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**Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (UEFISCDI)**  
**Higher Education Evidence Based Policy Making: a necessary premise for progress**  
**in Romania**  
**SMIS 34912**

# **The Status-quo of Romanian National Policies on Equity in Higher Education**

**- Draft -**



THE EXECUTIVE AGENCY FOR  
HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH,  
DEVELOPMENT AND  
INNOVATION FUNDING



Higher Education Evidence  
Based Policy Making



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Inovație în administrație  
Programul Operațional  
"Dezvoltarea Capacității  
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# Equity analysis

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## Part A

### 1. Introduction

The Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (*UEFISCDI*) is currently implementing a project meant to increase the institutional capacity for evidence based public policies in higher education. One of its planned activities is an analysis of two essential dimensions of Universities in Romania: social cohesion/equity and internationalization. Starting from the premise that each institution, respecting university autonomy, defines its own university mission and strategy, it is desired to map out the policies regarding social cohesion/equity and internationalization within the Romanian higher education system and on an institutional (university) level. Furthermore, some recommendations will be formulated by teams of both national and international experts regarding national and institutional policies. The document will also constitute a support for international audiences, in order to improve the understanding of the current state of affairs of national and institutional policies regarding social cohesion/equity and internationalization started and implemented in Romanian universities.

The economic changes following the Second World War and subsequent changes in society have led to a change in the public understanding of the role of universities. One of these changes was the transition from elitist education systems to "massification" of education. In Romania this process only began after the fall of communism in 1989. After 1990, private institutions of higher education were established, the number of universities (including private ones) and the number of students rapidly increased, together with a large diversification of specializations offered. The number of registered students in the academic year 2008/2009 is almost seven times higher than the number of students registered in 1989/1990. On the other hand, massification has led to a series of challenges: the mismatch between the level of public funding and the rapid expansion of the system, the difficult balance between maintaining quality and allowing the system to expand, especially through the emergence of private universities and a clash between the notions of merit based participation in higher education and tapping into the full potential of the Romanian population, especially with a view to access, progression and completion of underrepresented groups in higher education..

According to the INS publication: "The design of active population of Romania at 2050" published in 2011, the demographic change in the European Union (EU) and especially the low fertility rates have had important implications on aging, also having consequences for social policies and education. The EU-27 population was estimated in 2010 to be approximately 500 million. Giving the fact that low fertility is a major problem for the region, according to UN estimates, the population of the EU will decrease by 2.4% by 2050. Demographic problems faced by other EU Member States are also found in Romania, with the observation that the relatively lower performance of Romanian economy could have an even greater social impact in relation to the demographic.

Romania's population has experienced over the past two decades significant changes, in part due to the demographic transition and changes in the political regime that had a strong influence on the evolution of demographic phenomena. Since 1990, the total population decreased year by year, to an average annual rate of 0.2%. During 1992-2002, the population decreased by 1.1 million people. Furthermore, in 2002-2010, the population aged 15-24 years decreased by 13.8% and the population aged 25-34 fell by 8.2% while the population 55-64 years increased by 18.7%.





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According to Eurostat data quoted in the Ministry of Education study launched in 2012<sup>1</sup>, in 2007-2011 there was a decrease in the **risk of poverty** and **social exclusion** in Romania, from 45.9% in 2007 to 40.3% in 2011. However, Romania is still among the countries with the highest rate of risk of poverty and social exclusion in Europe, almost twice as high as the EU average. Higher poverty and social exclusion rates compared to Romania were recorded only in Latvia and Bulgaria.

The analysis of the Ministry of education concludes that: "The main challenge for education system in terms of risk of poverty and social exclusion is the significant gap between the situation of children and young people in Romania compared to average EU rates of poverty and social exclusion of children and young people. Romanian rates of poverty and social exclusion are consistently higher (almost double) compared to the EU average having direct effects on access and participation in education. Economic support measures for children in this situation are required to be continued and focused on specific groups of children and young people from disadvantaged groups while implementing inclusive education principles in economically and socially disadvantaged areas."

The data from the National Institute of Statistics (INS) shows low participation rates in higher education for students from different disadvantaged groups such as rural students, disabled, Roma or those coming from low income families. Also, the data shows a correlation between participation rates in higher education and participation rates in secondary education which means that when developing a national strategy on equity in higher education, the situation of previous formal education should be taken into consideration.

As shown before, the number of students in Romania increased after the communist period. On the other hand, since the academic year 2008/2009 the total number of students begins to significantly decrease in close correlation with the lower number of high school graduates, the low percentage of high school students that passed the national examination (baccalaureate), which lead to a lower number of students who enrolled in the first year of study. This negative evolution represents arguments for Romania to develop a coherent strategy on equitable access to higher education.

Giving the social context of Romania and also the fact that the current governmental strategy includes as a main priority the development of equity policies regarding higher education, the project aims at making the first steps for the construction of a national strategy on equity. It also aims at involving international experts, national experts and representatives from Romanian universities in order for this strategy to be both centered on institutional realities and experience and on relevant expertise related to equity in (higher) education.

The current document represents a policy instrument which has the role to support Romanian policy makers in the decision making process regarding equity policies in higher education. The document is structured as follows:

- Part A represents a background paper which serves at clarifying the concept of equity as defined within different policy and official documents, at giving an overview of the main national policies with impact on equity, at presenting relevant indicators of access, participation and completion in education and, finally, at summarizing the relevant pieces of education legislation, policies and instruments with impact on equity;

<sup>1</sup> Reference: Needs analysis on education and training in Romania , 2012

<http://administratesite.edu.ro/index.php/articles/18802>

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- Part B represents the findings and experts' recommendations for the institutional level. The recommendations follow the structure of the Equity Plan at the Institutional Level developed by World Bank;
- Part C represents the experts group's recommendations for the further development of equity policies at national level;
- Part D includes the relevant Annexes.

Part A of the document is structured as follows:

- **General presentation** – introduces the conceptual considerations on equity related to access, progress, completion and transition to the work market, as a pre-condition for social cohesion. It also makes references to the international commitments of Romania with impact on equity;
- **General policy framework** – describes the national policy framework with impact on equity in education which includes, inter alia, governmental strategies, The National Pact for Education, the National Reform Plan, the Education Law (1/2011) and ends with an overview of the institutional structures with responsibilities on equity;
- **Indicators and Relevant References Regarding Equity in Higher Education and Social Cohesion** – comprises data regarding access, participation in and graduation from higher education. It starts by giving a series of indicators on secondary education and continues to describing participation of different categories of students in higher education, ranging from the gender distribution to the participation of Roma students, mature, students with special needs etc.;
- **The Specific Framework of Policies and Instruments concerning Equity in Higher Education** – describes specific instruments and policies implemented in Romania which have direct or indirect impact on equity in higher education, such as: funding higher education and the financial support for students, social and academic services for students and policies for quality assurance;
- **Challenges and opportunities** – Analyzing the status of Romanian higher education in terms of data, policies and instruments regarding equity, the chapter concludes by describing, from the experts' perspective, both the challenges and the opportunities that the Romanian system faces.

To provide a general overview of equity in the Romanian higher education system, the document uses data from the following main sources:

- Statistical data from the National Institute of Statistics (INS);
- Data from the process of classification of Romanian universities<sup>2</sup>;
- Data from the national institutions and councils responsible with higher education: Ministry of Education (MEN), National Council for Funding Higher Education (CNFIS), the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS);
- Studies and reports launched by the Ministry of Education and the World Bank;
- International comparison data from Eurostat and Eurostudent.

It is important to note that, though necessary, certain types of data are not currently collected at the national level by the National Institute of Statistics. In this case, existing studies bringing a certain level of information on the topics where INS data is missing are quoted even though, in several cases, the data presented is not recently updated.

For the development of the institutional recommendations, the experts group drew on the experience of the International Association of Universities (IAU). In this regard, an open call was launched for universities

<sup>2</sup> The process of collecting the data and information for evaluating universities and study programs to the purpose of classifications of universities and hierarchies of the study programs <http://chestionar.uefiscdi.ro/>

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- "Stefan cel Mare" University of Suceava;
- "Carol I" National Defense University of Bucharest;
- Polytechnic University of Timisoara;
- "Titu Maiorescu" University of Bucharest.

In order for the working group to analyze the institutional strategies and statutes of the Romanian universities in relation to equity in higher education, a **self-assessment instrument** has been designed by the experts group to enable each institution to provide a snapshot of their status-quo, policies, instruments and current practice in relation to equity.

The institutional recommendations are designed following the Equity Plan at the Institutional Level model. It comprises five chapters: identification of relevant equity groups, assessment of the equity gaps for each relevant group, presentation of institutional equity goals and targets, action plan and budget to achieve the proposed objectives, as well as the definitions of monitoring indicators and mechanisms.

It is important to mention that the present study has its limitations in the sense that focusing on equity in higher education in a comprehensive and exhaustive manner requires more time and resources than available for the current activity. A further debate with decision makers, universities representatives and other stakeholders is needed, as well as an ex-ante impact analysis of the proposals made.

## 2. General Presentation

### 2.1. Conceptual Considerations:

#### 2.1.1. What is equity in education?

The access to education is a *sine qua non* condition to be successful in a knowledge-based economy and, consequently, to be socially included. Even if we witness a massive expansion in education, there are citizens, not only of less developed countries, who do not have enough chances to graduate a secondary school and to enroll in a higher education institution. If, at the societal level, the money allocated to education can be seen as an investment in future economic and technical competitiveness, at the individual level, these resources can be used to diminish social inequalities in education that are a foundation for future inequalities (Schlicht, 2010, 30). Therefore the existence of socio-economic factors that influence school performance and the access to higher educational system is a source of waste of human capital and of reproduction of social inequalities.

The European Union stresses, in its treaties, directives, regulations and strategies, the role of the relationship between education, employment and risk of poverty and / or social exclusion. In the Communication from the Commission to the Council and to the European Parliament on September 8, 2006 there is a special focus on the relationship between efficiency and equality in the European education and training systems, which are "critical factors to develop the EU's long-term potential for competitiveness as well as for social cohesion". According to this document, equity in education is not only related to equal opportunities and access, but it is connected with equal treatment and with the outcomes of the educational and training systems:

*"Equity is viewed as the extent to which individuals can take advantage of education and training, in terms of opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes. Equitable systems ensure*





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*that the outcomes of education and training are independent of socio-economic background and other factors that lead to educational disadvantage and that treatment reflects individuals' specific learning needs." (European Commission, 2006, 2)*

The Communication of the Commission underlines that even if the concept of equity does not overlap with the concept of inequalities (which are caused by gender, ethnic minority status, disability and regional disparities, etc.), there are socio-demographical variables that are the main sources of disadvantages. Moreover, there is a relationship between equity and efficiency, which are mutually reinforcing, taking into consideration the fact that "systems are efficient if the inputs produce the maximum output" (Commission, 2006, 2). Therefore a high level of equity is associated with a high level of efficiency and, therefore, equity is not just a moral goal, but a pragmatic source of efficiency, as well.

In an OECD paper, Field *et al.* (2007, 11) consider that equity in education has two dimensions that are intertwined: fairness and inclusion. Fairness means that personal and social circumstances are not obstacles in fulfilling the individual potential and inclusion means that there is a minimum standard of education for all. There are similarities between EU and OECD perspectives regarding equity, both underlining that access and school performance should not be negatively influenced by socio-demographical variables. The lack of equity is not only a problem of fairness, but a source of future social inequalities and social exclusion.

Since there is a relationship between equity and equality in education, should we try to equalize the educational outcomes? Ben Levin (2003) considers that this kind of equality is not only impossible, but also undesirable. The main goal should be that the differences in outcomes would not be determined by the economic and social differences:

*"There is general agreement that the aim of public policy cannot and should not be equality in the sense that everyone is the same or achieves the same outcomes – a state that appears to be both impossible and undesirable. Rather, a commitment to equity suggests that differences in outcomes should not be attributable to differences in areas such as wealth, income, power or possessions." (Levin, 2003, 5)*

If there is an acceptable degree of inequality, it is important to determine how much and what kind of inequality should be acceptable? It is very difficult to give a response to this question, given the economic, political and cultural diversity of the welfare states. But it can be stated that equity is not just equal educational opportunities, but fairness and justice "in terms of opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes" for every student. The educational and training systems should build strategies and policies to diminish the negative impact of individual and social factors in order to increase access and performance of citizens at the higher educational level. Equity means more than equal opportunities and it increases all people's (regardless of their social and economic backgrounds) chances to graduate from higher education. Therefore equity implies the decrease of the risk of social exclusion.





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## 2.1.2. Access and school performance. Individual and social factors

It is not in our intention here to present an extensive theoretical analysis regarding the factors that create inequity within the educational systems, but to present the main socio-economic variables that lead to educational disadvantage.

There are sociologists saying that, paradoxically, equality of chances in the educational system can create economic inequality (Boudon, 1990). The French sociologist underlines that academics and politicians are too optimistic regarding the fact that the development of the education increases the chances for children with a lower social status to have a better life, compared with their parents' life.

In opposition to this approach, the EU stresses the role of education in order to adapt to a knowledge-based economy: "better educational levels help employability and progress and increasing the employment rate helps reducing poverty" (European Commission, 2010, 9). On the other hand, it is true that the decrease of poverty or social exclusion does not necessarily imply the increase of economic equality. Social cohesion, one of the main objectives of the EU policies based on social equity, can be defined as:

*"a state of affairs concerning both the vertical and the horizontal interactions among members of a society, as characterized by a set of attitudes and norms that include trust, a sense of belonging, and the willingness to participate and help, as well as their behavioral manifestations" (Chan et al., 2006, 290).*

Taking into consideration this definition, social cohesion is more related to social inclusion and not to the decrease of the economic gap. But, in a report elaborated by the Council of Europe, social cohesion is defined as "the capacity of a society to ensure the well-being of all its members, minimizing disparities and avoiding marginalization" (Council of Europe, 2008, 14). Therefore social cohesion does not mean only economic and social integration, but minimizing disparities, as well.

To analyze equity in education in terms of opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes, we have to underline the individual and social factors that create disparities and diminish the possibilities of people to graduate from higher education and be integrated into the labor market. Literature that approaches school performance, dropping out risk and intention to continue education at a higher level (at the undergraduate or the graduate level) takes into consideration variables that are related to students' families, quality of schools, socio-economic development of communities, peer group pressure, gender and social values.

As far as family is concerned, several studies underline the importance of the family relationship, family income, and parents' level of education. Sun and Li (2009) consider that teenagers, especially girls, from unstable families have lower school performance in mathematics and social sciences. Therefore the two authors underline the importance of family counseling and of school counseling for students. Parents' education and income affect students' academic performance directly, by the fact that parents with higher education and/or income set higher school expectations and offer higher economic conditions to study.

School performance can be influenced indirectly by what Basil Bernstein (1964) called "restricted code" and "elaborate code" of communication. Children (students) from working class families have access only to the restricted code, and the middle class can use both restricted code and elaborate code. If within the restricted code "the range of the alternatives, syntactic alternatives, is considerably reduced and therefore it is much more likely that prediction should be possible", the elaborate code "will facilitate the speaker in



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his attempt to put into words his purpose, his discrete intent, his unique experience in a verbally explicit form" (Bernstein, 1964, 57). Because the elaborate code is not accessible for workers' families children and „school and universities are obliged to use elaborate code and to recompense its usage by the students" (Hatos, 2011, 625), students from low-educated families have a linguistic disadvantage and lower chances to achieve (high) school performance.

Gender is another variable that influences school performance and the intention to enroll in higher education. If, in the past, usually boys had better school performance, in the last decades this situation has changed, girls have higher grades and the percentage of female students (enrolled in higher education) is higher than the number of male students. The gender gap regarding secondary school pupils and first year students' performance was underlined in Romania in a survey conducted in 2010 (Pricopie *et. al.*, 2011). Furthermore, female pupils from secondary school are more interested to complete higher education than male pupils, regardless of their grades, families' income or parents' level of education. In this context, it becomes more and more clear that we face a new challenge, namely how to motivate students, especially male students, to have high school performance and to continue to study at a higher educational level.

Because teenagers are very much influenced by peer groups, we have to take into consideration the importance of the belonging groups and the reference groups for pupils. Martin H. Jones *et. al.* (2012) conducted a study regarding the relationship between school performance in mathematics and perception of the friends' academic and social behaviors. Perception of friends' social behavior represents the fact that, in the respondents' opinion, friends are more interested to go to parties, to be popular, have boy/girlfriends, or to hang out. The academic behavior means that friends are more oriented to get good grades, attend classes, study, and to continue education beyond high school. The research findings confirmed the hypothesis that perception of friends having an academic behavior positively correlate with academic performance, rather than the case where friends are perceived having a social behavior. (Jones *et. al.*, 2012, 30). Therefore the social environment is very important for students, especially for teenagers, in determining their school performance and willingness to continue education beyond high school.

Peer groups, together with family, schools and community, influence not only academic achievements but resilience, as well. And between resilience and academic achievement there is a strong correlation, because the more pupils or students are resilient, the higher their school performance (Wasonga, 2003). In a survey conducted in USA, six variables that constituted resilience were identified: cooperation and communication, empathy, problem-solving, self-efficacy, self-awareness, and goals and aspirations (Wasonga, 2003, 44). We can say that resilience consists of the capacity to adapt to norms, values, standards of the school, to be sociable, to be aware of others, and have pro-social behaviors, as well. Therefore, "if individuals had sustained experiences in caring relations, high expectations, and opportunities for meaningful participation across the stages of the life circle and across institutions, they were likely to develop resilience and perform better in school" (Wasonga, 2002, 45). Similar conclusions regarding the role of values in school performance were mentioned by Holma *et al.* (2009) in Finland. The findings of the study showed that there is a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and academic achievement. Consequently, Holma *et al.* (2009) consider that "gifted students should be prepared for cultural diversity, for example, by promoting critical thinking in school and by encouraging them to be aware of and comfortable with other cultures" (Holma *et al.*, 2009, 198). Therefore, materialistic values, which focus more on possession and acquisition of goods and less on warm relationships with others (Richins & Dawson, 1992, 312), negatively correlate with school performance (Pricopie *et al.*, 2011). Consequently, we can recommend that the curriculum should support solidarity, awareness for community issues, openness for cultural diversity and moral sensitivity.

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### 2.1.3. Equity as a pre-condition for social cohesion

For a concept that is so widely debated, equity in higher education has surprisingly few formal definitions. It is an intuitive concept – but practically each meaning suggests a different policy. Thus, equity in higher education can refer to those who have the ability to go on university, or to a non-discriminatory selection based on social class, gender, religion, ethnicity, or there are no barriers to access in university, or (finally) the selection in university is made on academic merit. In official definitions, usually equity refers to non-discrimination in the access and educational route in university.

In the last decade, a European memorandum and the review of citizenship education policies emphasized the problem of equity showing an increasing preoccupation for social exclusion and simultaneously for the social – or wider, non-economic – benefits of learning (Green and Preston, 2001). However, observes Green (2003, p. 14), the dominant policy discourse, at least in the Anglo-Saxon countries, is no longer about social cohesion and social solidarity, and the impacts of education on these, but rather on community renewal and impact of education on 'social inclusion' via the labour market. The dominant theoretical discourse has changed as well. Theories of social integration have been superseded in current theory by the burgeoning new discourse of social capital. In both cases – in terms of policy and theory – there has been a significant shift from the macro societal perspective on social cohesion (whether of the Left or Right) to the more micro individual or community level – analysis.

Halimi (2005) reviews the current problems of equity in higher education, explaining the recent concern of the Council of Europe for "opening the doors of higher education to people who have so far been under-represented there – women, ethnic and cultural minorities, the disabled, young and not-so-young people from underprivileged social backgrounds", in a humanistic model which leads to a better quality of life. The author recalls a classification of people interested in lifelong learning: the *postponers*, who postponed access to higher education at the end of their secondary education, for various personal or career reasons; *returners*, who have already benefited from it, and come back to upgrade their knowledge; and lastly, *second chancers*, those who have not yet had an opportunity to benefit from academic learning, and who apply for or are offered another chance to do so (Halimi, 2005, p. 15). Most of these are from underprivileged groups that have so far been underrepresented in higher education: members of ethnic and cultural minorities, women with family commitments, disabled people. The third category is especially vulnerable, because it suffers from economic weaknesses, and has difficulties to gain recognition for their studies in their social group. Also, they have special needs in learning methods and curriculum (adaptation to practical targets, lack of prerequisite certificates, difference in cultural background and expectations, refuse to obey to academic rules) that are challenges to the program designers.

Not only the globalization and the emergence of lifelong learning were issues to deal with in the matter of equity. Also, increase at a mass proportion of the higher education in some countries was reported as generating inequalities to access and continuing academic studies in university (especially in case of growth of private universities) (McCowan, 2004). Other scholars (Brennan, Naidoo, 2008) considered that the excluded, disadvantaged or underrepresented groups are only one side of the problem. The other side refers to fairness of private benefits and to proper balance between public and private sources of funding, academic autonomy and links between university and community. In debating this balance, some studies (Johnstone, 2004) explore various forms of support for academic studies (for example, the notion of cost – sharing) and their implication on equity, through the increase of participation.





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Preparing a cross-national research, Green et al. (2003) made a distinction between social capital and social cohesion saying that, even if they are related, the two concepts should not be identified with each other. Thus, a society that is rich in social capital at a community level does not necessarily have a high level of social cohesion (Green et al., 2003, p.2). In this research, authors used cross-national, quantitative techniques to test the model on aggregated data for 15 countries from the World Values Survey (WVS), the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and Interpol Crime statistics. Data was used to build an aggregate measurement of social cohesion at a societal level, the "social cohesion index". The aggregate measure for social cohesion included, as variables, the general trust and trust in democracy, the civic cooperation /attitude of cheating in taxes and public transport, and indicators of violent crimes (p. 27). Among results, it was no significant correlation in the analysis at the national level between aggregate levels of education and social cohesion (p.36) An important finding in this study showed a negative and significant correlation between societal cohesion and education inequality and also a negative relationship between income inequality and social cohesion (p.6). Thus, inequality of educational outcomes, which is closely connected to income inequality, appears to have a significant effect on social cohesion.

## 2.2. General overview on the HE system in Romania

The general education framework is established by the Law on National Education no.1/2011 and specific regulations and procedures are adopted by decisions of the Minister of Education (Ministerial Orders) and Government Decisions.

In Romania, education has the following levels:

- Early education, divided into early pre-school (0-3 years) and pre-school (3-6 years);
- Primary education, including the school preparatory class and grades I-IV;
- Secondary education, which includes: Lower secondary education or gymnasium (grades V-VIII), upper secondary education or lyceum (IX-XII);
- Trades schools with a duration between 6 months and 2 years;
- Postsecondary non-tertiary education;
- Tertiary education which includes bachelor, master and PhD cycles;
- Post university education;
- Lifelong learning.

With the fall of the communist regime in December 1989, a difficult process towards organizing the Romanian higher education system began. The first reparatory stage lasted from 1990 to 1995 and was marked by efforts to prepare a new law of education, depoliticize the academic curricula, improve work condition for teachers and introduce new fields of study.<sup>3</sup>

So far, important moments for the development of higher education in Romania were:

- Adopting Law no. 88/1993 - the legal framework for the accreditation of higher education institutions and diploma recognition;
- The establishment of ARACIS (The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) in 2005, in compliance with the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2005 approved with modifications by the Law no. 87/200;

<sup>3</sup> Monographs on Higher Education, Silvia Florea and Peter J. Wells, 2011





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- Emergence of private universities; Creation of the legal basis for tuition fees in public universities and the acceptance of private higher education as an alternative to the public sector;
- Increased number of higher education institutions and enrolment quotas;
- Promulgation of the Education Law (nr. 84/1995);
- Better definition of the autonomy of higher education institutions;
- Introducing the "per capita" funding system, complemented by financing granted to universities according to quality criteria amounting to 30% from the total sum allocated for basic financing;
- Alignment with the Bologna Process and implementation of policies (since 2004);

The number of higher education institutions (both state and private) evolved since 1991 as following:

**Table 1 Number of higher education institutions (both state and private institutions)**

No. of HEI	
1991/1992	56
1992/1993	62
1993/1994	63
1994/1995	63
1995/1996	95
1996/1997	102
1997/1998	106
1998/1999	111
1999/2000	121
2000/2001	126
2001/2002	125
2005/2006	107
2006/2007	104
2007/2008	106
2009/2010	108

According to the official website of the Ministry of Education<sup>4</sup>, the status of higher education institutions in Romania is as following:

- 56 accredited state universities;
- 36 accredited private universities;
- 21 accredited for limited period private universities;
- 5 provisional authorization private universities which only organize study programs at Master level and adult education.

As a new law of education was adopted in 2011, the main changes brought (though not yet were fully implemented) are the following:

- A new funding system based both on the number of students and on performance indicators;
- A process of classification of universities and ranking of study programs;

<sup>4</sup> Reference: [www.edu.ro](http://www.edu.ro)

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- New advisory councils to assist MEN in its activity: the Council for Academic Management and Ethics, the National Council for Scientific Research Ethics, Technological Development and Innovation, the National Council for the Validation of Academic Titles, Diplomas and Certificates, the National Council for Statistics and Prognosis in Higher Education;
- Changes in the academic management of universities and new provisions related to academic integrity;
- A loan scheme for students;
- Improved provisions for Lifelong Learning services.

Regarding the process of classification of universities and ranking of study programs, a methodology was developed (according to the law) by a council which included ARACIS, CNATDCU and CNCS. In the first exercise the Council was assisted by EUA experts, which were consulted in the methodology drafting phase. The universities were classified as following:

- Research intensive universities – 12 HEIs;
- Teaching and research universities/ education and artistic creation - 30 HEIs ;
- Teaching universities - 48 HEIs;

The ranking of study programs comprised 1,074 study programmes that were divided in five specific types (A>B>C>D>E, where > means better results than). The results were as following:

- A – 20%
- B – 22%
- C – 25%
- D – 12%
- E – 21%

From 2011 until 2013, EUA, through its Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP), acts as the agency responsible for the external evaluation of universities. EUA is responsible for planning and implementing institutional evaluations focusing on a broad range of issues such as institutional missions and how they relate to the classification exercise; supporting quality provision, quality assurance mechanisms and strategic management. Following each evaluation, an institutional report is published for each HEI. The country level evaluation process will be finalized with a national report on institutional differentiation within the Romanian higher education system<sup>5</sup>.

### 2.3. International commitments of Romania on social cohesion and equity in higher education

International acknowledgements presented in this document are those contained within the Bologna Process, present in the Education Ministry Press Releases or other official information, Council of Europe Recommendations and those adopted as part of the World Conference on Higher Education organized by UNESCO.

Thus within the **Bologna Process**, assuming responsibility for the development of the social dimension of education was underlined by education Ministers, for the first time, in a communication adopted on the occasion of the Ministerial Conference in Prague, in 2001. Subsequently this ideal was operationalized in

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.eua.be/News/12-01-09/EUA\\_s\\_Institutional\\_Evaluation\\_Programme\\_IEP\\_to\\_evaluate\\_90\\_universities\\_in\\_Romania\\_as\\_part\\_of\\_national\\_higher\\_education\\_reforms.aspx](http://www.eua.be/News/12-01-09/EUA_s_Institutional_Evaluation_Programme_IEP_to_evaluate_90_universities_in_Romania_as_part_of_national_higher_education_reforms.aspx)



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political acknowledgements regarding especially equity, access and completion of studies in higher education, through setting quantifiable objectives, such as adopting government strategies and clear targets for enlarging access and raising participation. With the adoption of the London Communication (2007), ministers have reaffirmed the political commitment to the principle of equity, defining it as: „the student body that enters participates and finalizes, on all levels of higher education, needs to reflect the diversity in the population. We reaffirm the importance of students to be able to finalize their studies without facing obstacles connected to their social and economic situation.”

The concrete objectives that Romania assumed as part of the Bologna Process regarding equity and access to higher educations are:

- Setting quantifiable targets for enlarging access to higher education and adopting necessary measures for reaching these objectives (Leuven 2009, Bucharest 2012);
- Raising graduation and participation rates in higher education (Bucharest 2012);
- Increasing the participation of under-represented groups in higher education (Leuven, 2009);
- Reporting national strategies, action plans and measures for efficacy evaluation (London, 2007).

Political commitments part of the Bologna Process aim at developing the social dimension of education, decreasing inequalities, adequate support services for students, counseling and orientation, flexible learning directions, alternative access routes, including the recognition of education in contexts other than formal ones and eliminating obstacles related to the social and economic environment students come from.

**The Council of the European Union conclusions of 11 May 2010 on the social dimension of education and training** encompass the following recommendations to member states concerning higher education:

- Promote widened access, for example by strengthening financial support schemes for students and through flexible and diversified learning paths;
- Develop policies aimed at increasing completion rates of higher education, including through strengthening individualised support, guidance and mentoring for students;
- Continue to eliminate barriers to, expand opportunities for, and improve the quality of, learning mobility, including by providing adequate incentives for the mobility of students from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Promote specific programmes for adult students and other non-traditional learners.

Participants at the World Conference of Higher Education organized by UNESCO in 2009 adopted a communication mentioning the fact that although increasing access to education has become a priority for member states, the disparities in participation rates are a source of inequality. Thus equity does not simply refer to access to education, but also to “the objective must be successful participation and completion while at the same time assuring student welfare. This must include appropriate financial and educational support to those from poor and marginalized communities.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> 2009 World Conference on Higher Education, UNESCO  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001832/183277e.pdf>



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### 3. General policy framework

#### 3.1. References to Government's vision and policy documents with regard to equity

Analyzing **the governing program for 2013-2016**, the chapters on education and youth acknowledge the following objectives related to equity and social cohesion:

- Ensuring social equity policies;
- Strengthening social cohesion and increasing citizen participation to economic and social development programs through promotion of active citizenship;
- Stimulating participation of the Roma population to higher levels of education;
- Ensuring complementary education for raising the capacity for adaptation and rebuilding social cohesion through: developing educational alternatives, training youth through sports, rebuilding camps for pupils and students, institutionalizing the participation in projects and programs dealing with areas complementary to the curriculum;
- Supporting the *Second Chance through education* programs, for eliminating illiteracy and for labor market integration, through: guaranteeing equal opportunities and eliminating all forms of discrimination, adequate facilities, policies and programs for vulnerable groups, support programs for early-leavers from school;
- Stimulating youth from a rural background to go to school;
- Social scholarships need to ensure expenses for meals, school supplies and housing necessary for students each month;
- Building programs such as *The Second Chance* for those who abandoned school before graduating.

#### 3.2. The Pact for Education

Following a diagnosis of the education and research system and proposing some of the solutions presented in the *Romania of Education. Romania of Research* report (2007) of the Presidential Commission for the Analysis and Elaboration of Policies for Education and Research in Romania<sup>7</sup>, the National Pact for Education (2008) was signed by all parliament political parties and by 22 organizations from the civil society. This document enlists eight major objectives on which a new legislative framework is to be based.

From an equity and social cohesion perspective the National Pact for Education supports:

- Transformation of early education in a public good, guaranteeing a compulsory education of 10 years and access to free education for 13 years. Only in this way Romania can align itself to a knowledge based society, preparing successive generations from schools and high schools to fully benefit from the Bologna reform already implemented in Romanian universities;
- Defining priority education areas, in order to surpass the differences that dramatically separates the rural and urban environments or affects those different categories of Romanian citizens.

#### 3.3. The National Reform Plan (NRP)

The National Reform Plan<sup>8</sup> adopted by the Romanian Government for 2009-2013 represents the framework for defining and implementing Romania's economic development policies, in accordance with EU policies.

<sup>7</sup>Reference: [http://www.presidency.ro/static/ordine/Pactul\\_National\\_pentru\\_Educatie.pdf](http://www.presidency.ro/static/ordine/Pactul_National_pentru_Educatie.pdf)

<sup>8</sup>Reference: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp\\_romania\\_ro.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_romania_ro.pdf)



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As far as access to education is concerned, NRP mentions as an issue the fact that this access is not encouraged, Romania placing in the last positions in Europe regarding participation to education by youth aged 15-24 and proposes the adoption of a new legislation that would abide the objectives of the NRP.

As far as increasing the percentage of population aged 30-34 with tertiary education, objective which is part of the EU2020 Strategy, Romania aims at reaching a target of 26,7% in 2020 with the following prognosis of evolution:

**Table 2 Evolution of the EU2020 target in Romania**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020
Indicator (%)	18,1	18,7	19,4	20,2	21,3	22,1	26,7

The Measures defined through NRP are: developing a National Qualifications Framework, attracting youth with aptitudes to the qualifications that insure the implementation of a predetermined model of economic development, creating the mechanism for recognition of non-formal education and stimulating lifelong learning.

Referring to social inclusion the NRP mentions a series of disadvantaged groups for which MECS constantly developed policies: rural population, Roma population, children with special educational requirements (CES); other vulnerable groups (children from socio-economical disadvantaged groups, home alone children – children that have parents which are working abroad, immigrants, etc).

### **3.4. Law of National Education (Law 1/2011)**

The Law of National Education (Law nr. 1/2011) represents the legal framework that regulates the structure, positions, organization and operation of the higher education in Romania. Regarding equity in higher education, the Law provides a definition of the principle of equity and also includes provisions regarding different mechanisms and policy instruments meant to stimulate the access and participation of the following underrepresented groups:

- Students with physical disabilities;
- Students coming from low income families;
- Orphan students or those coming from foster care;
- Ethnic Romanians coming from abroad;
- Students coming from environments with high socioeconomic risk or socially marginalized;
- Roma Students;
- Students from rural environment.

The Law also regulates a series of instruments for access and participation of the underrepresented groups such as:

- Regulation for a loan system;
- Procedures for scholarship allocation;
- Procedures for funding of student dorms and canteens;
- Public transport subsidies;
- The possibility to distribute study grants on social criteria.

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The mentioned articles are quoted in the present document when describing different policy instruments.

### 3.5. Institutional structures responsible for equity in HE and social cohesion

In Romania there is no structure responsible for equity policies in higher education, but related responsibilities can be found in institutions such as Ministry of Education (MEN) and the National Council for Funding Higher Education (CNFIS). Even in MEN there is no specific department on these issues, and tasks are divided between several departments (e.g. the department for funding or public policies, the general department for higher education etc).

CNFIS has the following tasks: it sends proposals to MEN concerning the allocation of complementary funding, funding which includes subsidies for dorms/ canteens and proposes the annual minimum amount of social scholarships for the support of low-income students, taking into account that these have to cover minimum meal and housing expenses according to the law. Moreover, within CNFIS there are several working commissions, one of which is concerned with student services.

The Agency for Student Loans and Scholarships (ACBS) is the institution that will manage the loan system for students when it will be set up. In the meantime, this institution administers a series of scholarships that MECS and/or the Government finance primarily for studies abroad after signing bilateral agreements with other states.

The Ministry of Education (MEN) has a series of tasks and competences that impact equity, particularly in pre-university education (for giving special coupons to children from different vulnerable groups) or, generally tasks and competences for integrating youth with special educational requirements in an active life.

Universities, based on university autonomy, are responsible for developing their own strategies and procedures for ensuring equity in education. Thus, they are the ones that can influence the way the fund for scholarships is distributed (between social scholarships or achievement scholarships), they have their own admission procedures and procedures for progressing from one university year to another, they can influence how budgeted study places are distributed within different faculties and study programs or they can distribute from their own income funding to support certain categories of students.

## 4. Indicators and Relevant References Regarding Equity in Higher Education and Social Cohesion

This chapter aims to provide a series of data and information on student's characteristics, relevant within the domain of equity in higher education and social cohesion.

Because equity, as previously defined, refers both to increasing access as well as to participation and graduation of studies, this chapter will refer to the following: access to higher education, highlighting data and information on the transition from high school level to tertiary level and participation in higher education, with a focus on students' characteristics.

The presented data are mainly obtained from national and international institutions with responsibilities linked to collecting data on higher education. On the other hand, as far as collecting data at an institutional

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level is concerned, a UEFISCDI<sup>9</sup> report indicated that out of the 69 interviewed universities, 55% said that they manage personal data of students using electronic means at university level for all undergraduate levels, for 47,6% for MA students and 31,7% for PhD students.

Two major issues will be highlighted here: the evolution of the number of students and the inclusion rate as well as the characteristics of the student body.

As far as characteristics of the student body are concerned several categories were underlined:

- Gender distribution;
- Students from poor backgrounds;
- Students from rural backgrounds;
- Students with disabilities;
- Roma students;
- Mature Students (over 30 years old);
- Parents' educational attainment;
- Students with children;
- Immigrant students;
- Working students;
- Ethnic Romanian students coming from abroad.

#### 4.1. Access to Higher Education

When addressing access to higher education it is necessary to have data on the number of those participating in high-schools and trade schools and of those graduating from the Baccalaureate (as a first legal condition for having access to higher education).

To have an overview of the current population structure in Romania, we present a dataset displayed in the study launched in 2012 by the Ministry of Education: "Needs analysis on education and training in Romania"<sup>10</sup>. The data is mainly taken from the INS.

According to the Ministry analysis, **the age structure of Romanian population** reveals the process of demographic aging mainly influenced by the decreasing birthrates, which affected the pronounced decreasing of young population (age 15-24) of total population from 14.7% in 2007 to 12.4% in 2012 and also the school age population (age 0-14) of total population from 15.5% in 2007 to 14.9% in 2012.

The forecasts regarding the population evolution made by the INS show that the downward trend in the number of inhabitants will increase by 2020 and it will also affect the young population at enrollment age. According to the forecasts, by 2020 we will see a drastic decrease of young population aged 15-24 with almost a quarter compared with 2007 and approx. 27% lower compared with 2010.

According to the study mentioned before, for 2014-2020, as an immediate consequence of these demographic phenomena, the school population will constantly decrease and this will affect the number of

<sup>9</sup> Report on the Current State of Affairs, at a national level, of the systems of managing students in higher education institutions in Romania, 2009

<sup>10</sup> Needs analysis on education and training in Romania , 2012

<http://administraresite.edu.ro/index.php/articles/18802>



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Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European, prin Programul Operațional "Dezvoltarea Capacității Administrative", în perioada 2007-2013 available teaching positions, as well as the functioning or sustainability of schools. The phenomenon will also determine the entry of a smaller number of students in the higher education system.

In 2011, the structure of the active population<sup>11</sup> (15 - 64 years) by level of education showed the following distribution:

- 18.8% of the total active population have a university diploma;
- 3.9% have only post-secondary studies;
- 35.3% were high school graduates;
- 21.7% were vocational school graduates;
- 17.9% were secondary school graduates;
- 2.5% were graduates of primary education or without formal education.

Between 2007 and 2011, the most important increase was noted in the active population with tertiary education in relation to the total active population (from 14.6% in 2007 to 18.8% in 2011).

As far as the transition from high school to tertiary education is concerned, according to the EUROSTUDENT Report *Economic and social conditions and International Mobility of Students from Romania* (ISE, 2010), 85% of the questioned students had a direct transition from high school to university and approximately 10% had a time-out period between graduating high-school and university enrollment.

### Primary and secondary education

The compared data regarding the participation rates at all levels of education, as a ratio of population aged 3-19 years<sup>12</sup>, in 2006, was the following:

Table 3 Participation rates at all levels of education

	2006
EU-27	92.1
Estonia	95.2
Hungary	94.2
Norway	94.1
Czech Republic	93.8
Slovenia	92.4
Lithuania	91.5
Latvia	91.2
Slovakia	89.9
United Kingdom	89.1
Poland	88.6
Finland	87.5

<sup>11</sup> Active population is a fraction of a population that is either employed or actively seeking employment

<sup>12</sup> All pupils and students at all ISCED levels in public and private institutions aged 3-19 of the total population aged 3-19 years, Key Data on Education in Europe, 2009.





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<b>Malta</b>	86.9
<b>Bulgaria</b>	86
<b>Cyprus</b>	84.9
<b>Romania</b>	<u>83.8</u>
<b>Turkey</b>	63.4

In all European countries a high level of educational participation in the 3-19 age group can be observed, the proportion of young people studying at some level of education being over 90 % in sixteen countries. We can observe that in Romania only 83.8% from the total number of population aged 3-19 years is enrolled in a level of education.

When we talk about access in higher education is useful to review the situation of high school graduates, high school graduation examination (baccalaureate) being the first condition for admission to the university.

Regarding the enrolment rate for school aged population, according to data provided by the INS in 2012, the situation is as follows<sup>13</sup>:

Table 4 Enrolment rate for school aged population (%), INS 2012

Age	Enrolment rate for school aged population (%)					
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
<b>3-6 years</b>	80,4	80,9	81,8	81,7	81,9	82,1
<b>7-10 years</b>	98,0	97,0	96,0	95,0	94,9	94,6
<b>11 -14 years</b>	96,2	95,0	94,4	94,4	94,5	94,0
<b>15 -18 years</b>	73,5	75,7	77,4	79,2	81,3	80,8
<b>Above 19 years</b>	51,2	55,9	63,8	63,3	59,3	56,0

Analyzing the data provided by INS in 2012 in terms of secondary education, as well as the data from the university classification on the evolution of the number of students enrolled in the first year, we have the following correlation:

<sup>13</sup> Enrolment rate for school aged population represents the ratio between number of pupils from a certain age group, no matter of education level and total population of the same age group .Reference: Statistical Yearbook 2011/Education

[http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/Anuar%20statistic/08/08%20Educatie\\_ro.pdf](http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/Anuar%20statistic/08/08%20Educatie_ro.pdf)

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Table 5 Evolution of high school graduates, number of students who have passed the baccalaureate, students enrolled in the first year

	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010
High school graduates	185255	187576	218205	202113	204863
Number of persons who have passed the baccalaureate	171015	181589	199972	199006	162482
Students enrolled in the first year – not paying tuition fees	62470	62520	57894	62809	63154
Students enrolled in the first year – paying tuition fees	193264	223777	258143	250891	152164
TOTAL number of students enrolled in the first year	255734	286297	316037	313700	215318

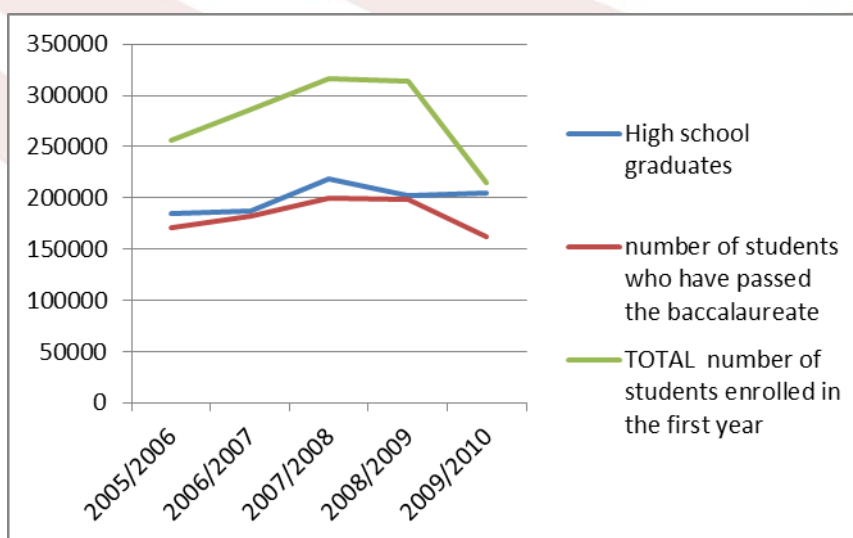


Figure 1 Evolution of high school graduates, number of students who have passed the baccalaureate, students enrolled in the first year

From the above figures we can see, on the one hand, a minor increase in the number of high school graduates (by 1.4%) in 2009/2010 compared with the previous year, but on the other hand, that same year, the number of young people who complete the baccalaureate decreases by 18.4%. Moreover, the number of students enrolled in first year of study decreases by 31.4%.

What is important to analyze in terms of access to higher education is high school student achievement at the national examination (baccalaureate). Thus, according to the "Report on the state of school education", if we report the number of students who register for the national examination to the total number of high



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## Higher education

According to the National Reform Plan<sup>14</sup>, the indicator of the Europe 2020 Strategy - young people aged 30-34, graduates of a tertiary form of education (from the population aged 30-34) was, for Romania, 8,88% in 2002, 16,78%, in 2008 and 16,8% in 2009. At the same time, according to EUROSTAT, in 2010 the percentage of population aged 30-34 with tertiary education was 18.1%, and 20,4% in 2011.

Comparative, in Europe, the share of graduates among the population aged 30-34 years, according to data from Eurostat (amended on 06.08.2012) is as following:

Table 6 Share of graduates among the population aged 30-34 years, Eurostat 2012

TIME ▸ GEO ▾	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Ireland	43.3	46.1	48.9	49.9	49.4
Norway	43.7	46.2	47.0	47.3	48.8
Luxembourg	35.3	39.8	46.6(b)	46.1	48.2
Sweden	41.0(p)	42.0(p)	43.9(p)	45.8(p)	47.5(p)
Finland	47.3	45.7	45.9	45.7	46.0
Cyprus	46.2	47.1	44.7	45.1	45.8
United Kingdom	38.5	39.7	41.5	43.0	45.8
Lithuania	38.0	39.9	40.6	43.8	45.4
Iceland	36.3	38.3	41.7	40.9	44.6
Switzerland	36.5	41.3	43.4	44.2	44.0
France	41.4	41.2	43.2	43.5	43.4
Belgium	41.5	42.9	42.0	44.4	42.6
Denmark	38.1(b)	39.2	40.7	41.2	41.2
Netherlands	36.4	40.2	40.5	41.4(b)	41.1
Spain	39.5	39.8	39.4	40.6	40.6
Estonia	33.3	34.1	35.9	40.0	40.3
Slovenia	31.0	30.9	31.6	34.8	37.9
Poland	27.0	29.7	32.8	35.3	36.9
Latvia	25.6	27.0	30.1	32.3	35.7
European Union (27 c)	30.0	31.0	32.2	33.5	34.6
Germany (including fr	26.5	27.7	29.4	29.8	30.7
Greece	26.2	25.6	26.5	28.4	28.9
Hungary	20.1	22.4	23.9	25.7	28.1
Voreia Ellada	26.0	25.9	27.0	28.8	27.4
Bulgaria	26.0	27.1	27.9	27.7	27.3
Portugal	19.8	21.6	21.1	23.5	26.1(i)
Croatia	16.7(u)	18.5(u)	20.6(u)	24.3	24.5
Czech Republic	13.3	15.4	17.5	20.4	23.8
Austria	21.1	22.2	23.5	23.5	23.8
Slovakia	14.8	15.8	17.6	22.1	23.4
Malta	21.5	20.9	21.0	21.5	21.1
Romania	13.9	16.0	16.8	18.1	20.4
Italy	18.6	19.2	19.0	19.8	20.3
Turkey	12.3	13.0	14.7	15.5	16.3

According to the Report on the State of Higher Education in Romania 2011 and the data from the INS, the evolution of the number of students **at bachelor level** has been the following:

<sup>14</sup> Reference: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp\\_romania\\_ro.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_romania_ro.pdf)



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Table 7 the Evolution of the Number of Students, source: INS 2003-2010, data do not include foreign students

	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
<b>Total</b>	<b>611779</b>	<b>641400</b>	<b>716464</b>	<b>785506</b>	<b>896258</b>	<b>891098</b>	<b>775319</b>	<b>673001</b>	<b>539852</b>
Public	468024	486419	513678	520263	516650	480239	452982	433063	399464
Private	143755	154981	202786	265243	379608	410859	322337	239938	140388

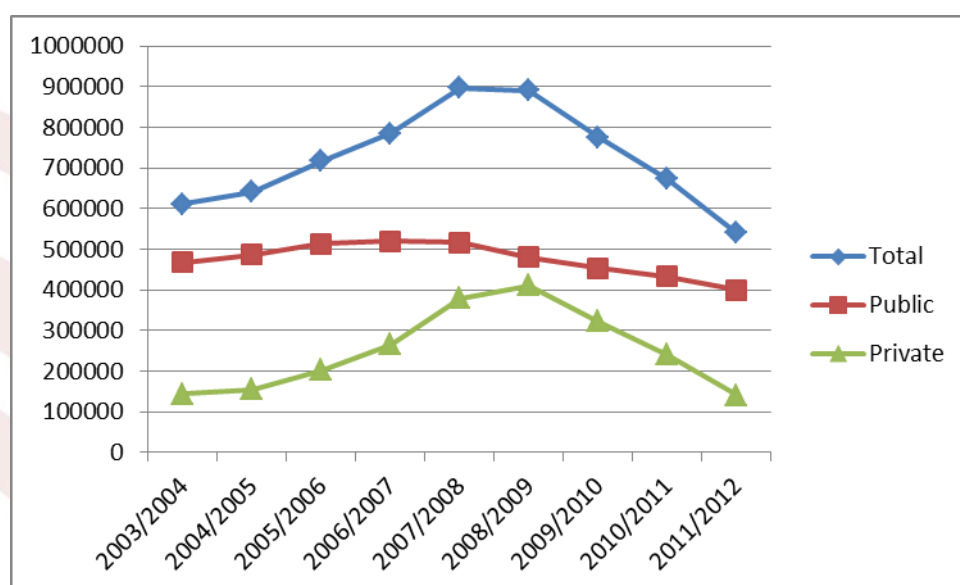


Figure 2 The evolution of the total number of students at bachelor level, INS 2011

According to data collected as part of university classification process<sup>15</sup>, the total number of students (bachelor, master and PhD level) presents the following evolution:

Table 8 the Evolution of the Number of Students, source: university classification process; data does not include foreign students

	2005 /2006	2006 /2007	2007 /2008	2008 /2009	2009 /2010
<b>Total</b>	<b>859030</b>	<b>961114</b>	<b>1076050</b>	<b>1072721</b>	<b>971537</b>

We can also observe in both the numbers from INS and the data from the classification process, an increase in the number of students until the university year 2007/2008, with numbers decreasing after that. According to the INS the number of enrolled students in 2011/2012, at bachelor level, is approximately 40% lower than the number of enrolled students in 2007/2008.

According to the data from INS regarding the situation at the beginning of academic year 2011-2012, the Romanian higher education system includes 108 universities, 614 faculties, 539.900 students attending

<sup>15</sup> The process of collecting the data and information for evaluating universities and study programs to the purpose of classifications of universities and hierarchies of the study programs <http://chestionar.uefiscdi.ro/>





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More than that, from the total number of students enrolled, **82.0% attend full-time studies, 8.6% attend part-time studies and 9.3% attend distance education.**

Table 9 Distribution of students by cycle and form of study, INS 2012

	2010-2011		2011-2012	
	Total	Public Univ.	Total	Public Univ.
<b>Total number of students</b>			<b>692061</b>	<b>531523</b>
<b>Bachelor studies</b>	673001	433063	539852	399464
<b>Master Studies</b>			128669	108748
<b>PhD Studies</b>			23540	23311
<b>Students from the country</b>	656863	418352	<b>522564</b>	<b>383835</b>
<b>Students from abroad</b>	16138	14711	17288	15629
<b>Full-time students</b>	513491	368617	442613	347851
<b>Part-time students</b>	94239	16912	46628	13840
<b>Distance learning students</b>	64276	46539	50019	37181
<b>Evening learning</b>	995	995	592	592

Regarding the distribution of students financed by the state and those paying tuition fees in public universities the status is as follows:



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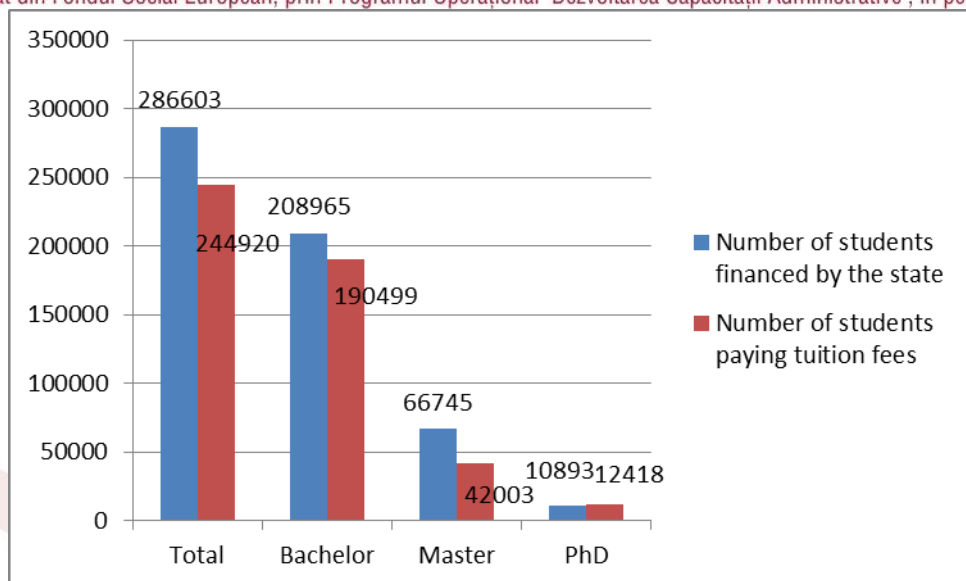


Figure 3 Number of students financed by the state and number of students paying tuition fees, CNFIS 2012

According to the INS, at the beginning of the academic year 2011-2012, the distribution of students in public and private universities on localities is as follows:

Table 10 Distribution of students on localities, INS 2012

Distribution of students in public univ. on localities		Distribution of students in private univ. on localities	
Bucuresti	23.20%	Bucuresti	52.6%
Cluj-Napoca	12.80%	Arad	7.8%
Iasi	11.70%	Brasov	6.4%
Timisoara	7.80%	Constanta	5.3%
Constanta	5.20%	Timisoara	3.2%
Craiova	4.80%	Iasi	3.2%
Brasov	4.30%	Craiova	3.0%
Sibiu	3.80%	Galati	2.6%
Oradea	3.50%	Cluj-Napoca	2.1%
Galati	3%	Sibiu	2.0%
Pitesti	2.20%		
Targu-Mures	2.10%		
Suceava	2.10%		

We can observe that half of students studying in public universities are distributed in four universities cities – Bucuresti, Cluj-Napoca, Iasi and Timisoara (also the biggest cities in Romania) while half of students studying in private universities are distributed in Bucuresti.

The figure below highlights the eight development regions of Romania, the distribution of the number of inhabitants per region and the distribution of students at bachelor level, per region according to the INS. It can be observed that, while in some areas there is a strong correlation between the two distributions



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Table 11 Distribution of inhabitants and of students at bachelor level per regions, INS 2012

	Number of inhabitants	Distribution of the total number of inhabitants per regions	Number of students	Distribution of the total number of students at bachelor level per regions
<b>Northeast</b>	3674367	<b>16.9%</b>	66356	<b>12.29%</b>
<b>Southeast</b>	2848219	<b>13.1%</b>	45988	<b>8.51%</b>
<b>South</b>	3379406	<b>15.56%</b>	26110	<b>4.83%</b>
<b>Southwest</b>	2330792	<b>10.73%</b>	32762	<b>6.06%</b>
<b>West</b>	1958828	<b>9.02%</b>	61222	<b>11.34%</b>
<b>Northwest</b>	2746064	<b>12.64%</b>	78862	<b>14.60%</b>
<b>Centre</b>	2533021	<b>11.66%</b>	61699	<b>11.42%</b>
<b>Bucuresti-Ilfov</b>	2242377	<b>10.32%</b>	166853	<b>30.9%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	21713074	<b>100 %</b>	539852	<b>100 %</b>

#### 4.2. Participation in Higher Education

##### Gender distribution

As regard to the participation of females, the data from Eurostat shows the status of female participation in higher education among Europe:





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Table 12 Women among students at bachelor and master level as % of the total students at this level, Eurostat 2013

### Tertiary education participation

Last update: 13-03-2013

INDIC\_ED: Women among students in ISCED 5-6 - as % of the total students at this level

TIME ▾	2009	2010	2011
GEO ▾			
European Union (27 c	55.5(i)	55.4	:
Belgium	54.8	55.2	:
Bulgaria	55.6	55.5	55.1
Czech Republic	56.5	56.8	57.2
Denmark	58.2	58.1	:
Germany (until 1990	51.4(i)	51.3(i)	:
Estonia	61.9	60.9	:
Ireland	53.9	52.4	51.7
Greece	:	49.8	:
Spain	54.1	53.9	53.9
France	55.2	55.0	54.8
Italy	57.7	57.6	:
Cyprus	46.8	46.1	:
Latvia	63.7	62.7	61.1
Lithuania	59.2	59.4	59.0
Luxembourg	:	51.9	:
Hungary	56.8	56.5	55.9
Malta	56.5	56.3	:
Netherlands	51.8	51.8	:
Austria	53.2	53.1	53.4
Poland	57.9	59.2	:
Portugal	53.4	53.3	:
Romania	56.3	56.4	:
Slovenia	58.0	57.8	60.6
Slovakia	60.5	59.7	59.6
Finland	54.0	53.8	54.0
Sweden	60.1	59.4	59.1
United Kingdom	57.0	56.6	:
Iceland	64.3	63.4	:
Liechtenstein	31.7	37.2	32.8
Norway	61.1	60.8	:
Switzerland	49.7	49.2	49.2
Croatia	55.0	56.3	:
Former Yugoslav Rep	53.0	52.6	:
Turkey	43.6	44.4	:
Albania	:	:	:
Bosnia and Herzegovi	:	:	:

According to the data from the INS, the gender distribution of students from total number of students from bachelor level, distributed over the main fields of study, evolved as following:

Table 13 Distribution of students on gender on the main fields of study (% of total number of students), INS 2012

	2002/2003		2011/2012	
	Females (%)	Men (%)	Females (%)	Men (%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	54.5	45.5	53.1	46.9
<b>Technical</b>	29.7	70.3	30.6	69.4
<b>Economic</b>	62.5	37.5	61.1	38.9
<b>Judicial</b>	52.9	47.1	52.2	47.8
<b>Medical and pharmaceutical</b>	66.3	33.7	69.5	30.5
<b>University</b>	66.8	33.2	65	35
<b>Artistic</b>	53.8	46.2	55.5	44.5

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One can observe that females are the majority, especially in medical and pharmaceutical education, academic, economic, artistic and judicial fields. Instead, men predominate in technical education.

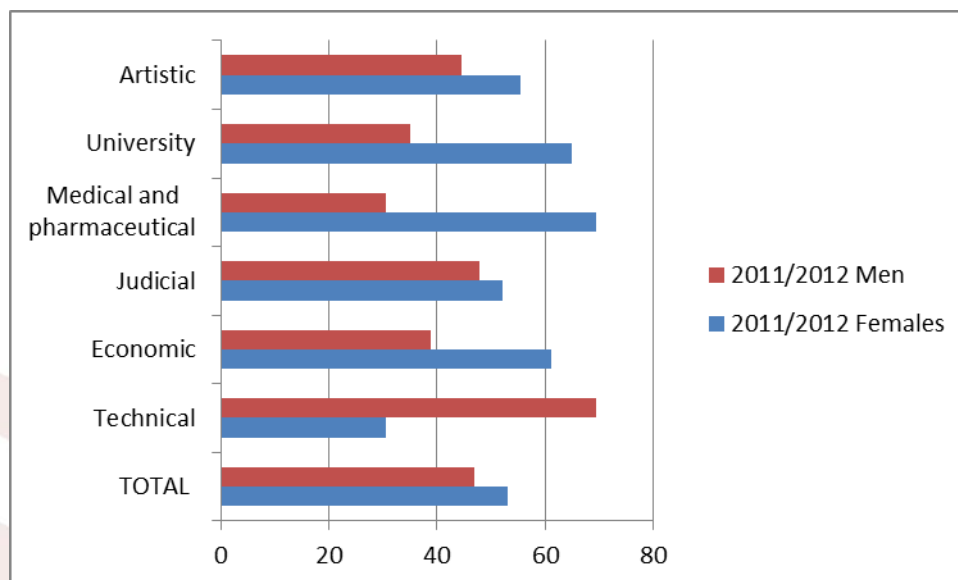


Figure 4 Distribution of students on gender, 2011/2012, INS 2012

A Eurydice report mentions the fact that in most states women with higher education are in higher numbers than men, but most states have policies on gender equality with the main concern being the number of women included in certain education domains, those included in the PhD level and those working in the academia<sup>16</sup>.

Romania does not have gender equality policies in higher education the data presented in this report indicate that:

- In most domains women graduates outnumber men graduates, with the exception of: engineering and constructions (32,2%), services (42,7%) and agriculture (40,9%);
- The percentage of women PhD graduates is 49,9%;
- The percentage of women working in universities - teaching and administrative positions, is 43,9%.

Even more, as far as undergraduates are concerned, the EUROSTUDENT Report states: "The gender difference favoring girls is maintained for all group ages, all education levels and all types of transition from high school to university; the percentage of women is even higher in the case of MA students, of students over 30 years old and those with a delayed transition from high school to university"

Regarding the gender distribution among graduates, according to the Ministry of Education analysis (2012), in 2011, almost 22% from the active women population graduated a form of tertiary education compared with 16,3% men from active men population.

<sup>16</sup> Eurydice, *Gender Differences in Educational Results*, 2009

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic\\_reports/120EN.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/120EN.pdf)

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### Participation in higher education of youth coming from low-income families

According to calculations made by the World Bank based on the household budget survey (2011), one can see that, in 2009, **3,8%** of youth aged 25-29 from the 20% (quintile) the poorest young people, have graduated one cycle of higher education, while **52,4%** of the top 20% (quintile) most affluent young people have graduated.

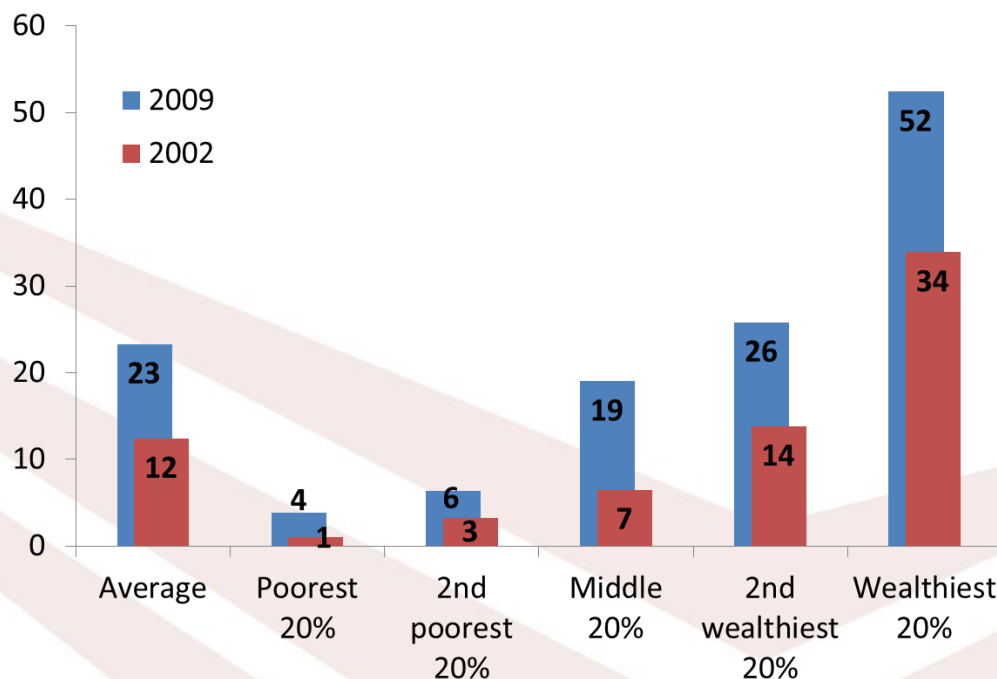


Figure 5 Percent of 25-29 year olds completed higher education by income quintile in Romania, source: Romania Household Budget Surveys in World Bank (2011) *Romania Functional Review for Higher Education*

### Participation in higher education of youth from a rural background

According to the INS at the 1st of July 2009, 44,9% of Romania's population lived in rural areas.

The Report on the State of Higher Education in Romania notices that the access of youth from a rural background has decreased with approx. 10% in the last 4 academic years. This indicates the still severely reduced access of people from the rural environment to higher education and also the emergence of disadvantages on the labor market for this population.

According to the data from the INS, at the beginning of academic year 2011-2012, the distribution of students at the bachelor level according to their origin (urban/ rural) is the following:

Table 14 Distribution of students at the bachelor level by place of origin, INS 2012

	Total	(%)Public Univ.	(%)Private Univ.
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Urban	395475	75.26	76.84
Rural	127089	24.74	23.16

We can observe that in the academic year 2011/2012, approx. 24% from the total number of students, were students with rural background.

On the other hand, a World Bank and Ministry of Education, Research and Youth study (2008) indicates that only 3,7% of youth aged 25-29 from a rural background have graduated a higher education institutions, while 27,2% from a urban background have graduated a university. This would indicate that students from rural areas have significant problems with progression and completion in higher education, not just with access.

Another important element to be considered is the participation of youth from a rural background in universities with highly competitive admission procedures. One can notice that in these situations the participation of youth from a rural background is considerably lower (less than 1% according to a research by prof. George Poede in 2003<sup>17</sup>).

Regarding the distribution of active population with tertiary education, according to the analysis of Ministry of Education (2012), in 2011, only 5,1% from the active population from rural area had completed a form of tertiary education degree (from 3,5% in 2007), compared with 28,4% from urban area (from 22,8% in 2007).

### Participation in Higher Education for youth with disabilities

In regards to the participation of the under-represented groups, a comparative study conducted by Eurostudent<sup>18</sup> at the international level shows the percentages of students with physical disabilities and chronic illnesses in the total number of students in different states as follows:

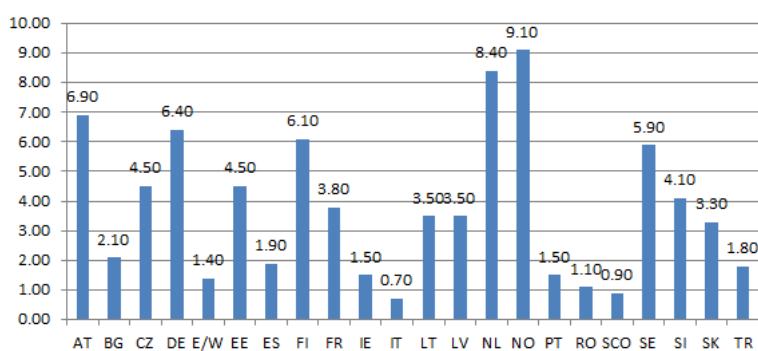


Figure 6 Students with physical disabilities and chronic illnesses in the total nr of students, Eurostudent

Regarding the participation of students with disabilities in Romania, the percentage of youth with disabilities, aged 20-29 from the total youth aged 20-29 was 2.06% (according to the population census of 2002). More than that, according to the National Institute of Statistics, at 31.12.2012, the share of disabled

<sup>17</sup> Dincă, George (2003) *Changes in the Funding System in Higher Education*, Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, [http://www.almamater.ro/schi\\_finante.pdf](http://www.almamater.ro/schi_finante.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Reference: Eurostudent, Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life in Europe 2008-2011

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**Table 15**The number of disabled persons in 2012 and their participation on the labor market, INS 2012

Number of disabled persons	Not institutionalized	Institutionalized
Children	60,844	15
Adults	618,921	17,389
Total	679,765	17,404
Number of disabled employed people	28,756	

As it can be observed, only 4.65% of the disabled adult population is employed. The limited access to higher education can represent an important factor to the unemployment rate of the disabled people.

In the last university years, at national level, the percentage of students with disabilities has not been higher than 0.07% of the total number of students, according to data collected as part of the university classification process.

**Table 16** Participation of youth with disabilities, university classification process

	Students with disabilities				
	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
<b>Total students with disabilities</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>691</b>
<b>Percentage of total number of students (%)</b>	0.04%	0.05%	0.05%	0.06%	0.07%

According to INS, at the beginning of the academic year 2011-2012 there were 333 disabled students of which 309 in public universities and 24 in private universities.

### Participation of Roma students

As far as Roma youth participation is concerned, according to the previously mentioned World Bank Report, less than 1% of the Roma population graduates from higher education. On the other hand according to the population census of 2002, 535140 (2,5%) of Romania's population is Roma, and in 2011 the number was 619007 (3,2 %). This includes people with personal ID that declared their ethnicity.

More than that, regarding the participation of Roma youth to secondary education, according to the data from the Ministry of Education, we can conclude that the number of Roma students admitted in high schools from Romania increased with 44.2% from 2009/2010 to 2011/2012. Even if there is a sizeable

<sup>19</sup> Reference: <http://www.anph.ro/tematica.php?id=13&idss=41>

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increase in Roma participation in secondary education, we can see that the number of available places for roma students is still uncovered in percentage of 40.1%.

Table 17 Roma participation in secondary education, MEN 2012

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
<b>Number of planned places for Roma</b>	7483	7675	7906
<b>Number of Roma high school students admitted</b>	2246	2974	3239

Regarding the participation of Roma students in higher education, according to the Government decisions from 2010, 2011 and 2012, the number of state financed places reserved for Roma evolved as following:

Table 18 Places for Roma students in higher education

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
<b>Number of places for Roma students (Bachelor)</b>	555	611	555

We have no information regarding the percentage of study places filled from the total vacancies.

### Participation of mature students

According to the data from INS, at the beginning of the university year 2011-2012, the distribution of students on age, at bachelor level, is the following:

Table 19 Distribution of students on age at bachelor level, INS 2012

Percentage of students on age	
<b>18</b>	3.6%
<b>19</b>	16.8%
<b>20</b>	18.7%
<b>21</b>	18.8%
<b>22</b>	14.0%
<b>23</b>	7.5%
<b>24</b>	4.6%
<b>25</b>	2.8%
<b>26</b>	2.0%
<b>27</b>	1.5%
<b>28</b>	1.2%

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<b>29</b>	1.0%
<b>30-34</b>	2.7%
<b>35 and above</b>	4.8%

At the master and PhD level, the distribution is the following:

Table 20 Distribution of students on age at master and PhD level, INS 2012

	Master	Phd
21-29	84.5%	41.7%
30-34	5.1%	19.8%
35 and above	10.4%	38.5%

The distribution of mature students (aged 30 and above) on forms of study is as follows:

Table 21 The distribution of mature students (aged 30 and above) on forms of study, INS 2012

	Total	Full-time students	Part-time students	Distance learning students	Evening learning
<b>30 and above</b>	30165	16973	3801	9202	189
<b>% from the total number of mature students</b>	100	56.26%	12.6%	30.5%	0.62%

According to data collected as part of the university classification process in 2009-2012, 14,75% of the total number of students (bachelor, master and PhD) in 2009-2010 are aged over 30.

Table 22 Mature Students Participation, university classification process

Mature Students (aged over 30)					
	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
<b>Total</b>	110370	137986	184229	186074	144612
<b>Percentage of student total (%)</b>	12.78%	14.27%	17.02%	17.22%	14.75%



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A EUROSTUDENT report<sup>20</sup> states: "Out of 3339 questioned students, 87,5% enrolled in higher education immediately after high-school, and 12% has a delayed transition (with a break between high school and university). The relatively high percentage of students over 30, which is part of a constant tendency of recent years, is explained, on the one hand, by the enlargement of higher education access (determined by the increase of the annual enrollment numbers and the private university networks) and, on the other hand by labor market pressure, that requires a workforce with a higher qualification level".

### Participation related to parents' educational level

As far as family characteristics are concerned, the EUROSTUDENT report offers useful information, such as:

- More than half of students have parents employed with a full-time or a part-time job. Most of these parents have professions from upper and middle groups of occupations (technicians, specialists with intellectual and scientific occupations, workers in services, trade and similar) and have graduated high school or a university. Few students (3.6%) have parents with lower educational levels (at most eight classes).
- The percentage of students coming from families with higher education (university) attainment is much greater than the percentage of those whose parents have a lower educational attainment (at most eight years of study – primary school).

Even though at the international level such data is a revealing indicator in terms of equity, at the national level data on this topic is not collected by the INS.

### Participation of students with children

The EUROSTUDENT report mentioned above underlines the fact that 10,6% of students were parents at the moment of the research<sup>21</sup>. Also the percentage of students over 30 with children is seven times greater than the percentage of those aged 18-29.

Even though at the international level such data is a revealing indicator in terms of equity, at the national level data on this topic is not collected by the INS.

### Immigrant students

The EUROSTUDENT report analyzes the status of immigrant students using parents' place of birth as a proxy. Data indicates that 2,4% of students are first or second generation immigrants, mostly first generation. On the other hand, of the total of foreign students, the majority comes from the Republic of Moldova (59%).

Even though at the international level such data is a revealing indicator in terms of equity, at the national level data on this topic is not collected by the INS.

### Working students

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<sup>20</sup> EUROSTUDENT IV *Economic Conditions, Social Conditions and International Mobility of Students from Romania*, 2010

<sup>21</sup> 2010

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Data from the *Social Needs of Students* study<sup>22</sup>, conducted by the National Alliance of Students' Organizations in Romania (ANOSR) on a sample of 20000 students studying in Romanian universities, indicates the following:

- 69.4% of students live on an income of maximum 500 lei/month (around 120 Euros). Of all respondents only 12.9% declare they have an income higher than 700 lei/month. In large University Centers (București, Timișoara, Cluj, Iași), student incomes are slightly higher than in smaller university centers, but this is probably offset by the difference in living costs;
- Of all respondents, 65.2% support themselves solely on parents or relatives income. 13.9% support themselves with their own job related income and on parents or relatives income, and 11.4% work to support themselves with no contribution from their family;
- Approximately 25% of students have a full or part-time job. This percentage is influenced by the typology of the university (for ex. in medicine universities the percentage of employed students is very low).

The EUROSTUDENT report connects students' status on the labor market with their family situation. Thus the report states that "over 60% of students coming from families with low educational attainment have a stable paid job and work at least 5 hours/week, the income from the salary representing 78% of their total income; by comparison only 13% of students from families with a higher educational attainment have such a job".

Even though at the international level such data is a revealing indicator in terms of equity, at the national level data on this topic is not collected by the INS.

### **Ethnic Romanian students coming from abroad**

The Romanian state provides grants for young ethnic Romanian and Romanian citizens residing abroad (from Moldova, Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, the Republic of Ukraine, the Republic of Hungary and the larger Diaspora), as well as a number of state funded study places (both for high school and in the university for all three cycles). This is complemented by scholarships or other facilities.

In the Romanian higher education system, the following categories of students can be identified (in both high schools and universities):

- a. Students that do not pay tuition fees and that receive a scholarship (they benefit from: financed tuition costs, a monthly scholarship which amounts to 65 euro for high school and bachelor students, 75 euro for master, 85 euro for PhD and a subsidy covering almost the total or all the costs for dormitories);
- b. Students that do not pay tuition fees, but do not receive a scholarship (they benefit from: financed tuition costs and a subsidy covering almost the total or all the costs for dormitories).

All students are entitled to a minimum 50% discount on public transportation and for the railway network (on certain categories of trains).

The ethnic Romanian students coming from abroad benefits of all the social and educational rights as Romanian students.

<sup>22</sup> Reference: <http://www.anosr.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2011-Studiu-Nevoile-sociale-ale-studentilor-din-Romania.pdf>

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The procedures for admission for ethnic Romanian students coming from abroad are the following:

- For secondary education, students enroll in Romanian county Ministry offices - inspectorates (for those continuing their studies without scholarship) or at the diplomatic mission of Romania in the Republic of Moldova or other states (for those applying for scholarship). For those candidates which are applying for scholarship, the county inspectorate from Iasi organizes the admission competition.
- For tertiary education, students who have completed their high school studies in Romania can directly enroll at universities and enter a competition for special quota study places allocated by the Ministry. Students who have completed their high school studies in Republic of Moldova or other states, can enroll at the diplomatic missions of Romania. There is a national admission competition for all the quota places for ethnic Romanian students in all Romanian universities, which is organized by a common commission of Ministry of Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has as selection criteria the grades of previous high school years studied in Republic of Moldova or other states.

The figure below details the number of budgeted places and scholarships allocated by country and level of study in academic year 2012-2013 for ethnic Romanian students:

**Table 23 The number of budgeted places and scholarships allocated by country and level of study in academic year 2012-2013, MEN 2012**

		Number of places with Tuition costs scholarship covered	Tuition costs
<b>Secondary Ed</b>	<b>Republic of Moldova</b>	750	550
	<b>Neighboring countries and diaspora</b>		
	Albania	20	
	Bulgaria	25	
	Macedonia	20	
	Serbia	25	
	Hungary	20	
	Ukraine	20	
	Diaspora	20	150
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>700</b>
<b>Tertiary Education - Bachelor</b>	<b>Republic of Moldova - with Romanian secondary education diploma</b>	300	200
	<b>Republic of Moldova - with secondary education diploma from the Republic of Moldova</b>	700	1600
	<b>Of which Republic of Moldova - from high schools with teaching in Romanian language</b>	70	
	<b>Neighboring countries and diaspora</b>		
	Albania	100	5



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	Bulgaria	65	40
	Macedonia	29	1
	Serbia	200	100
	Hungary	100	100
	Ukraine	6	9
	Diaspora		100
	Israel		50
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>2205</b>
<b>Master</b>	Republic of Moldova	250	300
	<b>Neighboring countries and diaspora</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>270</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>570</b>
<b>Residency</b>	Republic of Moldova	25	0
	<b>Neighboring countries and diaspora</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>PhD</b>	Republic of Moldova	25	100
	<b>Neighboring countries and diaspora</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>120</b>

### Access of graduates in the labor market

According to the data from the study launched by the Ministry of Education in 2012 previously mentioned, the next conclusions could be drawn as regard to the integration of graduates in the labor market:

- In 2011, the youth employment situation is **better in rural areas** compared with urban areas, mainly due to employment in agriculture, and leaving school at younger ages;
- It can be observed a sharp increase in youth unemployment rate in **urban areas**, from 24.7% in 2007 to 32.4% in 2011, while maintaining a consistently low level of unemployment rate in rural areas (around 15-17% throughout the period under review). **In 2011 there are twice as many young people unemployed in urban areas than in rural areas;**
- The highest employment rates are found in the group of people with post-secondary education attainment (57.5%<sup>23</sup>), professional education attainment (52.1%) and tertiary education attainment (42.4%) and the lowest rates are for those which have only completed primary education – 15%;
- Compared with other age groups, young people (15-24 years) recorded the lowest employment rate (23,8% in 2011) - about three times lower than the 25-34 age group and those of 35-54 age group and twice lower compared to the population located closer to retirement age (55-64 years);
- The analysis in 2011 reveals that women with tertiary education attainment face a greater unemployment prospect than men;
- In 2011, of all young people aged 15-24 years, 20.2% (573,885 young people) are active persons who **are not employed, are not enrolled in any form of education or training and are not registered as persons looking for a job.**

## 5. The Specific Framework of Policies and Instruments Concerning Equity and Social Cohesion in Higher Education

<sup>23</sup> People employed with post-secondary education from the total number of people



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## 5.1. National Policies for Funding Higher Education

The funding for public universities comes mainly from the state budget. Each year, the government approves the total number of study grants per field of study, per university and per study cycle. The recommendation of grant distribution comes from MEN on the basis of institutional capacity and also the place and type of university in the national classification.

According to the Law of Education, the incomes of higher education institutions include:

- Amounts allocated from the budget of the Ministry of National Education, on a contractual basis, for the base financing (represents the study grants described above);
- Complementary financing includes accommodation and food subsidies, funds allocated according to priorities for equipment, other investment expenses and repairs, funds allocated for scientific research on the basis of academic competition;
- Supplementary financing allocated based on criteria and quality standards set by CNFIS and MEN;
- Funds allocated on a competitive basis for institutional development. It targets those best institutions of higher education in each category;
- Funds for social inclusion, student scholarships and social protection;
- University own incomes - interests, donations, sponsorship, fees charged in compliance with the law;
- Other sources.

The base (core) funding is allocated on annual basis (according to the HE Law the core funding should be allocated on a multi-annual basis - per cycle, but is not yet implemented), and is generally used by universities to cover personnel and infrastructure expenditure. The base funding has evolved since 1999 as following:

Table 24 Evolution of base (core) funding between 1999 and 2010

Evolution of base(core) funding between 1999 - 2010												
Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Base funding (Thousands euro)	107.140	135.299	146.007	152.771	168.588	209.035	287.406	344.814	518.624	519.777	460.208	453.364
Base funding share in GDP	0,32%	0,34%	0,33%	0,32%	0,32%	0,34%	0,36%	0,35%	0,42%	0,38%	0,37%	0,37%
EUR (yearly average value exchange rate in lei)	1,63	2,00	2,60	3,13	3,76	4,05	3,62	3,52	3,34	3,68	4,24	4,21

### 5.1.1. Funding Tuition Costs

According to the Education Law, higher university education is free for the enrollment number approved annually by the Government or is paid for by the students, in conditions set by the law. Students that go to state universities either pay their own tuition or their tuition costs are covered by the state budget. In private universities all students pay tuition fees, except for situations where university senates decide otherwise.

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From the perspective of access to higher education, we will present here the way state budgeted study places are distributed.

The study places financed from the state budget are **distributed**, at the university level, after the end of the admission contests organized by universities according to a general framework, approved by the Minister of Education. Thus, the classification order is the result of the admission contests. The study grants are given to the best candidates from all areas. When calculating the general admission grade, the universities can also use as criteria: the grades from the baccalaureate exam or grades from exams organized by universities (for testing knowledge and cognitive capacities).

Access to state budgeted study places is made only based on the hierarchy of admission competition results (based on criteria set by each university). The categories of youth that benefit from separately set budgeted places are:

- **Roma Youth** <sup>24</sup> (in the 2012/2013 university year approximately 548 spots were allocated for the first year of undergraduate studies);
- At least one state financed study place is granted to high school graduates with a baccalaureate diploma from **placement centers**, in conditions set by the university senate;
- **Ethnic Romanian students** from abroad, based on a methodology approved by a Government Decision (in the 2012/2013 university year, at the national level, 500 de budgeted study places were approved - 300 with scholarships and 200 without scholarships).

On the other hand, the Education Law states „Candidates from environments with high socio-economic risks or socially marginalized - Roma, graduated from rural high-schools or cities with less than 10000 inhabitants - may benefit from a number of guaranteed state subsidized study places, as specified by the law” but this article has not yet been operationalized in the funding methodology or the methodology regarding the general admission framework.

In most universities, following the first year of undergraduate studies, the state financed study places are redistributed annually based on academic results obtained in the previous university year.

As far as **tuition fees** are concerned, we can observe a difference between the value of the study grant allocated by the Ministry of Education and the value of tuition fees. We can also see a difference between the tuition fees perceived by the public universities and those perceived by the private ones.

Table 25 Values of study grants and tuition fees

Field of study	The value of study grant, for studies in Romanian, bachelor level (euro)	Average tuition fees in public univ. (euro)	Average tuition fees in private univ. (euro)
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<sup>24</sup> Reference: Order no. 4334/2012 on the Distribution of the Tuition Number for University Undergraduate Studies for Admission in the 2012-2013 University Year

[http://www.dreptonline.ro/legislatie/ordin\\_4334\\_2012\\_repartizarea\\_cifrei\\_scolarizare\\_studii\\_universitare\\_licenta\\_a\\_dmitere\\_studii\\_anul\\_universitar\\_2012\\_2013.php](http://www.dreptonline.ro/legislatie/ordin_4334_2012_repartizarea_cifrei_scolarizare_studii_universitare_licenta_a_dmitere_studii_anul_universitar_2012_2013.php)

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Engineering sciences	850	740	508
Economy	483	620	500
Medicine	1090	1450	522

According to a study on the perception regarding the social needs of students, conducted by ANOSR<sup>25</sup>, 30,5% of interviewed students said that tuition fees are an obstacle in their academic path and that they are deeply affected by them, while 39,6% of students stated that tuition fees have little effect on them and almost 6% stated tuition fees are a determinant factor for dropping out of higher education studies. Concerning the amount of the tuition fee, 46.2% said they considered them high, 24.7% believed them to be very high, while only 2.4% stated that tuition fees were low.

### 5.1.2. Direct Financial Support for covering other costs (scholarships etc.)

According to the Education Law direct financial support consists in **scholarships or study loans** for students. Although national legislation states that a study loan system is to be established for certain categories of students: "Students coming from low income families benefit from a bank loans system for their studies, guaranteed by the state, under the conditions of the law, through the Agency for Study Credits and Scholarships (ACBS). Loans may cover tuition taxes and the cost of living for the duration of the studies." At the moment this system is not functional. Furthermore, according to the law, graduates that will practice their profession for a minimum of 5 years in rural areas will be exempted from paying back 75% of the loan, that part being taken over by the state, with a maximum threshold of 5000 RON (around 1200 Euros). In this context, the document will only detail the types of scholarships and that have equity as an objective and the methodologies used for their disbursement.

According to the law „Students benefit from merit or performance scholarships, for stimulating excellence, as well as social scholarships, for the financial support of students with low incomes. The minimum sum for social scholarships is proposed annually by the National Council for Higher Education Financing, taking into account the fact that these have to ensure the minimal living expenses (.” For all types of scholarships, the state, through the Ministry of Education, gives each university a sum of 69RON (15,3 EUR) multiplied by the number of state financed study places at that particular university. Then each university distributes this amount in funds for social, merit, study or achievement scholarships. The financial distribution is based either on a clearly set regulation (based on calculus formulas), either as a result of negotiations between students and faculty leadership. According to data obtained from CNFIS, on average, a university sets aside approx. 10% of the total sum to the social scholarship fund and the rest of the scholarship amount are distributed based on merit-based criteria.

Also, according the data gathered in the institutional evaluation conducted by ARACIS<sup>26</sup> in 2008, analyzing the data from 29 state universities, we can see that 10953 scholarships were distributed on social criteria at Bachelor level, while 36412 scholarships are distributed on academic criteria.

<sup>25</sup> Reference: <http://www.anosr.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2011-Studiu-Nevoile-sociale-ale-studentilor-din-Romania.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Reference: <http://db.aracis.ro/>





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Table 26 Distribution of scholarship fund, ARACIS 2008

Type of scholarship	Performance	Merit	Study	Total-Merit based (Performance+Merit+Study)	Social
BA	385	4168	31859	36412	10953
MA	52	687	4533	5272	370

At the same time, although the Education Law mentions the fact that the **social scholarship** needs to provide for the minimum expenses of meals and housing, according to CNFIS data the medium national amount of a social scholarship is 192 lei (42 EUR) while the estimated national average sum for minimum costs of meals (lunch and dinner) is 566 lei (125.7 EUR).

As far as the criteria for giving scholarships is concerned, social scholarships are awarded based on general criteria approved through Government Resolution<sup>27</sup>, mainly to the following categories: orphan students, students from state or family placement centers that do not have their own income, students sick with tuberculosis (TBC) and students whose families do not earn, within the past three months, an income higher than the minimum income. The Education law mentions the fact that social scholarships may be cumulated with other types of scholarships, but at the moment this is not implemented in most universities.

Regarding the universities opinion on the fact that the scholarship should provide for the expenses of meals and housing, according to the data gathered by ARACIS in the process of institutional evaluation, from a total number of 39 state universities that have reported the data, 21 think that the scholarship covers the costs for meals and housing while 16 think the opposite.

Even if the funds for scholarships are provided from the state budget, the universities should contribute from their own income. According to the data from ARACIS, the medium percentage with which universities contributed in 2008 to the scholarship fund is 10.88% (from the total scholarship fund), the minimum was 0.15%, the maximum was 33.2% and ten universities contributed with a percentage less than 0,5% from the total.

At the same time MEN awards annually, based on contracts, a number of scholarships to students **from a rural background**, which after graduation, are obligated to work in rural education system, in the field they prepared for, at least for a period of time equal to the one they received their scholarship for.<sup>28</sup> There are no available data on the number of people benefiting from this type of scholarships.

## 5.2. National Policies for Direct Support for Students

### 5.2.1. Social Services: housing, canteens, transportation etc.

With regards to the assurance of different social services, three categories are to be found:

<sup>27</sup> Reference: Government Resolution no. 558/ 1998 on the modifications of annexes 1 and 2 to Government Resolution no. 455/ 1997 on the setting of general criteria to award scholarships and other forms of financial support for pupils, students and those taking classes in the state education system, day classes  
<http://www.edu.ro/index.php/legaldocs/4769>

<sup>28</sup> Reference: Government Resolution 769/14 July 2005 on the giving of study scholarships to students living in rural areas  
<http://www.cnfis.ro/documente/pdf/HG769-2005.pdf>



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- Social Services or facilities for all students;
- Social Services or facilities for students in state universities;
- Social Services or facilities for certain categories of students.

The first category of facilities is available to all students regardless of the type of university they attend (state or private). These facilities are, according to the Education Law:

- Free medical and psychological assistance in medical and psychological university cabinets or in state clinics and hospitals. According to the data gathered by ARACIS in 2008, from a total number of 46 universities, 35 had a medical cabinet while 11 didn't.
- During the school year students benefit from a reduced fee (by minimum 50%) for local public transportation or national transportation- auto, railway and naval.
- Students benefit of fees reduced by 75% for access to museums, concerts, theatre, opera, movies or other cultural and sports events organized by public institutions, within the limits of approved budgets.
- The release of study certificates or documents attesting that one is a student (including the schooling situation/grade situation, graduate diplomas, engineering, MA and PhD Diplomas and diploma supplements, receipts, student licenses and ID cards, including for library access).

A second category of subsidies is given only to students enrolled in state universities.

The states give subsidies for dorms and canteens that partially cover the living costs, the difference being paid for through taxes by students. The dorm places are distributed to students that do not live in the city where they study based on criteria approved by university senates. In most universities social cases are given priority. According to a perception study in 2011<sup>29</sup>, students noticed better an improvement in the accommodation facilities, but also significant barriers in accessing them, either because of grade-related criteria or because of high taxes. As far as student canteens are concerned the ANOSR study mentions the following: „questioned on the frequency with which they use the canteen, only 13.7% of the students eat there daily, 22% eat there once or twice a week and 26.5% eat there once a month. Given this situation is worrisome that the highest percentage of students said that they never eat at the university - 30.7%”.

According to data from the university classification process and data presented in the ANOSR study *Equity in education*, the situation of dorm places is the following:

**Table 27 The situation of dorm places, university classification process**

	<b>2006 - 2007</b>	<b>2007 - 2008</b>	<b>2008 - 2009</b>	<b>2009 - 2010</b>
Number of places in dorms	103723	106677	106198	108189
Number of places allocated to students	103018	106288	105951	106808

Moreover, according to the Education Law, subsidies for accommodations may be granted to students that chose another accommodation, other than dorms of higher education institutions. In this case, the subsidies can be granted by students according to social criteria.

<sup>29</sup> Reference: <http://www.anosr.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/2010-Studiu-ANOSR-cu-privire-la-Statutul-Social-al-Studentului-din-Romania.pdf>

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According to the law, higher education state institutions ensure, within the limits of financial resources allocated for the practical internship of students, for the time set in study plans, expenses for meals, accommodation and transportation if the internship takes place outside the university center. There are no data on universities that offer such services to students.

The last category of subsidies is the one distributed to student groups with certain characteristics:

- Students from disadvantaged backgrounds or those with outstanding results in their education and professional, cultural or sports training benefit from places in relevant camps in the limit of the allocated budget;
- Orphan students or those coming from placement centers have free transportation set through an;
- Ethnic Romanian students from abroad, receiving scholarships from the Romanian state, benefit from free fees to all events organized by public institutions, that take place on Romanian territory;
- Children of active teaching staff receive free accommodations in dorms and boarding schools;
- Students with physical disabilities have the right to access facilities adapted to their needs in all university spaces and conditions must be met for a normal course of academic, social or cultural activities in higher education institutions.

According with the law, universities should be equipped with ramps and lifts to ensure the access of students with physic disabilities. The study from ARACIS shows that, from a total number of 39 universities, 16 of them don't have this type of equipment.

### 5.2.2. Academic services

As far as **carrier counseling services** are concerned, according to Art. 202 (b) from Law no. 1/2011, students benefit from free assistance or complementary services including counseling for professional orientation. The quality of the services is included in the ARACIS<sup>30</sup> evaluation methodology. According to O.M. 3235 of 2005, universities must establish Centers for Career Orientation to support students in making the best decisions for their careers and training paths. .

A study implemented by the National Alliance of Student Organization (ANOSR) in 2011, states "In only one university from the universities where the questionnaire was employed the percentage of students happy with the activity of the Center for Professional Counseling and Orientation is above 30 %. In all the other universities this percentage is under 20%. In only 7 universities the percentage of students who have at least heard of a Center for Professional Counseling and Orientation is above 20%."

Moreover, according to data from the process of university classification, the percentage of students using counseling and orientation services has reaches 3,68% in 2009/2010.

Regarding **flexibility of learning paths**, the Education Law defines the educational forms: with attendance, no attendance and distance learning. Even more, flexibility is realized at the level of universities/faculties through offering optional or facultative classes, with their number and typology differing for each university, study domain, study program or institutional resources.

<sup>30</sup> Reference: Government Resolution 1418/2006 for the Approval of Methodology for External Evaluation  
[http://www.aracis.ro/uploads/media/Metodologie\\_aprobată\\_HG\\_1418\\_-\\_2006.pdf](http://www.aracis.ro/uploads/media/Metodologie_aprobată_HG_1418_-_2006.pdf)

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Concerning alternative access routes, in this moment access to higher education can only be done in the formal academic manner (via graduating a Baccalaureate exam).

**Recognizing competences from other than formal education routes** is done according to Order No. 4543/468 from 2004<sup>31</sup>. Thus, currently no transferable credits are awarded for recognizing competences obtained otherwise than through formal ways. On the other hand, according to the law "Initial or continuous professional training programs, as well as the system for evaluating the results of learning in non-formal and informal contexts will respect the need for assuring occupational mobility horizontally and vertically through the use of the transferable credit system for professional education and training". The law also mentions the adoption of a Ministry Order outlining a methodology in this regard. A discrepancy was noticed between the Education law and Order 4543/2004, regulating the recognition of competencies not obtained through formal ways, in the sense that Order 4543 does not allow recognition of competencies acquired in informal or non-formal ways, while the more recent Education Law leaves this possibility open.

The Education Law also offers the possibility for universities to use study credits for recognizing non-formal activities. Thus according to art 203: "Students may participate in volunteering activities, for which they may receive a certain number of transferable credits, under the conditions set by the University Charter"

### 5.3. National Policies for Quality Assurance

As far as the national policies for quality assurance are concerned, we will underline in this document two of the most relevant such policies and how they address issues influencing equity in education.

**Accrediting higher education institutions in Romania and periodical evaluation is done** on the basis of reference standards and common performance indicators adopted through a Government Ordinance. These indicators have a real impact in influencing institutional behavior and policies on this level. In this context, within the methodology, the indicators and standards that deal with equity are:

- Performance indicator related to the system of scholarship allocation and other forms of financial support for students. This indicator has as a minimum standard the existence of formalized allocation procedures and as reference standards the university supplementing, from its own funds, of a minimum 10% (20% respectively for performance standard 2) the scholarships fund. According to data obtained from the CNFIS, the medium percentage at a national level of contribution from universities from their own incomes for the scholarship fund is 7,29%
- Concerning admission policies, a reference standard mentions that admission is based exclusively on academic competences of candidates and no discriminatory criteria should be applied.
- Within the description of a performance indicator concerning student centered teaching methods, it is indicated that the teaching strategy should take into consideration the needs of students with disabilities.

<sup>31</sup> Reference: Order no. 4543/468 in 2004 for approving the Procedure for the Evaluation and Certification of Professional Competences Obtained through Other Ways apart from Formal ones  
[http://www.anc.gov.ro/uploads/Registrul%20National%20al%20Centrelor/Procedura\\_evaluare\\_4543/ordin%204543%20privind%20procedura%20de%20evaluare%20si%20certificare.pdf](http://www.anc.gov.ro/uploads/Registrul%20National%20al%20Centrelor/Procedura_evaluare_4543/ordin%204543%20privind%20procedura%20de%20evaluare%20si%20certificare.pdf)



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- A performance indicator that has as a minimum standard the fact that the university should have recovery programs for those with difficulties in learning. A performance indicator regarding student services that has as a minimum standard the existence of housing spaces for at least 10% of students.

The methodology presented above has 43 performance indicators.

## 6. Challenges and opportunities:

### Part B – Institutional level

#### 1. Institutional Policies Regarding Equity- General Issues

Considering the fact that in 2011/2012 elections for all ruling structures in universities took place, in most cases the institutions have not yet published the strategic plans for the mandates for the period 2012-2016.

Also, based on previous experience we can mention that there are no specific elements to assuring equity (for example objectives related to participation rates of different disadvantaged groups). Common identified elements were especially those related to constructions of new student dorms and/or the rehabilitation of existing ones or the bettering of accommodation conditions as well as aspects related to increasing access to education (attracting a larger number of students). Also we can conclude that the approach to equity in university strategic plans differs significantly. On the one hand there are universities that only address at most issues related to student accommodation but there are universities that also set other objectives (such as: flexibility in MA studies so that students holding a job may access them, developing services for academic professional counseling, including financial counseling for students, setting contributions from their own funds to the scholarship fund)

#### 2. Structure of the Equity plan/ self-assessment tool

#### 3. Challenges and opportunities

### Part C – Recommendations

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## ANNEX 1 – Group of experts

### Coordinator:

**Eva Egron Polak** – is Secretary-General of the International Association of Universities (IAU), an international non-governmental organization based at UNESCO in Paris, France.

Bringing together Higher Education Institutions and Associations from every region, the IAU is committed to strengthening higher education worldwide by providing a global forum for leaders, undertaking research and analysis, disseminating information and taking up advocacy positions in the interest of quality higher education being available to all.

With a long experience in international co-operation in higher education, and now as the Secretary General of the IAU, Eva Egron-Polak is engaged with many of the most pressing issues in current higher education policy debates globally, such as internationalisation, cross-border higher education, higher education for sustainable development, and equitable access to higher education, among others. Prior to joining the IAU, she was Vice President (international) of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. She was educated in the Czech Republic, Canada and France.

### International Experts

- **Mary Tupan-Wenno** - is the executive director of ECHO, Center for Diversity Policy in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Before ECHO she worked for the Dutch Ministry of Education Culture and Science as a policy advisor at the Department of Higher Education. At the ministry she was also responsible for the development of policy regarding the improvement of the participation and success of ethnic minorities in higher education. She was part of a team that worked on the establishment of ECHO in 1994. Mary is a founding member of the European Access Network (1991) and is currently the President of the Executive Board of EAN. EAN provided a network to broaden her focus and expand international collaboration.
- **Claudiu Dondi** – is the President of SCIENTER – a non-profit research organization based in Bologna and active Europe-wide in the field of innovation of education and training systems – since its establishment in 1988. In this position his main activities are the co-ordination of large national and European projects, as well as policy advice and evaluation at regional, national and international level. His other positions include: President of EFQUEL – the European Foundation for Quality in eLearning, Member of the Board of the MENON EEIG (enabling eLearning) in Brussels, Member of the Editorial Board of the British Journal of Educational Technology. From 2001 to 2008 he has been Vice-President of ElfEL – the European Institute for e-learning and from 2001 to 2006 Vice-President of EDEN – the European Distance Education Network.
- **Peter Brown** – is Programme Manager with the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education within the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The HEA is the statutory planning and development body for higher education and research in Ireland, with wide advisory powers throughout the sector. In addition it is the funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and a number of designated higher education institutions. The National Access Office manages the Springboard Labour Market Activation initiative on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.

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- **Elodie Boisfer** – is a Program Officer working for the International Association of Universities since 2008. Élodie Boisfer was first the Secretary-General's Executive Assistant (2008-2011), before to become one of the IAU Program Officers. Working closely with the Secretary General, Élodie is engaged, since 2010, in developing and managing IAU activities in regards with the twin issues of equitable access and success in higher education. She is also the manager of the LEADHER grant program and she coordinates the organization of the IAU Annual Conferences and GMAs.
- **Jamil Salmi** – was the coordinator of the World Bank's network of tertiary education professionals. Mr. Salmi is the principal author of the Bank's new Tertiary Education Strategy entitled "Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education." In the past thirteen years, he has provided policy and technical advice on tertiary education reform to the governments of over 35 countries around the world. Mr. Salmi has also guided the strategic planning efforts of several public and private universities in Colombia, Kenya, Mexico and Peru. Before moving to the Human Development Vice-Presidency in July 2001, Mr. Salmi worked for 7 years in the Bank's Latin America and Caribbean region (as Education Sector Manager among others); in the Education and Social Policy Department of the World Bank (1990-1993) and also prepared the World Bank's first Policy Paper on Higher Education (1994). Prior to joining the World Bank, Mr. Salmi was a professor of education economics at the National Institute of Education Planning in Rabat, Morocco. He also worked as a consultant to various ministries, national professional associations, and international organizations. Mr. Salmi is a graduate of the French Grande Ecole ESSEC. He also holds a Master's degree in Public and International Affairs from the University of Pittsburgh (USA) and a PhD in Development Studies from the University of Sussex (UK). He is the author of five books and numerous articles on education and development issues.

#### Romanian Experts:

All experts worked together with Remus Pricopie, the Minister of National Ministry of Education, in the various project aimed at studying equity in HE in the past years:

- **Nicoleta Corbu** - Vice-Dean for research of the College of Communication and Public Relations and Executive Director of the Center for Research in Communication, College of Communication and Public Relations, both at the National School of Political Studies and Public Administration (SNSPA), Bucharest. She owns a PHD, in Sociology, Magna cum laude, Doctoral School of Sociology, SNSPA Bucharest.
- **Valeriu Frunzaru** - Lecturer at the College of Communication and Public Relations, National School of Political Sciences and Public Administration, Bucharest. Specialist in Sociology, he is the author of many articles and studies regarding equity and social inclusion, gender balance and social public policies.
- **Diana Cismaru** - Ph. D. in sociological communication, associate Professor at the College of Communication and Public Relations, National School of Political Sciences and Public Administration, Bucharest. She is the author and co-author of numerous articles, studies and volumes about organizational communication, public relations and social media.





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## ANNEX 2 – IAU Self-Assessment Instrument on Equitable Access and Success in Higher Education



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ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL  
UNIVERSITIES DES UNIVERSITÉS  
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES BUREAU BUREAU INTERNATIONAL DES UNIVERSITÉS

### IAU Self-Assessment Instrument on Equitable Access and Success in Higher Education

#### Guidelines for Institutional Internal Review and Data Gathering

The questions below are intended to guide the case study universities in conducting a review of institutional equity/social cohesion policies and activities. This review should have the ownership of the entire academic community (i.e. students, teaching and research staff, administrative staff should be part of the self-assessment efforts) and the final report should bear the signature of a representative of the university leadership (Rector or Vice-Rector).

The project experts' team recommends that you follow the structure of the guiding questions below to organize the self-study report. It is important to note that these questions are meant to be a prompt for the institutional committee's work in gathering information and in analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in equity/social cohesion. **You may choose not to answer all questions, and there may be additional areas the committee wishes to investigate. You may also want to emphasize some areas more than others.**

This self-assessment instrument has been designed by the International Association of Universities (IAU) to enable each institution to assess the extent to which its policies and practices are equitable and how well they address the needs of students from under-represented groups to ensure, facilitate or encourage their successful participation and graduation. The Self-assessment instrument invites HEIs to measure their level of involvement in issues relating to equitable access and success in higher education, and helps them to evaluate their policy and practice in these domains.

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A brief and fairly straightforward **Glossary of Terms** has been included for your reference and to ensure that all institutions undertaking the self-assessment have a shared understanding of the questions and basic concepts (annex).

\*\*\*\*

*(Use additional space as needed, in this and other sections)*

**For the institutional coordinator of the overall information gathering/self-assessment process, please indicate:**

**Name:**

**Position:**

**Full contact details:**

**For each person participating in the completion of this self assessment process please indicate:**

**Name:**

**Position:**

## A. Institutional Information and Profile

**Name of the Institution:**

**City:**

**Country:**

**Language(s) of Tuition/ Instruction:**

1. How many degree seeking students were enrolled at your institution as of the beginning of the 2012-2013 academic year?

	Total Number of students	Number of students paying tuition fees	Number of students not paying tuition fees
Part time students (low frequency/distance)			



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learning)			
Full time students			

2. For each degree level offered at your institution, please indicate the number of enrolled students.

Level	Total number of students	Number of students paying tuition fees	Number of students not paying tuition fees
BA/BSc (1 <sup>st</sup> cycle) level			
MA/MSc (2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle) level			
PhD (3 <sup>rd</sup> cycle) level			
Other, please specify:			

3. Your institution is: (Please select one)

- ☐ Public
- ☐ Private

4. Please indicate if your institution has branches located outside the primary location: (Please select one)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, please indicate their locations;



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## B. Financial Considerations

5. Does your institution charge tuition fees<sup>32</sup>? (Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. Does your institution waive/ reduce fees for any category of students? (Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please indicate for which category of students your institution waives/ reduces fees, what type of fees are taken into consideration and for which criteria? (e.g. students with low family income)

7. Does your institution provide financial assistance (other than waiving / reducing fees) to any group of students? (Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please indicate the kind of financial assistance offered and for which group: (e.g. scholarships for students with low income).

## C. Equitable Access in the Institutional Mission

8. Is the issue of equitable access for students from under-represented groups mentioned in the mission statement? (Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

9. Is the issue of equitable access for students from under-represented groups mentioned in the university charter or other regulatory document adopted by the Senate?

☐ Yes

☐ No

<sup>32</sup>Tuition fees = Taxes for a BA/MA or PHD studies





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Please provide the parts of the document where this is specified as an annex.

i. If so, why did your institution decide to focus on the issue of Equitable Access?

ii. Do you have quantitative and qualitative targets?

**10. Does your institution keep enrolment records according to student socio economic, ethnic and/or special needs categories? (Please select one)**

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please indicate for which of the following groups such information is kept:

☐ Applicants

☐ Admitted students

☐ Graduated students

☐ Other, please specify:

ii. If yes, please indicate what type of information is kept:

iii. Please indicate the criteria according to which students are classified into different categories (special needs categories):

**11. Does your university have specific action plan(s) to address equitable access? (Please select one)**

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, is the action plan tailored to specific group(s) of students? (Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

ii. If yes, indicate which under-represented group(s)<sup>33</sup> is/are targeted:

(Please select all relevant categories)

<sup>33</sup> All possible underrepresented categories according to Romanian national legislation



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- ☐ Chronically ill students
- ☐ Disabled students
- ☐ Female students
- ☐ First generation students
- ☐ Mature students (over 30 years old)
- ☐ Students from rural areas (who still have a permanent residence in rural areas)
- ☐ Students from underrepresented ethnic groups (e.g. Roma students)
- ☐ Students with low socio-economic status (SES)<sup>34</sup>
- ☐ Working students
- ☐ Students with children
- ☐ Orphan students
- ☐ Students from placement centres or family placement
- ☐ Students which can prove their quality or of a parent as „Victory fighters in the Romanian Revolution in December 1989” or as „martyr hero”- mentioning: wounded, detained, injured and detained, with a patent signed by the Romania`s President
- ☐ Students from disadvantaged areas<sup>35</sup>
- ☐ Students from cities with less than 10.000 inhabitants
- ☐ Ethnic Romanian students coming from abroad (Ex: Students from Republic of Moldova)
- ☐ Others, please specify:

**12. Does the action plan include a specific program for students from some categories of under-represented groups? (Please select one)**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**i. If yes, please indicate for which category(ies):**

<sup>34</sup> According to HG 558/1998 - Students whose families have a lower average net income per member in the last 3 months than the minimum wage

<sup>35</sup> Areas that are declared disadvantaged areas by a government decision

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**13. Please indicate the number of students enrolled in your institution over the last most recent five years from each target group (if identified as such by your institution) :**

Year: Under-represented group					
Chronically ill students					
Disabled students					
Female students					
First generation students					
Mature students (over 30 years old)					
Students from rural areas (who still have a permanent residence in rural areas)					
Students from under-represented ethnic groups e.g. Hungarian students, Ukrainian students, Roma students etc.)					
Students with low socio-economic status (SES) (in accordance with the criteria of social scholarships regarding family income)					
Working students					
Students with children					
Orphan students					
Students from placement centres or family placement					
Students which can prove their quality or of a parent as „Victory fighters in the Romanian Revolution in December 1989” or as „martyr hero”- mentioning: wounded, detained,					

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injured and detained, with a patent signed by the Romania's President					
Students from disadvantaged areas					
Students from cities with less than 10.000 inhabitants					
Ethnic Romanian students coming from abroad (Ex: Students from Republic of Moldova)					
Roma students					
Roma students over those studying on special budgeted places					
The number of students which applies for social scholarships					
Number of students receiving social scholarships (from the public fund)					
Number of students receiving merit based scholarships (merit, study, performance, from the public fund)					

i. For the current year, please complete the table below:

Family Income/month	Below the national minimum wage	Between the minimum and national average wage	Above average
Number of incoming Students			

ii. For the previous year (indicate), please complete the table below:

Family Income/month	Below the national minimum wage	Between the minimum and national average wage	Above average
Number of graduated Students			

14. With regard to institutional Administrative Structures,



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**a) Is there an office or an individual whose main responsibility is to improve equitable access?**

(Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

**i. If yes, is such an office or individual mandated to work at:**

☐ Institution level

☐ Faculty level

☐ Department level

**b) Is there a specific budget allocated to improving equitable access?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

**i. If yes, please indicate the main source of the funds**

☐ Institutional budget

☐ Specific Government Program

☐ Foundations

☐ Private sector/industry sponsored program

☐ Other, please specify:

**c) Is there a monitoring/ evaluation framework to assess progress and impact of access policies?**

(Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

**i. If yes, please describe it:**



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## D. Equitable Access in the Admission Policies

**15. Does your institution systematically track applicants from under-represented groups at admission?**  
(Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

**16. Does your institution offer special consideration to applicants from under-represented groups at the time of admission?** (Please select one)

☐ Yes

☐ No

**i. If yes:**

**a. Please specify for which groups:**

**b. Please describe such special considerations or alternative admission options:** (Please select all relevant options)

☐ Interviews

☐ Different weighting of criteria

☐ Quotas or targeted admission numbers

☐ Other, please specify:

**17. Regarding the potential students from target under-represented group, what outreach and academic support activities have been put in place to increase their access to your university programs?** (Please select all relevant activities)

☐ Regular contacts with secondary schools with large numbers of students in target group (s)

☐ Pre-admission counselling

☐ Flexible/ Multiple academic pathways from high school through to postgraduate study

☐ Assistance with application preparation

☐ Pre-enrolment programs offered during long break between academic sessions

☐ Assistance with examinations preparation

☐ Alternate examination arrangements



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- ☐ Counselling or recruitment in schools with large numbers of students from low socio-economic background
- ☐ Other kind of activities, please specify:

**18. Is there a system for evaluating such admission policy(ies)?** (Please select one)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**i. If yes, please describe it:**

**19. Where is the impetus for choosing to target this/these group(s) coming from?** (Please select all relevant options)

- ☐ Government policy
- ☐ Institutional mission
- ☐ Civil Society (NGOs/ Trade Unions/ Human Rights Organisations/ etc.)
- ☐ Employers
- ☐ Other, please specify:

**20. Does your institution recognise prior and experiential learning for admission purposes?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**i. If yes, please describe how this is done:**



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## E. Successful participation, retention and graduation

21. Does your institution use a process to identify the specific needs of students from under-represented groups?

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please describe it, indicating when such screening is applied and by whom, etc:

22. Which services does your institution provide to respond to the specific needs of students from underrepresented groups as identified in question 11.ii? Please list the underrepresented groups(s) to which such services are offered in the space provided below proposed series of services.

i. Does your institution provide **academic support**? Please select all that are provided:

☐ Preparation for academic life (i.e List target group(s): writing skills, library use, study methods, etc.)

List target group(s):

☐ Special orientation sessions

List target group(s):

☐ Tutoring/ mentoring/ peer mentoring

List target group(s):

☐ Academic advisors

List target group(s):

☐ Specific support for students with language needs

List target group(s):

☐ Specific support for students with other learning needs

List target group(s):

☐ Tutorial services

List target group(s):

☐ Other, please specify

List target group(s):



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ii. Does your institution provide **financial support**? Please select all that are provided:

- ☐ Subsidized accommodation

*List target group(s):*

- ☐ Subsidized meal

*List target group (s):*

- ☐ Full subsidized (accommodation + meal)

*List target group (s):*

- ☐ Equipment or transport support

*List target group(s):*

- ☐ Grants and bursaries

*List target group(s):*

- ☐ Loans

*List target group(s):*

- ☐ Other, please specify

*List target group(s):*

iii. Does your institution provide **social support**? Please select all that are provided:

- ☐ Extra-curricular activities

*List target group(s):*

- ☐ Careers counselling

*List target group(s):*

- ☐ Specific services for disabled/ chronically ill students

*List target group(s):*

- ☐ Psychological counselling service

*List target group(s):*

- ☐ Peer monitoring

*List target group(s):*

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☐ Other, please specify

*List target group(s):*

**23. Does your institution offer alternative study/learning paths?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

**i. If yes, please indicate what kinds of alternative study/learning paths are offered (Please select all that apply):**

☐ Curriculum adapted to needs of disabled/ chronically ill students

☐ Curriculum specifically designed for and about students from underrepresented ethnic groups

☐ Preparatory courses for entrance examinations

☐ Specific programs for women (or men) in non-traditional disciplines

☐ Adjusted schedule for working students

☐ Distance education courses

☐ Extra tutorials

☐ Mentoring

☐ Other, please specify

**ii. If yes, is the success of such alternative study/learning paths monitored systematically?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

**iii. If yes, please describe the monitoring approach and indicate who is responsible for it:**

**24. Does your institution provide academic and career counselling through specialised centres?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

**i. If yes:**

**a) Please list the different specialised centres and describe their mission/mandate:**



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b) Please indicate the staff complement:

c) Please indicate the budget allocated to these centres

## F. Rewards/Incentives for quality teaching and curricular innovation to improve retention and success

25. Are faculty and staff members recognized for their contribution(s)/efforts to improving equitable access and success by learners from under-represented groups?

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, how is this done? Please describe the kind of reward offered:

26. Does your institution encourage curricular innovation that may improve success among learners from under-represented groups?

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please indicate how this is done

27. Does your institution monitor and assess how curricular innovations impact on the retention/success rates of students from under-represented groups?

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please describe how this is done:



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## G. Faculty development to promote retention and success

**28. Does your institution provide faculty and staff development opportunities to enhance their understanding and readiness to work on improving equitable access and success?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please describe how this is done:

**29. How does your institution prepare its faculty and staff to deliver education and services to a diverse student population (with different needs)?**

**30. Please list any innovative pedagogical approaches that were introduced by your institution to better meet the needs of a diversified student body:**

**31. Does your institution encourage its faculty to work (as a topic for research and academic interest) on the issue of equitable access and success in higher education?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please describe how this is done:



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## H. Education delivery modes and outreach

32. Has your institution introduced special measures and/or new delivery modes to facilitate access to learning by learners from under-represented groups?

☐ Yes

☐ No

i. If yes, please describe these measures for each target group:

33. Which of the following measures has your institution put in place to respond to the diverse learning needs of students? (Please select all options that apply)

☐ E-learning

☐ Mobile campus(es)

☐ Evening classes

☐ Other, please specify:

34. If your institution has a career counselling centre please provide data on how many students are being advised in the career counselling centre?

Year	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Students			
Students from under-represented groups			

35. Does your institution have a policy of alumni involvement in institutional development?

36. Does your institution have a strategy for preparing graduated students to be active citizens (democracy and tolerance classes, community volunteering and community outreach?)

i. If yes, please provide some details:

37. Does your institution have a strategy in response to the needs of the regional community?



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## I. Success Stories and Failures

38. Please describe successful initiatives for increasing equitable access and success in higher education, as an example of good practice. For each, please provide information such as target audience, objective, main actors involved, means, costs, incentives, indicators of success, etc.

39. Please describe an example of an initiative that aimed to improve equitable access or promotion of better success rates that failed and explain why it failed and what the institution has learned from the failure.

Date of completion:

Thank you for completing the questionnaire and sending it to the IAU by email to the attention of

Ms. Élodie Boisfer: [e.boisfer@iau-aiu.net](mailto:e.boisfer@iau-aiu.net) and Ms. Daniela Alexe : [daniela.alexe@uefiscdi.ro](mailto:daniela.alexe@uefiscdi.ro) .

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