban areas. Hence, rural interests were neglected: lack of investment, disregard of environment protection and country traditions.

The major problems include:

- population down in over 75% of communes in last 25 years;
- demographic ageing - the percentage of people over 65 has doubled in comparison with urban areas;
- ageing of working-age population;
- lack of varied employment with agricultural activities prevalent in over 75% of communes;
- low level of technical equipment and socio-cultural services;
- poor housing.

Main rural areas with acute problems are:

North-East Moldavia, Central Moldavia, Danube Delta, Central and South-West Dobrogea, Bărăgan Plain, Subcarpații de curbură, Teleorman Plain, South Oltenia, South Banat, Apuseni Mountains, Someș Plateau.

Areas like Danube Delta and Apuseni Mountains were recently declared disadvantaged zones due to their isolation, specific relief, ageing tendency, etc.

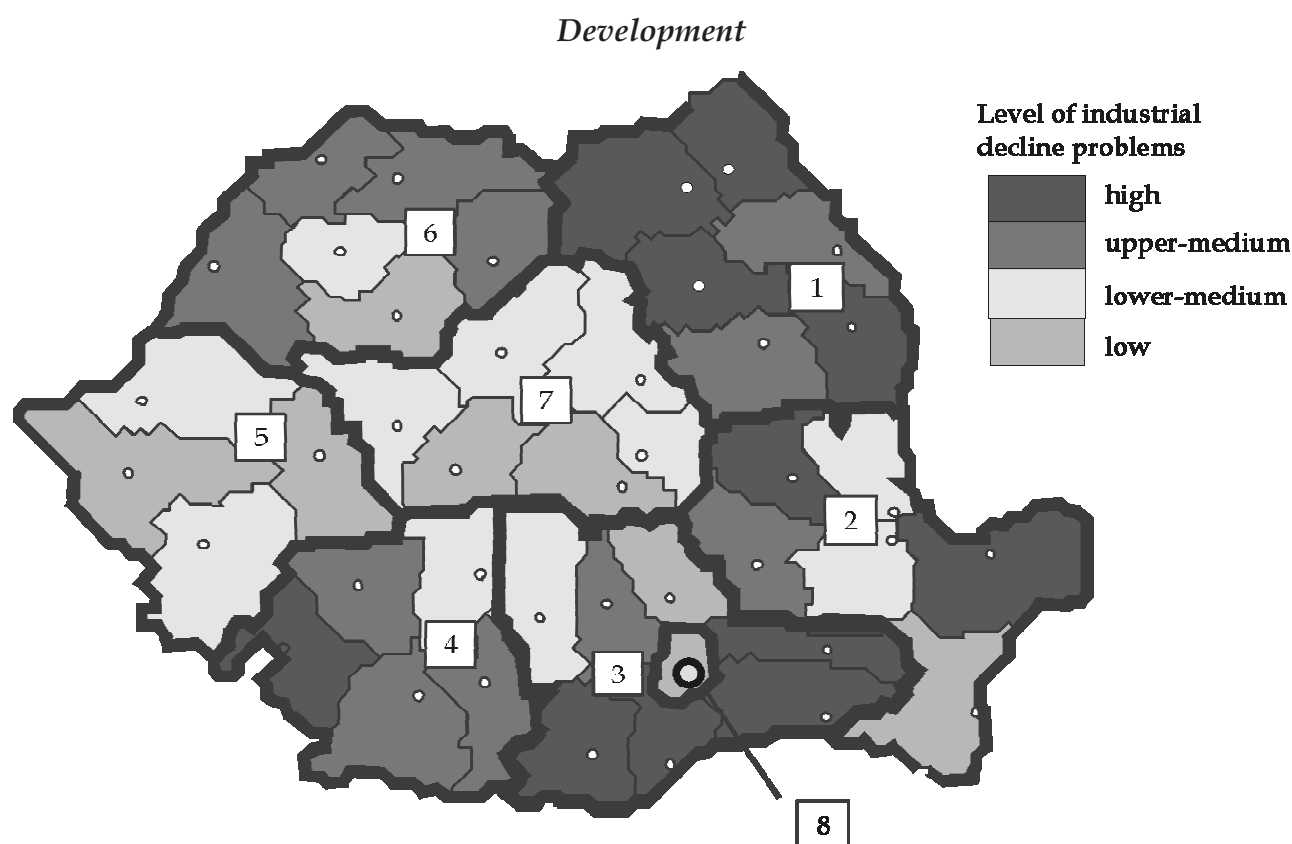
Traditionally underdeveloped zones

The traditionally underdeveloped zones (see map below) have high unemployment rates and most of the employed population in agriculture. These two factors are significantly linked to an infant mortality rate higher than the national average and the population's tendency to migrate in search of work.

4 URBANPROJECT analyses, 1992-1998; Green Paper on Rural Development – 1998, Phare project

You can infer the underdevelopment of these zones from basic infrastructure indicators (such as density of railways) and the level of the direct investments per inhabitant (indicator that relates the impact of labour on the local economy).

These indicators are far above the national average.



Such traditionally underdeveloped zones are in these Development Regions:

North -East (Botoșani and Vaslui counties), South (Giurgiu and Teleorman counties), South-West (Dolj and Olt counties), North-West (Maramureș and Bistrița – Năsăud counties).

Zones in industrial decline

Zones in industrial decline (see map below) are those where, during 1992-1998, transition led to massive redundancies, especially in processing and extractive industries.

The rate of development in these zones differs substantially from that in traditionally underdeveloped ones, because the infrastructure is relatively satisfactory, and the market economy has already started to function.

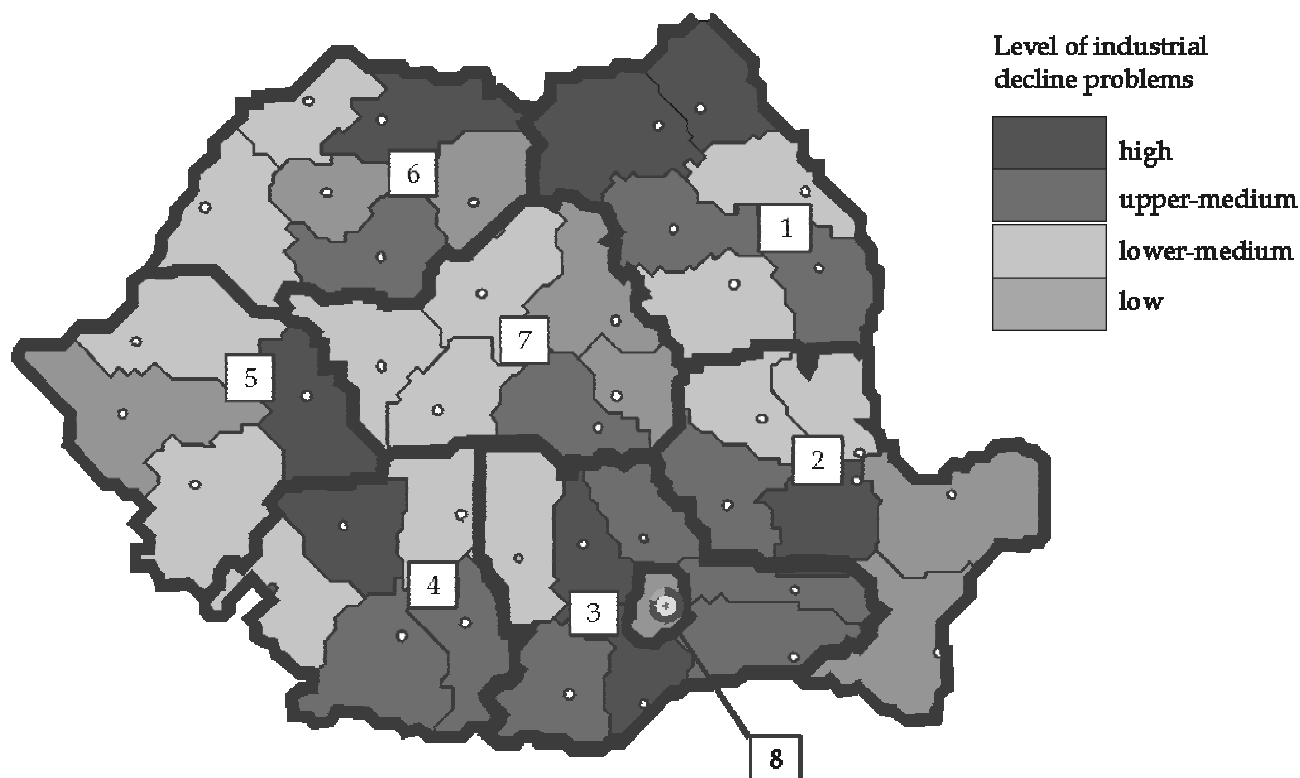
However, in many cases, the impact of industrial restructuring on the labour market is powerful enough to generate the threat of severe social tensions, even rebellion.

Such zones are in these Development Regions:

- North-East (Botoșani and Suceava counties);
- South-East (Brăila and Buzău counties);
- South (Giurgiu, Dâmbovița, Teleorman and Călărași counties);

- South-West (Gorj, Dolj and Olt counties);
- West Region (Hunedoara county);
- North-West (Maramureş and Cluj counties);
- Central Region (Braşov county).

Industrial decline problems

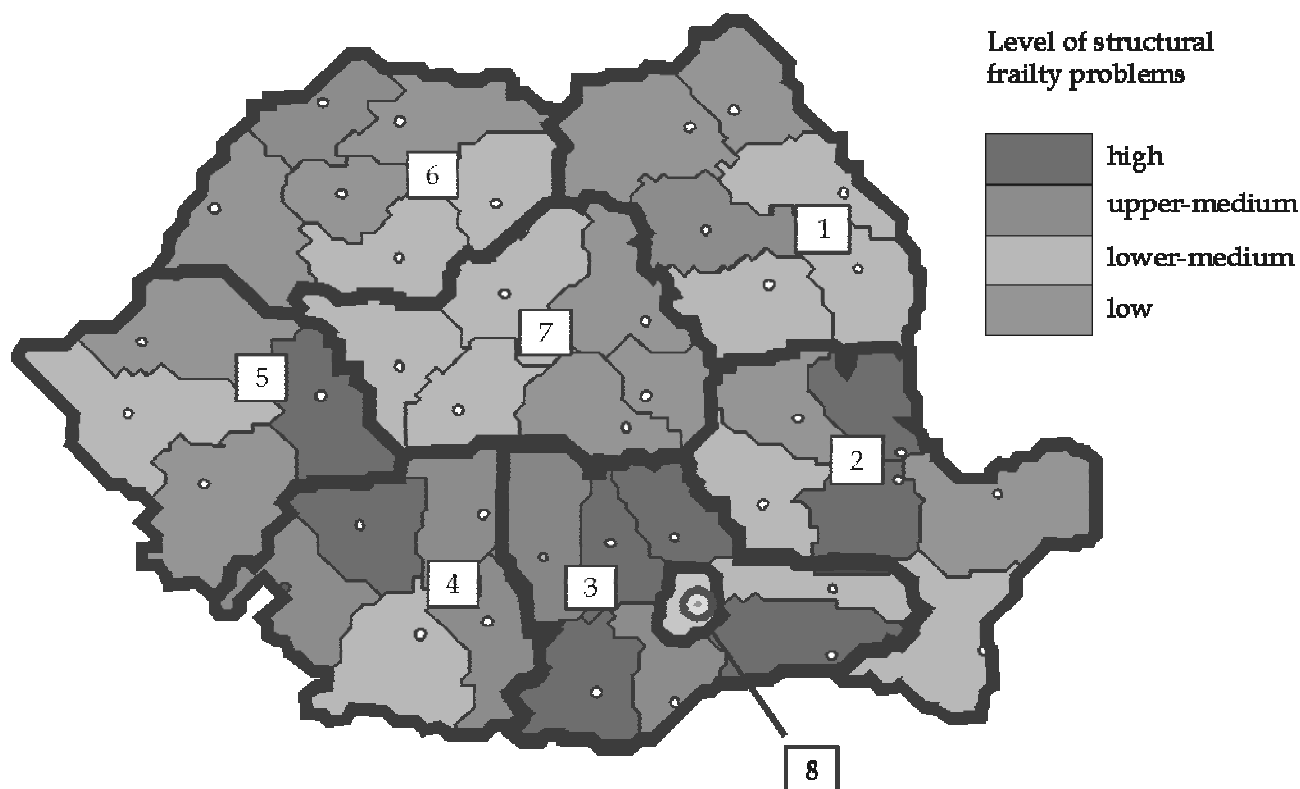


Structurally-troubled zones

The structurally-troubled zones (see map below) are where a dangerously high percentage of the workforce is still in heavy industry, which generates economic losses (metallurgy, mining and chemistry).

Moreover, most employees in the industrial sector depend on a single sector and usually one big business. These two factors are reflected in a lower-than-average number of industrial small and medium-sized businesses.

Structural frailty problems



The structurally troubled zones are those that will soon plunge into even worse difficulties, given the build-up of industrial restructuring and the removal of state subsidies. They have much in common with zones in industrial decline, including potential for short-term economic recovery and risk of major social tensions in the future.

Such zones are mostly in these development regions:

- North-East (Neamţ county),
- South-East (Galaţi and Brăila counties),
- South (Prahova, Călăraşi, Teleorman and Dâmboviţa counties),
- South-West (Gorj county),
- West (Hunedoara county),
- North-West (Satu -Mare county).

Sub-zones in difficulty

Regional analyses can be complemented by intra-regional analyses. Regional Development Plans drafted for each region identified sub-zones with specific problems.

Thus, in the North-East Development Region, these problems emerged:

- serious poverty was rife in the area comprising the south of Iaşi county, south-eastern part of Neamţ county, east of Bacău and Vaslui counties;
- areas in industrial decline and with high unemployment, including Piatra Neamţ, Roman, Vaslui and Botoşani municipalities and nearby industrial plants;

- poor infrastructure throughout the rural area at the confluence between Bacău, Vaslui, Iași and Neamț counties; the border between Botoșani and Iași counties; an area situated in the south-eastern extremity of Vaslui county, on Prut River bank;
- landslides, floods, poor water supply.
- South Region – Muntenia includes seven counties (historical Region Muntenia). This area falls into two sub-regions that contrast in geography, development and socio-economic structure:
- Southern Sub-region: Teleorman, Giurgiu, Călărași and Ialomița counties, less developed, mostly agricultural;
- Northern Sub-region: Argeș, Dâmbovița and Prahova counties, more developed, with many industrial units.

The differences in development between the two sub-regions stem from contrasting natural and human resources and of their evolutionary frameworks (economic, technological, demographic and cultural).

In the South-East Development Region, the traditionally underdeveloped zones are rife with high unemployment and most of the employed population work in agriculture. And there are other factors such as people going to other regions to seek a job, poor infrastructure development (Tulcea county), and smaller level of investment per inhabitant.

As we have seen, the areas in industrial decline comprise those counties where, during 1992-1998, large state-owned businesses were liquidated, restructured or privatised. This also happened in 1999 in Galați county, following extended restructuring and the removal of state subsidies. The restructuring process of the Iron and Steel Works in Galați affected about 5,000 employees, and we expect a further 11,000 people will soon be made redundant.

In the Central Development Region, the most serious problems arise from the high unemployment rate in mining areas being restructured and commitment to “single” industries (metallurgy, chemistry, industrial tools). Other difficulties stem from seriously depopulated areas and crucial ecological problems.

Annex 2b

General overview OF regional policies

The transition of Romania to a market economy led to the economic growth rate going down and a sharp rise in unemployment. The result is that there are numerous people who need to requalify and re-enter the labour market and thereby ensure social and economic stability. That aside, durable economic growth and sustainable job creation are daunting challenges. So we must combine industrial restructuring with effective regional development policies.

Although there was no focused plan to carry out regional development policies before 1996, Phare supported some programmes that achieved local and regional impact.

Year	Programme
1992	Small and Medium-sized Business Development
1992	Active Employment Measures (PAEM)
1992-1993	Social Services Development (SESAM)
1994	Strengthening of Small and Medium-sized Business and Regional Development
1994	Vocational Education and Training (VET)
1995	Energy

Source: Delegation of the European Commission in Romania

The “Strengthening of Small and Medium-sized Businesses and Regional Development” programme is relevant here. It is in several parts: support for analysis of the two policies; information, training and support for consultancy centres to promote and reinforce small and medium-sized businesses and local development initiatives; creation of a Fund for Local Development Initiatives (FIDEL) and some pilot financial schemes for small and medium-sized businesses. The main target groups attended over 40 courses on issues related to regional/local development and project management. Next, with support from various donors, consultancy courses took place at each of the 84 development centres for small and medium-sized businesses and business incubators.

Law no.151/1998 developed an institutional framework and established the aims, competencies and instruments specific to regional development policy in Romania.

Regional development policy aims to:

- reduce regional imbalance, stimulate even development, revitalise disadvantaged zones;
- prevent further imbalance;
- relate regional development policies to the Government’s sector development policies, stimulate co-operation between regions and overseas organisations and thereby boost economic development.

The strategic principles of regional development aim to:

- promote market economy mechanisms nationwide to generate competition and steady economic growth;
- promote a smooth-running regional network;
- increase the regions' capacity (concerning institutions, finance and decision-making) to sustain their own development;
- promote principles of lasting development;
- ensure everyone has equal access to information, research, technological development and lifelong learning;
- reduce disparities between regions, counties, town, country, and central and peripheral zones;
- prevent emergence of problem zones;
- co-ordinate regional development initiatives with national priorities and European Union guidelines;
- promote policies tailored to features of zones (single-industry zones dominated by agriculture, say, or mining; crowded urban zones, zones protected by law because of natural heritage, border zones and zones with environmental problems).

The regional development strategy is part of the National Development Plan. It has nine priorities that closely follow the National Programme for Accession to European Union (NPA):

- development of private sector and promotion of investments that contribute to economic growth, stimulate competition, sustain employment, and close productivity gaps between Romania and other countries;
- support for the creation of small and medium-sized businesses. These are the most effective generators of jobs. They also engender a democratic society by involving numerous citizens in the economic life of society at national, regional and local level;
- improvement and development of regional and local infrastructure could directly benefit production activity or local business; development of human resources to increase employability, sharpen entrepreneurial skills, make businesses and their employees more adaptable to the market economy, encourage equal opportunities for men and women;
- develop tourism;
- support technological development and innovation alongside human resources, and thereby reduce the unemployment rate and restore to the labour market all those who left it for agriculture;
- develop agriculture, agro-tourism and rural areas and thereby raise local incomes and encourage local markets to grasp new business opportunities in trade and services;
- develop transport infrastructure;
- protect and rehabilitate environment in line with European standards and principles of lasting development.

To advance its regional development, Romania draws support from the European Union through the Phare programme (for instance, PROGRES for the development of human resources; 1997 Regional Development; 1997 Small and Medium-sized Business Development; MARR Fund for to

help those affected by mining restructuring in two affected regions; Regional Policy and Cohesion launched in 1998; Disaster Damage Reconstruction), ISPA for infrastructure support and SAPARD for agriculture and rural development. Romania has enjoyed support from multi-country programmes such as those for cross-border co-operation or community programmes with regional impact.

A *National Agency for Regional Development* set up eight regional agencies. These comprise neighbouring counties that have merged voluntarily and now have managing roles in the implementation and evaluation of regional development policies. At the same time, the National Council for Regional Development set up regional councils to consider issues.

1999 saw the design of various essential documents: regional plans, the *National Development Plan* and the *Plan for Durable Development*. These are planning and programming tools compatible with those used in the European Union for regional development. To compensate for delays in the development of some zones, the Romanian Government has regulated the regime of disadvantaged zones (Emergency Ordinance no. 24/1998). This means businesses and private entrepreneurs can enjoy special privileges if they operate and invest in zones declared disadvantaged. A disadvantaged zone must fulfil one of the following conditions:

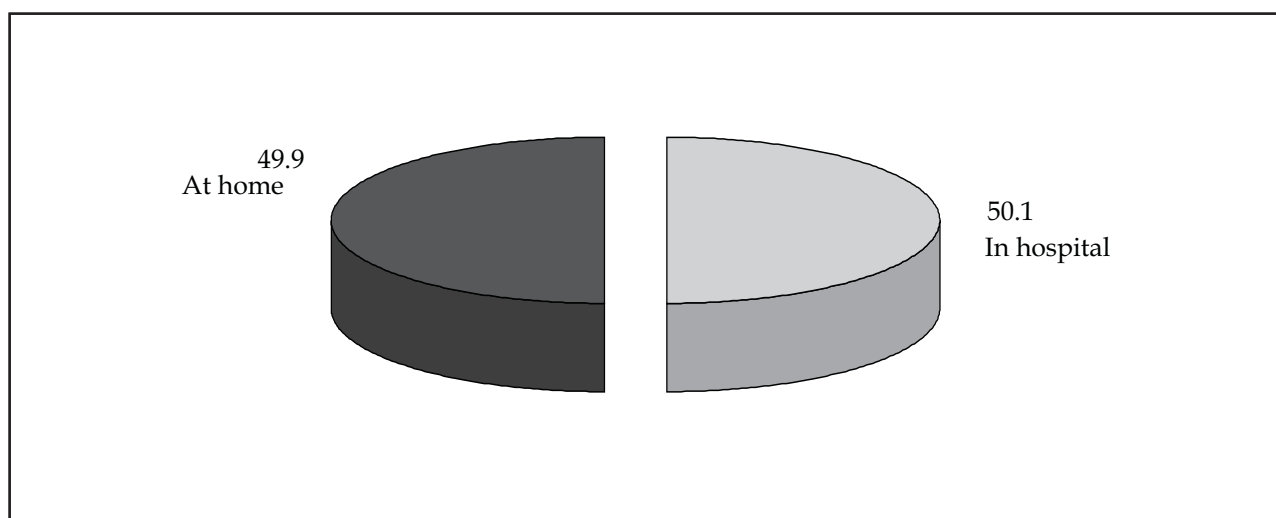
- a) have a single industry that absorbs over half the salaried population;
- b) be a mining area where workers have been made redundant through collective dismissals following restructuring;
- c) over 25% of resident workers were made redundant following liquidation, restructuring or privatisation of businesses;
- d) has an unemployment rate 25% over the national average;
- e) lacks ways of communication and has poor infrastructure.

The facilities, provided for 3 to 10 years, comprise exemptions for import custom duties, profit tax and taxes attendant on altering the use of destination of agricultural land; priority for getting funds to promote exports; guarantees of external credits and co-funding of investment projects. In case the unemployment rate is 50% above the national level, supplementary facilities are available. These include reduced transport tariffs, 50% off income tax and exemption from the agricultural income tax.

Given the short history of the regional development concept and programmes in Romania, no impact assessments are available as yet.

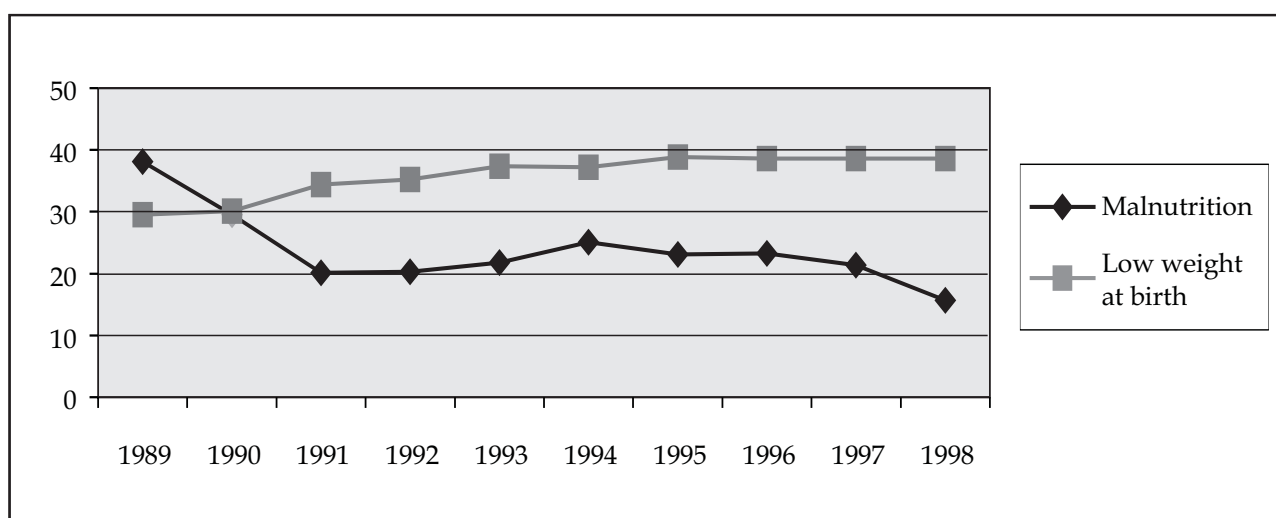
Annex 3

Infant mortality rate according to the place where death occurred (excluding infant death in maternity hospitals)



Annex 4

Favoring causes of death of children aged 0-1 year (percentages)



Annex 5

Unemployment evolution since the adoption of law 1/1991

	Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1. Total number of unemployed people registered at the end of each month	1991	0	65319	85408	112018	151951	188026	217055	235277	257639	259436	275382	332311
	1992	386033	433664	488276	428363	446591	500797	529220	634450	717653	800636	849553	897588
	1993	949843	1025717	1062293	1050651	1036719	1036117	1040830	1009072	1039845	1055396	1095511	1164705
	1994	1230433	1275244	1291304	1263814	1254362	1212745	1205550	1194369	1191829	1213874	1211851	1223925
	1995	1234853	1245397	1229024	1183729	1151841	1114748	1085474	1061839	1037991	1007119	985472	998432
	1996	1042165	1055290	1031436	926698	862736	798000	736351	692561	664634	659446	644620	657564
	1997	702537	748115	757723	730991	709486	727882	720254	708541	721077	763381	816363	881435
	1998	920121	961657	953419	933880	933880	883919	871028	848314	857196	894573	940032	1025056
	1999	1137795	1183947	1182701	1153535	1132960	1121807	1114242	1074962	1073586	1064463	1090578	
	1991	0	63613	80875	104023	138217	169388	193414	209060	228486	227324	239455	288006
out of which (unemployed people in receipt of indemnities): * workers	1992	335090	377832	429986	377754	395223	444038	470858	562356	634445	703586	748812	789403
	1993	837372	908680	938227	924174	910361	908368	909670	875310	903374	910603	947172	1005353
	1994	1066166	1103241	1116212	1093622	1084830	1047762	1042160	1031924	1028712	1038715	1032429	1037766
	1995	1045750	1054658	1036908	996850	967773	935588	910871	897820	882290	853709	826928	836567
	1996	876665	883153	864981	776047	722537	666267	616826	585871	563621	558674	537923	548901
	1997	590190	611468	614089	590621	572862	589474	588112	583237	590038	625219	657036	709017
	1998	741503	776036	770043	754356	729826	710727	706988	693834	696643	721584	745894	810388

	Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Septem-ber	October	Novem-ber	Decem-ber
	1999	683174	715167	707335	681201	660400	647964	647726	616855				
workers out of the total	1999									790182	788202	803267	
* people with pre-university education	1991	0	1667	3810	6403	10478	14179	18038	20119	22506	25850	29681	36520
	1992	41811	46187	47932	42610	43333	48198	49494	61093	70961	80601	86477	93233
	1993	96954	100903	107140	109743	109987	110838	114844	119425	121233	129027	132169	142178
	1994	146053	152900	155952	151727	151908	148627	147140	146773	147504	157678	162253	169039
	1995	171663	173089	174686	170161	167960	163660	159728	150594	142652	142045	147140	150331
	1996	153078	159000	153926	139537	130518	122823	111557	98259	92813	93127	99596	101264
	1997	104287	127423	134334	131713	127506	129101	122803	115840	120646	126325	145340	156736
	1998	161629	167901	166182	162837	161574	158120	149455	139735	145216	156345	176407	194635
	1999	198443	208945	211085	204137	203134	204339	202767	192695				
	1999									251608	244904	255955	
medium education out of the total													
* people with higher education	1991	0	39	723	1592	3256	4459	5603	6098	6647	6262	6246	7785
	1992	9132	9645	10358	7999	8035	8561	8868	11001	12247	13449	14264	14952
	1993	15517	16134	16926	16734	16371	16911	16316	14337	15238	15766	16170	17174
	1994	18214	19103	19140	18465	17624	16356	16250	15672	15613	17481	17169	17120
	1995	17440	17650	17430	16718	16108	15500	14875	13425	13049	11365	11404	11534
	1996	12422	13137	12529	11114	9681	8910	7968	8431	8200	7645	7101	7399
	1997	8060	9224	9300	8657	9118	9307	9339	9464	10393	11837	13987	15682
	1998	16989	17720	17194	16687	15797	15072	14585	14745	15337	16644	17731	20033

	Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
	1999	23172	24645	24203	24116	24522	25234	25766	23499				
higher education out of the total	1999									31796	31357	31356	
1.1. Unemployed people in receipt of unemployment benefit	1991	0	927	18441	42683	86700	121435	150079	165913	181222	181028	194476	257597
	1992	312838	358214	420507	355311	370366	420814	448081	464116	519766	560375	588294	602957
	1993	613663	650182	650084	625776	571250	549099	512269	447875	457255	478394	501170	549785
	1994	595323	629198	629433	602725	587817	552622	536943	510339	485461	498489	500810	504284
	1995	516802	533469	515669	472281	447572	419763	397154	354309	317777	293747	296063	317142
	1996	368784	400537	391467	319750	278967	254138	226996	196035	175795	170785	178920	202233
	1997	253611	217901	237469	207999	198519	201639	205926	212741	236440	261230	296161	333219
	1998	365978	400561	390005	365061	327975	284930	264413	245994	233284	237301	252046	310976
	1999	403478	444126	436360	400669	378895	374630	379416	345208	315868	285028	279498	
	1997	0	103361	104860	114927	112249	112800	103558	79395	72034	75580	90717	104825
1.2. Unemployed people in receipt of professional integration support	1998	110477	113407	115259	117208	118197	115841	100207	74674	60301	64318	78156	92004
	1999	103365	106486	111295	115026	116760	114229	97492	73392	66376	69718	85027	73210
1.3. Unemployed people in receipt of support allowance	1991	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	1992	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	56983	120121	157926	177764	208211
	1993	243704	278461	312645	350788	381527	413095	448717	485961	504086	486108	498853	516059

	Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Septem-ber	October	Novem-ber	Decem-ber
	1994	534376	542542	553150	559145	559248	547875	553137	561551	572182	577302	568745	564066
	1995	554857	545731	542439	533286	520816	506126	493468	482051	485914	481124	467681	457079
	1996	444867	424707	403993	376455	351791	320884	300007	292852	286030	277057	267928	259457
	1997	248540	234502	220572	208670	199469	188417	181416	186818	196509	203982	209143	217959
	1998	226054	226861	227030	231638	241015	260961	279409	311470	342936	365585	380832	390038
	1999	397946	398145	394968	393759	392401	388678	399351	414449	437335	446475	447627	
1.4 Benef. of art 45 EO98/99	1999									12246	21695	28944	
1.5. Unemployed people registered at the labour office who do not make the subject for support under Law1/91	1991	0	64392	66967	69335	65261	66591	66976	69364	76117	78408	80906	74714
	1992	73195	75450	67769	73052	76225	79983	81139	83351	77766	82335	83495	86420
	1993	92476	97074	99564	94087	83942	73923	79844	75236	78504	90894	95488	98861
	1994	100735	103504	108721	101944	107297	112248	115470	122479	134186	138083	142296	155575
	1995	163194	166197	170916	178162	183453	188859	194852	225479	234300	232248	221728	224211
	1996	228514	230046	235976	230493	231978	222978	209348	203674	202809	211604	197772	195874
	1997	200386	192351	194822	199395	199249	225026	229354	229587	216094	222589	220342	225432
	1998	217612	220828	221125	219973	220010	222187	226999	216176	220675	227369	228998	232038
	1999	233006	235190	240078	244081	244904	244270	237983	241913	241761	241547	249482	
Rata șomajului (%)	1991	0	0.6	0.8	1.1	1.4	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.4	3.0
	1992	3.5	3.9	4.4	3.8	4.1	4.5	4.7	5.9	6.6	7.4	7.9	8.4
	1993	8.5	9.2	9.6	9.5	9.3	9.3	9.4	8.9	9.1	9.3	9.6	10.2
	1994	10.8	11.2	11.3	11.1	11.0	10.7	10.6	10.5	10.5	10.8	10.8	10.9

	Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
	1995	11	11.1	10.9	10.5	10.3	9.9	9.7	9.5	9.2	9.0	8.8	8.9
	1996	9.3	9.4	9.2	8.2	7.7	7.1	6.6	6.2	5.9	5.9	6.1	6.3
	1997	6.7	7.1	7.2	7.0	6.8	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.9	7.6	8.1	8.8
	1998	9.2	9.6	9.5	9.3	9.0	8.8	8.7	8.5	8.7	9.0	9.5	10.3
	1999	11.5	12	11.9	11.6	11.4	11.3	11.3	10.9	10.8	10.8	11.1	
Rata șomajului feminin (%)	1991	0	0.9	1.2	1.4	1.9	2.2	2.5	2.7	3.0	3.1	3.4	4.0
	1992	4.5	5.0	5.6	5.0	5.2	5.8	6.1	7.2	8.1	8.7	9.3	9.8
	1993	10.8	11.4	11.8	11.8	11.7	11.8	11.9	11.2	11.6	11.7	12.1	12.6
	1994	12.9	13.2	13.3	13.2	13.2	12.7	12.5	12.5	12.6	13.1	13.0	13.0
	1995	12.9	12.8	12.7	12.3	12.0	11.6	11.3	11.0	10.9	10.7	10.3	10.3
	1996	10.3	10.1	9.9	9.1	8.6	8.0	7.3	6.9	6.7	6.7	7.2	7.3
	1997	7.3	7.6	7.7	7.5	7.4	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.5	8.0	8.5	9.1
	1998	9.2	9.5	9.4	9.4	9.2	9.1	9.0	8.8	9.1	9.4	9.9	10.5
	1999	11.1	11.4	11.5	11.4	11.4	11.3	11.1	10.8	10.8	10.8	11.2	

Annex 6

Geographical Distribution of People in Receipt of Unemployment Benefit, Integration Support and Support Allowance According to the Duration of Unemployment (August – November 1999)

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Alba	August	20376	3505	3730	3862	2046	1046	1893	1197	1794	1303
	September	20020	4265	3740	3393	2015	1126	1863	1147	1694	777
	October	19463	4700	3754	2822	2085	1052	1700	1076	1554	720
	November	19045	4800	3654	2944	2125	922	1530	986	1434	650
Arad	August	12686	17	231	7292	10	238	24	33	224	4617
	September	13437	31	730	7031	61	74	58	58	112	5282
	October	12388	19	920	6077	4	25	23	29	85	5206
	November	12220	502	1042	5093	15	27	27	27	101	5386
Argeş	August	18422	2390	4987	2797	1723	1053	1411	1990	1518	553
	September	17662	1604	4585	2800	2179	922	1413	1536	2044	579
	October	17287	1623	2714	4001	2171	1343	1093	1370	2165	807
	November	17620	2784	2211	3441	2226	1789	949	1278	1805	1137
Bacău	August	30293	6036	4654	4389	3553	2107	2488	3245	3137	684

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	September	29607	4759	4258	4770	3952	2331	2171	3008	3372	986
	October	29492	4550	4069	4556	4080	2409	2242	3112	3464	1010
	November	30619	4424	5424	4455	3770	3330	1873	2193	2883	2267
Bihor	August	15639	1546	3926	4263	704	963	1093	977	1411	756
	September	14620	885	4032	3631	835	979	1006	948	1055	1249
	October	13673	806	2675	3858	1052	1030	966	1009	945	1332
	November	13503	1777	2606	2380	2030	997	914	945	879	975
Bistrița	August	14407	2603	2495	2250	2163	1713	979	716	674	814
	September	14413	2774	2282	2210	2163	1373	1079	816	774	942
	October	14164	2712	2182	1860	2022	1521	1052	949	774	1092
	November	14487	2641	2102	1817	2282	1630	1095	991	809	1120
Botoșani	August	22724	8322	111	2526	1571	1945	1791	1826	2938	1694
	September	22834	2574	3846	4407	2046	1854	1760	1686	2839	1822
	October	22914	2714	3889	3944	4142	1834	1598	1724	2119	950
	November	23604	3268	3126	3668	2479	2838	1886	1759	1790	2790
Brașov	August	24916	3117	3929	3500	2977	1244	1103	3711	3877	1458
	September	25053	2238	4037	3373	3285	1840	1158	1861	5075	2186

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	October	25736	3283	3950	2941	2572	2673	1244	1399	3690	3984
	November	25275	3990	2602	3433	2319	3126	1191	1073	3661	3880
Brăila	August	17571	2743	2341	2498	1885	1259	1003	1327	1651	2864
	September	17244	1733	3298	2190	3005	1195	1095	969	1541	2218
	October	17497	2474	2600	2246	2698	1815	1119	956	1274	2315
	November	16387	2975	1871	2277	1612	2917	1074	1406	869	1386
Buzău	August	25346	7491	4866	3146	2706	1722	1646	1795	1454	520
	September	25043	1825	5640	3838	4296	2521	1634	1550	2001	1738
	October	25074	2171	4865	4102	2941	2896	1535	1518	1628	3418
	November	25788	2700	4608	4327	2222	3487	1825	1308	1382	3929
Caraş	August	16382	1583	2493	3540	1359	1515	1021	1282	2579	1010
	September	16127	1383	2271	3260	1506	1515	1121	1482	2579	1010
	October	15295	1018	1905	2895	1550	1559	1165	1527	2620	1056
	November	15631	1080	1905	2895	1550	1559	1439	1527	2620	1056
Călăraşi	August	12729	1516	2772	2151	1685	929	955	1343	1050	328
	September	13016	671	2520	2351	2880	1009	785	1210	1229	361
	October	12974	932	2011	2424	3072	1128	680	1005	1244	478

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	November	13539	1891	1378	2418	2465	1781	820	880	1227	679
Cluj	August	32176	6995	9554	1560	2807	3887	1904	2383	1913	1173
	September	32021	6517	9510	1537	3265	3874	1892	2369	1889	1168
	October	31137	6300	8610	1465	3166	4311	1867	2304	1837	1277
	November	31168	6629	8271	635	4037	4111	2167	2304	1837	1177
Constanța	August	21247	2642	4000	5290	2632	1501	1163	1716	1353	950
	September	21393	2948	3329	5137	2641	2290	1020	1281	1660	1087
	October	22692	4592	2839	4744	2659	2887	1013	1143	1553	1262
	November	26182	8089	2770	4276	2754	3273	1269	986	1451	1314
Covasna	August	9203	816	2062	2125	708	753	526	885	985	343
	September	8784	769	1777	1776	778	802	653	571	1181	477
	October	8653	744	1687	1238	1258	782	696	594	684	970
	November	8922	1129	926	1480	1708	868	709	534	742	826
Dâmbovița	August	24923	4423	4051	4252	3054	1599	2086	2350	1877	1231
	September	24741	2756	6035	3551	3513	1390	1817	1494	2794	1391
	October	24470	2915	6178	2397	3097	2244	1705	1688	2379	1867
	November	24685	3607	4320	3533	3319	2760	1430	1891	1990	1835

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
Dolj	August	25960	1824	4880	4449	2628	1664	1792	2636	3976	2111
	September	25620	1245	4388	3743	3782	2559	1567	2295	3869	2172
	October	25607	1672	2611	4492	3921	3148	1596	1954	3187	3026
	November	27086	4290	2006	4180	2947	4534	1346	1667	2473	3643
Galati	August	23057	2422	6332	3396	2226	2440	1554	1515	1670	1502
	September	23193	1840	4742	4742	2605	2543	2016	1352	1845	1526
	October	23803	2612	3682	5419	2418	2873	1978	1398	1589	1834
	November	24945	4496	2813	5380	1913	3465	2151	1384	1325	2018
Giurgiu	August	8146	1139	1448	1877	916	379	570	692	830	295
	September	8136	494	1916	1783	1095	526	487	602	786	447
	October	7027	453	1858	728	864	843	336	711	647	587
	November	8072	921	1172	1145	1510	1176	347	503	610	688
Gorj	August	21683	1710	2669	3206	1587	1124	588	1889	3584	5326
	September	20603	747	3384	1773	1807	1708	531	1226	2589	6838
	October	21281	803	2271	2291	2472	2205	825	660	2336	7418
	November	17577	1916	2222	1794	3077	2180	824	652	2304	2608
Harghita	August	11754	1075	2050	2773	1196	904	770	1215	1034	737

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	September	11308	875	1730	2425	1296	984	782	1315	1154	747
	October	11389	876	1735	2181	1306	1248	797	1330	1164	752
	November	11666	2457	989	1763	1527	1492	796	697	970	975
Hunedoara	August	37273	7348	6902	5970	2345	3267	4168	2421	2791	2061
	September	38480	7585	6022	5570	1780	2907	4529	3447	3268	3372
	October	32265	2079	6504	2774	2715	3310	3950	3411	3445	4077
	November	33282	4144	5649	4024	4472	4681	2617	1699	1716	4280
Ialomița	August	11725	950	2497	2165	1264	895	1133	923	1259	639
	September	11358	643	1983	2162	1420	1343	1108	796	1304	599
	October	11224	795	1537	1995	1611	1570	769	1038	1110	799
	November	11426	1235	974	2153	1332	1992	795	990	814	1141
Iași	August	28781	1816	5358	6219	2620	2478	2063	2435	3842	1950
	September	28986	1695	5523	5297	2727	3004	2395	2566	3164	2615
	October	28632	1621	5125	5060	2509	3241	2415	2610	3352	2699
	November	29093	1816	4358	5613	1238	2978	2563	3435	4842	2250
Maramureș	August	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	September	18625	1454	749	5857	606	120	326	9347	142	24

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	October	18533	1448	1669	4498	1206	913	954	6450	757	638
	November	16074	1448	1669	4404	1206	913	954	4085	757	638
Mehedinți	August	12163	1633	1276	2340	1652	807	713	961	2460	321
	September	11985	1582	1914	1441	1644	1017	651	80	1294	1642
	October	12094	1189	1417	2127	1575	1650	623	659	691	2163
	November	11413	1893	1328	1976	1865	1590	590	629	855	687
Mureș	August	18927	1865	3651	4374	2131	1352	1908	1267	1478	901
	September	19051	2425	3408	3303	3649	2645	3594	27	0	0
	October	17866	1689	2117	3975	3487	1639	1557	1374	1536	492
	November	18447	2615	1927	3116	3834	2153	1228	1445	1641	488
Neamț	August	27952	767	1543	10477	2291	1348	1421	2022	1263	6820
	September	27768	2096	2502	7031	2156	3235	2593	1953	1882	4320
	October	27778	1991	2139	8007	1638	1942	1953	2381	2173	5554
	November	27438	2879	3679	5613	1783	2201	1959	1712	1255	6357
Olt	August	15221	2754	3225	3045	1651	866	592	1103	1240	745
	September	14791	1417	3678	2191	2584	1156	616	697	1480	972
	October	14714	1257	3792	1879	2829	1178	833	507	1450	989

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	November	15059	1710	2575	2895	2005	2219	832	500	916	1407
Prahova	August	44958	10778	7064	4086	5001	2561	2954	6567	4980	967
	September	43624	7867	8575	3112	5723	2825	2899	5814	5381	1401
	October	43085	5676	9227	3413	5949	3486	2876	3017	7507	1934
	November	43436	5788	9296	3627	5936	4454	2283	2636	5972	3444
Satu Mare	August	9397	732	1434	2952	1090	476	688	505	1015	505
	September	7965	684	1223	1692	923	859	443	593	553	995
	October	7541	839	1017	1382	817	1005	406	525	524	1026
	November	7374	1295	750	1254	662	1144	399	535	418	917
Sălaj	August	13425	1815	3925	2548	1125	1185	565	519	1284	459
	September	13271	1124	3268	2822	1957	1188	908	405	1045	554
	October	12811	1112	2928	2751	1886	1138	869	563	1035	529
	November	12822	1123	2898	2751	1885	1131	876	579	1044	535
Sibiu	August	17971	1994	3537	3658	1900	1717	1430	2013	474	1248
	September	17434	1360	3307	3611	2332	1385	2551	2181	557	150
	October	16907	1892	2748	3152	2011	1816	2475	2043	785	185
	November	17408	2816	1726	3540	1714	2109	1512	920	1903	1168
Suceava	August	27200	2916	5353	3459	2523	2538	2279	2628	3335	2169

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	September	27174	2171	5618	3281	2854	2750	2377	2485	3114	2524
	October	26500	2312	4202	3922	2357	3217	2486	2031	2805	3168
	November	26417	3543	3161	4313	2183	3665	2303	2029	2320	2900
Teleorman	August	12255	1116	1857	4519	18	182	497	1351	1722	993
	September	10035	1469	1842	2111	82	236	509	1351	1722	713
	October	9171	1805	1835	915	261	281	534	1349	1725	466
	November	13436	2010	1196	1633	1788	2336	1257	876	990	1350
Timiș	August	21333	2275	5257	4128	2396	2076	1085	1455	1407	1254
	September	20166	1359	5053	3870	1609	2228	2066	1473	1514	994
	October	19334	1253	4898	3146	2003	2148	2172	1100	1554	1060
	November	19225	2020	2172	4712	2070	2190	1801	1857	1294	1309
Tulcea	August	10020	1150	1515	2506	791	657	816	917	1148	520
	September	9689	896	1499	2058	1244	697	738	842	1140	575
	October	9008	776	1363	1253	1406	958	697	671	1009	875
	November	9548	1232	1146	1188	1441	1458	593	703	819	968
Vaslui	August	25979	1818	4159	5188	2645	2043	2513	2713	3465	1435
	September	25979	1818	4159	5188	2645	2043	2513	2713	3465	1435
	October	26719	1926	3566	5141	3390	2421	2529	2455	3573	1718

Duration of unemployment											
County	Months	TOTAL	1day-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	12-15 months	15-18 months	18-21 months	21-24 months	24-27 months
	November	26363	2552	2795	4595	3035	3234	2304	2233	3048	2567
Vâlcea	August	14266	2580	1311	1763	2146	2118	1103	963	1033	1249
	September	14636	1186	2085	2780	2118	1228	1113	1207	1494	1425
	October	14764	1285	2061	2217	2507	1589	1051	1017	1288	1749
	November	14558	1713	1804	1733	2331	1836	1102	854	1160	2025
Vrancea	August	9253	1260	831	1317	956	1429	991	673	729	1067
	September	9912	857	1461	1730	1032	1121	732	813	1034	1132
	October	8748	503	1328	1265	1036	1055	999	633	1140	789
	November	9017	721	942	1385	1254	1136	1070	602	898	1009
Bucureşti	August	39122	7020	8713	5031	4538	3949	2658	2640	2727	1846
	September	43078	5511	10360	9050	3557	3389	3045	3047	3181	1938
	October	42522	3809	10573	9454	3581	3854	2850	3128	2872	2401
	November	40416	5445	10103	6603	4538	3627	2691	2956	2668	1785
Ilfov	August	1911	409	334	417	102	112	115	115	119	188
	September	1905	506	387	393	94	91	102	114	103	115
	October	1549	399	306	325	124	89	64	93	82	67
	November	1388	227	296	233	107	94	127	93	115	96

Annex 7: Case study on 18 year olds who leave child protection institutions

1. Background

During the past ten years, Romanian children in residential care have faced numerous problems. These have raised concern amongst many international organisations, as well as the media and the public worldwide. The Romanian authorities have started to reform a child protection system that has been successful in some ways but a failure in others. While the children in some institutions live in much improved conditions, there are still institutions where the children live in conditions unacceptable for the third millennium and for a European country. Improvement of these institutions is one of the political criteria for Romania's membership of the European Union.

Moreover, there are two further increasingly worrying issues:

- the consistently high rates of children abandoned and children institutionalised despite great efforts to “de-institutionalise” and create alternatives;
- ever since 1990, the situation of 18-year-olds leaving residential care has become more and more serious.

Before 1989, these teenagers were given a job in a state organisation, regardless of qualifications and their salaries were almost the same as those of other employees. The state also provided housing, albeit of the lowest quality. After 1990, state support virtually vanished, and local communities took little interest in the issue.

Furthermore, unemployment rocketed throughout the population and poverty spread rapidly. Access to education and training opportunities has largely hinged on the financial means of individual families. Hence, the very vulnerable situation of these young people: no housing, little or no family, no state or community support, no resources, low qualifications and, amongst other deprivations, no work. The result is that they often end up as delinquents on the street.

Several programmes aim to promote the social re-integration of these young people. They mainly stem from non-governmental organisations with overseas funding. Despite the urgent need for Romanian authorities to get involved, the young people still seem to be “nobody's responsibility”. There are no governmental strategies or national campaigns to solve their problems.

2. Objectives

From May to July 2000, the Federation of Non-Governmental Organisations Active in Child Protection conducted research in three placement centres (“casa de copii”) to see how teenagers who left them the previous year had fared.

In particular, research focused on:

The situation of teenagers one year after leaving the placement centre;

- Whether the geographical situation of the centre affected the way young people turned out;
- How the placement centre influenced the development of the young people.
- This case study ends with some conclusions and several recommendations.

3. *Methodology*

We carried out the study in three placement centres in Bucharest, Constanța and Neamț. We deliberately chose these regions because they contrast economically and socially:

- Constanța, a well developed county;
- Neamț, a poor county with a high unemployment rate;
- Bucharest, the capital of Romania; compared with the rest of the country, it has a high level of economic and social development, diversified labour market opportunities, and a unique spread of social and cultural ways.

The three selected institutions were:

- a) Placement Centre for Boys “The Dolphin” - Agigea, Constanța county;
- b) Placement Centre “Ion Creangă” - Piatra Neamț, Neamț county;
- c) Placement Centre No.8 for Girls, Bucharest.

During 1999, 27 teenagers left these centres: Constanța (12), Piatra Neamț (10) and Bucharest (five). The questionnaire (appended as Annex) was put to 22 teenagers (all those in Bucharest and Piatra Neamț, and seven in Constanța). Nine of these youngsters were directly interviewed, sometimes repeatedly. For the rest, the questionnaire was put to their families (brothers, sisters or parents).

Information came from direct interviews and data gathered by staff (directors and teachers) at the placement centres.

The questionnaire has three main chapters: the first on the placement centre; the second on the child’s career at the institution; and the third on the young people’s current situation.

4. *Results and comments*

4.1 *The status of the placement centres*

As for the centres, significant differences emerged in terms of the children and ways of teaching and management.

Centre	No. of children	Age	Boys / Girls
Piatra Neamț	218	3-24	Boys and girls
Constanța	111	8-20	Boys
Bucharest	70	4-18	Girls

As you see, the centres take care of a large number of children, the total depending on where they are. In a disadvantaged region, where alternatives to residential care are rare, local resources are scarce and there is little hope of reducing the number of institutionalised children. Surprisingly, in the big cities, the genders are kept separate - possibly because teaching and other staff are resistant to change.

Field visits also highlighted key differences between the resources available to the three centres. The Constanța Centre benefited from substantial foreign aid that paid for personalised clothing, more food,

pocket money and colour television. Every summer, up to 60 children went to Belgium where they had a chance to work and earn money. While the Bucharest Centre does not command foreign support on the same scale as Constanța, it deploys the statutory state allowances for children in a more intensive and innovative way. The centre in Piatra Neamț has far more limited resources, the only supplement coming from cattle breeding. Its children dress in uniform and are therefore visibly stigmatised as “Casa de copii”. They have no refrigerators and keep the bread in their pockets to eat between meals.

As for educational courses, the Centres share the same “school model”, but this is more evident in Piatra Neamț. Children take part in some vocational activities. Sadly, these are not genuine vocational training courses; they do not furnish any kind of qualification or certificate to attract work on leaving the institution. Moreover, homework always takes up five hours of the day in Piatra Neamț. And apart from Bucharest, the Centres have no psychologists to help with vocational counseling and career development.

Constanța runs the best leisure activities; Piatra Neamț, the least adequate.

The staffing structure shows that Constanța is out of step because children still go to school inside the Centre. Starting in September, children will attend the village school. Generally, teaching staff predominate.

Centre	Educators	Psychologists	Teachers	Doctors	Pedagogues	Social Assistants	Super-Intendants
Piatra Neamț	17	0	0	1	9	1	0
Constanța	2	0	6	0	16	0	14
Bucharest	16	1	0	1	1	3	0

4.2 *Youngsters that leave the institutions*

The most obvious feature of these children is that they come from dysfunctional families with financial and other problems. Out of 27 children who were 18 and left the institutions during 1999, only one is an orphan.

Centre	Orphans	Two-parent family	Single parent family	Family with handicap
Piatra Neamț	1	4	5	0
Constanța	0	11	1	1
Bucharest	0	5	0	1

The next table refers to young people of 18 who left the three centres in 1999:

Centre	Youngsters who left in 1999	Re-integrated in the family	Still cared for by the Centre	Taken over by other organisations	Married	Indipen- dent
Piatra Neamţ	10	2	0	2	4	2
Constanţa	12	7	2	1	0	2
Bucharest	5	1	0	1	2	1

The table reveals a serious situation: of 27 children, only five take care of themselves, the rest still depend on some kind of support. Given those re-integrated in the family (ten), those married (six) and those taken over by other organisations (four), we see that, out of the initial 27, only two remained in public care. If we compare Constanţa to Piatra Neamţ, the latter has a far higher rate of family re-integration.

As far as educational level is concerned, an 18-year-old is usually in the last years of high school (11th or 12th class). The next table shows that in this respect Constanţa comes out by far the best. Five out of 12 continued their studies in high schools, post-secondary schools or university, while the rest learnt a trade. With similar numbers, Piatra Neamţ fared worse. In Bucharest, the educational level is also low.

Centre	5th grade	8th grade	9th grade	10th grade	8th grade + 3 years in vocational school	High school	Post-secondary / University
Piatra Neamţ	1	1	3	4	0	0	1
Constanţa	0	0	0	0	7	2	1/2
Bucharest	0	0	3	1	0	1	0

In general, there is only limited access to high school and even less to university. Of 27 young people, only two attained higher education.

It is hardly surprising that so many of these children abandoned school. Of the 27 researched, five dropped out for various reasons including the need to ensure survival by marriage. Once again, Constanţa emerges as the best.

Centre	School drop-out	Marriage	Unable to adapt in special school and falling in vagabondage
Piatra Neamţ	3	2	1
Constanţa	0	0	0
Bucharest	2	2	0

As for employment, of 20 youngsters who did not go to school, only two have a regular work contract; six work on the basis of collaboration agreements (civil conventions), four are agricultural labourers and three function on the black market.

Centre	Labour contract	Collaboration agreement	Work in agriculture		Black labour market
Piatra Neamț	1	3	1	0	0
Constanța	0	3	3	1	2
Bucharest	1	0	0	0	1

Comparing the three centres, you see that, out of the 12 young people who left Constanța, nine make their own living and two continue with their studies. In Piatra Neamț, only half have their own sources of income. Bucharest comes last even though it offers the most job opportunities.

Significantly, in Constanța at least two of the young people who re-integrated in families are now working in a business owned by a family member. The inference is that in the Constanța region the economy favours the social re-integration of young people of this kind.

The most frequently practised trades are locksmith, house painter, tailor, manicurist and waiter.

We also researched to what extent the young people kept in touch with the Centre after they had left. About one third of them maintained contact with what was, in effect, their childhood home. In most cases at Constanța, this tie amounted to genuine affection.

Centre	Contact maintained	Attachment / affection	Family interest
Piatra Neamț	4	2	1
Constanța	5	5	0
Bucharest	3	0	1

5. Conclusions

General conclusions

1. Over the past 10 years, placement centres in Romania have evolved well in terms of both material status and working methodologies.
2. That said, there are still many difficulties: numerous children, limited budgets, use of obsolete educational methods such as schooling children inside the center.
3. Most of the children in placement centres come from dysfunctional families with financial difficulties and/or other problems; they are rarely orphans.
4. Generally, many of these children drop out of school. They have little access to high school and university, less through legislative constraints, more because they lack information, career advice and resources. Apprentice schools and vocational schools exist, and they could well make these teenagers more employable. After graduating from such schools, they can continue their studies in a high school by taking the “studies’ equivalence” in case they pass the “capacity

exam” which takes place after the first eight classes. According to Emergency Ordinance no.130/30.06.2000 - and to support social inclusion - you do not have to have a “capacity certificate” to gain entry to a vocational school.

5. As for social integration, a few of these young people are independent after leaving the Centre. For girls, such independence often derives from marriage or a stable relationship with a partner who has his own income.
6. A significant number of these young people apparently have their own resources but these largely come from risky sources such as part-time work or the black market.

Comparison between the centres

1. From almost every point of view, the Centre in Constanța provides for better living and a better education when compared with the other two Centres – apart from the fact that up to now schooling still went on in the Centre.
2. Constanța has the edge because the economic development of the region is that much better and, even more, because the Director of the Centre is very go-ahead. He has a frank, modern, direct approach to solving the Centre’s problems. Furthermore, he managed to find useful partners inside Romania as well as abroad. His general aim is to improve the situation of children in his care.
3. The situation of young people in Constanta is by far the best. First, Constanța commands more job opportunities. Second, training young people at the Centre for a job and more generally preparing them for working life made for better results. And, third, the children learnt a lot from working in Belgium during the summer holidays. In fact, this initiative enabled two of them to work and continue their studies after leaving the centre.

6. Recommendations

These recommendations come within the general scope of the national report “Vocational Education and Training against Social Exclusion”. In other words, they consider the potential of vocational education and training only in relation to the group covered by this study.

1. There is a need for individualised projects in child care institutions in terms of vocational training for the most common jobs on the local labour market.
2. Vocational training must be accompanied by vocational counseling and professional orientation. Also required are preparation activities to ease transition from the centre to the world of work and educational initiatives that generate a positive attitude to work after leaving the centre.
3. Staff training programmes are also necessary in tandem with specific training courses for the directors of the centres. The main aim of such training is to equip the directors of centres with the skills and knowledge to set up their own courses. The latter must be geared to the potential of the children. They must also forge the links vital to the social integration of young people after leaving the centre.

Annex to case study

Questionnaire

I. The placement centre where the inquiry was conducted				
Name:				
Full address:	Street and number:			
	Post code, Locality:			
	Country			
	Phone number:		Fax:	
Contact persons: (position included)				
Number of beneficiaries:	Ages from:		To:	
Number of specialised personnell:				
Out of which:	■ pedagogues		■ medical doctors	
	■ psychologists		■ others	
	■ teachers			
Annual budget:				
Professional training programmes organised in the centre:				
Preparation programmes carried out in the centre in order to obtain autonomy:				

II. Personal data of interviewed youngster:			
First name:		Surname:	
First name and surname of:			
Father:	Mother:	Brothers /Sisters:	
Sex:	<input type="checkbox"/> male	<input type="checkbox"/> female	age:
Date of birth:		Place of birth:	
Existent identity paper:			
Physical description (colour of the hair, eyes, height, etc):			
Date of institutionalisation:		Person who brought him/her into the institution:	
Where was s/he brought from?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	<input type="checkbox"/> Street	<input type="checkbox"/> another institution:	
Reasons for institutionalisation:			

Environment s/he comes from			
<input type="checkbox"/> family		<input type="checkbox"/> Placement Centre	
Family:			
<input type="checkbox"/> it does exist		<input type="checkbox"/> it does not exist	
Full family address:		Causes:	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown parents <input type="checkbox"/> Dead parents <input type="checkbox"/> Disappeared parents	
Family type:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Biological family		<input type="checkbox"/> Adoptive family	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Substitutive family:	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Brother / sister <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents <input type="checkbox"/> Uncles /aunts <input type="checkbox"/> Other persons (which?):	
Civil status of the family:			
<input type="checkbox"/> married parents	<input type="checkbox"/> divorced parents	<input type="checkbox"/> Concubinage	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
Family structure:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Two-parents family	<input type="checkbox"/> Monoparental family	<input type="checkbox"/> only mother <input type="checkbox"/> only father <input type="checkbox"/> causes:	
Number of family members:			
Parents' occupation:			
Permanent activity:		Unemployed:	
<input type="checkbox"/> mother <input type="checkbox"/> father		<input type="checkbox"/> mother <input type="checkbox"/> father	
Parent' behaviour:			
<input type="checkbox"/> alcohol consumers	<input type="checkbox"/> prostitution	<input type="checkbox"/> domestic violence	<input type="checkbox"/> beggary
Criminal Convicts of Parents:			
Previous:		Current:	
<input type="checkbox"/> mother <input type="checkbox"/> father		<input type="checkbox"/> mother <input type="checkbox"/> father	

Family relations:	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> poor: Causes:
Date of leaving institution:	
Psychological profile:	
Health status:	

III. Relations with the school			
School attendance:			
<input type="checkbox"/> normal	<input type="checkbox"/> school abandonment since when:	<input type="checkbox"/> not enrolled	
Education level:			
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> poor	<input type="checkbox"/> inexistant
School graduated:		Where:	
Qualification obtained:			

IV. CURRENT SITUATION	
Workplace previous to inquiry:	
Current place of work (form of employment: labour contract, collaboration agreement, others)	
Monthly income:	
Other sources of material/ financial support:	
Where does s/he live nowadays (full address):	
Civil status:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> Not married
Children	
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes; How many
Group relationships:	
Family relationships:	
Delinquency:	

IV. CURRENT SITUATION
Relationships with the insitution left:
Future wishes/projects/dreams:
Expectation (chances):

Annex 8

Beneficiaries of professional integration support according to Law 87/1992, Government Ordinance 32/1995 and Government Ordinance 35/1997
(Source: National Agency for Employment and Vocational Training)

Indicator	Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
No. of the unemployed registered and in receipt of unemployment benefits	1997	702537	748115	757723	730991	704486	727882	720254	708541	721077	763381	816363	881435
	1998	920121	961657	953419	933880	907197	883919	871028	848314	857196	984573	940032	1025056
	1999	1137795	1183947	1182701	1153535	1132960	1121807	1114242	1074962	1073586	1064463	1090578	1130296
out of which: Beneficiaries of professional integration support	1997	-	103361	104860	114927	112249	112800	103558	79395	72034	75580	90717	104825
	1998	110477	113407	115259	117208	118197	115841	100207	74674	60301	64318	78156	92004
	1999	103365	106486	111295	115026	116760	114229	97492	73392	66376	69718	85027	95496

Indicator	1999	1998	1997
No. of beneficiaries of professional integration support, out of which:	95496	92004	104825
(a) Graduates of high school with bacallaureate, but no qualification, out of which:	27710	29093	30363
a. graduates in 1999	20312	0	0
b. graduates in 1998	5696	20539	0
c. graduates in 1997	1141	6813	22113
d. graduates in 1996	425	1471	7848
(b) Graduates of high school with bacallaureate and qualification, out of which:	44194	40458	42250
a. graduates in 1999	30916	0	0
b. graduates in 1998	9578	27751	0
c. graduates in 1997	2479	9727	30490
d. graduates in 1996	1042	2639	10804

Indicator	Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Total no of graduates for which employers have benefited of provisions of Law 87 / 1992, Government Ordinance 32 / 1995 and Government Ordinance 35 / 1997	1992	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	610	1624	2842	4299
	1993	6626	8975	11111	12641	14578	15895	0	0	0	0	16738	21558
	1994	25714	16984	23284	27155	30491	27090	30592	32219	33274	34141	34729	36610
	1995	37693	10738	12753	13427	15371	16062	17780	20461	20800	24420	24547	26328
	1996	20917	20559	23381	18223	19255	17613	16725	15917	16992	17200	20749	18575
	1997	22445	27262	25354	27887	32430	33038	32974	33602	32947	32788	32756	32625
	1998	21452	26368	12854	17933	19423	17373	18546	20183	21800	23615	25278	29090
	1999	30600	32759	16414	16372	21700	22800	25200	26300	27700	29037	30093	31001

*Evolution of young graduates employed according to Law no.87/1992, Government Ordinance no.32/1995
and Government Ordinance no.35/1997*

Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Total number of employed graduates	1992	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	610	1624	2842	4299
	1993	6626	8975	11111	12641	15895	0	0	0	0	16738	21558
	1994	25714	16984	23284	27155	30491	30592	32219	33274	34141	34729	36610
	1995	37693	10738	12753	13427	15371	17780	20461	20800	24420	24547	26328
	1996	20917	20559	23381	19255	19255	17613	15917	16992	17200	20749	18575
	1997	22445	27262	25354	27887	33038	32974	33602	32947	32788	32756	32625
	1998	21452	26368	12854	17933	17373	18546	20183	21800	23615	25278	29090
	1992	0	0	0	0	0	0	102	442	1214	2034	2835
out of which graduates of higher education	1993	3889	4591	6772	7783	9920	0	0	0	0	10306	12037
	1994	13509	4582	5122	6281	5433	6094	6479	6681	6880	6970	7380
	1995	7588	2383	3479	3729	4998	5178	5693	6062	6682	6773	7428
	1996	6068	4589	5182	5230	4620	4829	4573	4772	4800	5902	6053
	1997	7028	8365	8761	9706	10403	10428	10689	10804	10863	10745	10877
	1998	8950	11110	4774	8315	9052	9554	10428	11200	10492	11253	13122

Source: National agency for employment and vocational training)