



## Country Background Report Romania

### 1. Background – everyday reality versus political framework

The daily problems a school leader faces refer to material, human and curricular resources, such as:

- insufficiency of financial funds
- insufficient didactic resources to support the educational process
- poor access to education of disadvantaged groups (causing dropouts)
- lack of attractiveness of the teaching profession causes shortages of teachers, especially in the rural area (for instance the shortage of teachers of English and computer science)
- young people's lack of motivation and interest in schooling
- some categories of parents' lack of interest (disadvantaged groups) in their children's school careers
- decreasing of school population due to decreasing of birth rate
- lack of correlation between the educational offer and the needs/expectations of the labour market.
- a curriculum that is too academic and too much loaded and which does not value the students' life experience and the environment they live in.

Analysing the existent situation in the context of the objectives agreed upon at the European level, the following strategic priorities for the development of pre-university education up to 2010 have been identified:

- Ensuring access to and improving quality of education for everyone. Priority domains:
- Education in rural areas
- Access to education for disadvantaged groups
- Developing human resources for the knowledge society. Priority domains:
- Development and implementation of the e-Learning initiative
- Reform of compulsory education
- Enhancing access to and improving responsiveness of TVET to the labour market needs, in order to ensure economic and social cohesion.

### 2. Context

#### The national context

General administration and management of education and the training system is ensured at the national level by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, a part of the central public administration. In exercising its specific attributions, the Ministry cooperates at the central level with other ministries and institutional structures subordinated to the Government.

The national educational policy is established by the Ministry, based on consultations with other involved institutions and ministries. Public pre-university education is part of the local decentralised public services and is subordinated to the Ministry through the County School Inspectorates. These inspectorates ensure at the local level observance of legislation and evaluation of the education system and process as well as implementation of the educational policy established by the Ministry.

The public pre-university education network is organised and approved by the Ministry in cooperation and with the support of local public administration, according to the demographic evolution and the training requirements.

The human resources policy in education is established by the Ministry, according to the provisions of the Education Law (Law 84/1995) and the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997) and based on consultations with teachers' unions. The management of the human resources in pre-university education is the responsibility of the Ministry and is performed at local level through the County School Inspectorates. The methodology for the teachers' mobility (recruitment, selection, appointment and permanent or temporary transfer) is established every year through Ministerial Order, within the limits set by law. Furthermore, the Ministry coordinates and supervises, through the County School Inspectorates, all the activities concerning the mobility of teachers.

The Ministry is responsible for the elaboration of the national curriculum for pre-university education: frame-curricula, syllabi and textbooks. Schools, in cooperation with the County School

Inspectorates and local community representatives, establish the school based curriculum (local development curriculum for T/VET).

Decentralisation of the administration and financing system for pre-university education has been a major objective since the promulgation of the Education Law (Law 84/1995). Government Ordinance 32/2001 (amended in 2001 and 2002), Government Decision 538/2001 (amended through Government Decision 174/2003), as well as the Law 195/2006, have contributed to the decentralisation of financing system – determining a decentralised allocation of funds and the execution of budgets through the local public authorities. The local councils received attributions regarding the projection and execution of budgets, including the task of ensuring from their own funds the current materials costs, subventions for boarding and schools canteens, investments and major repairs.

### **The local (regional and municipal) context**

From an administrative-territorial point of view, Romania is organised in 41 counties. The capital city Bucharest counts as the 42 administrative-territorial unit.

Pre-university education, including schools of all levels, extra-school activities and auxiliary units, is subordinated to the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation through the County School Inspectorates acting as regional level decentralised specialised bodies with the following attributions:

- To supervise the organisation and functioning of the pre-university educational network in accordance with national educational policy;
- To ensure implementation and observance of legislation in organising, managing and deploying the educational process;
- To ensure quality of education and observance of the national standards through the school inspection;
- To establish, based on the Ministry endorsement, public schools: kindergartens , primary, gymnasium and VET schools;
- To propose to the Ministry the pupils' enrolment quotas for each education level, career, profile and specialisation at the county

level – based on prognosis studies and following consultations with schools, local public administration authorities, economic agents and interested social partners;

- To ensure, together with the local public administration authorities, schooling of the pupils during compulsory education;
- To coordinate teachers' recruitment, according to the provisions of the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997);
- To organise and guide the in-service teachers' training as well as academic research and other complementary activities in pre-university education;
- To coordinate, together with the local public administration authorities, the use, development and preservation of the didactic material bases of schools;
- To coordinate schools admission and graduation exams as well as the educational competitions;
- To control the activities and the pre-university educational services provided by the economic agents, foundations, associations, religious cults and other bodies within the county; to ascertain observance of legislation and to take the legal measures as required;
- To coordinate the activity of the libraries in the pre-university education subordinated units;
- To coordinate and control the Casa Corpului Didactic – resource centre for in-service teachers' training.

The County School Inspectorates design and implement their own budgets and are financed by state through the Ministry budget. The County School Inspectorates have specific attributions in financing certain educational institutions and activities, as established by law.

The structure of the County School Inspectorates is established through Ministerial Order. The administration council of the County School Inspectorate comprises 9-11 members: the General School Inspector, the Deputy General School Inspectors, the head of the Casa Corpului Didactic, the technical-administrative director, the chief accountant, the legal advisor and school inspectors. The General School Inspector is the chair of the administration council. The County School Inspectorates periodically organise county

level conferences of the teaching staff for consultative, participative and didactic reasons.

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Each County School Inspectorate annually evaluates the education system at the county level and, based on this evaluation and the national educational policy, establishes the management plan for the next school year: detailing objectives, activities, resources and responsibilities. The management plan is discussed with the consultative bodies. After being approved by the administration council of the County School Inspectorate, the management plan becomes compulsory for all the managerial structures of the education system at the county level.

According to the in-force legislation, all the public schools buildings are the property of the local public domains and public pre-university education is financed from the local budgets (town, commune; county – only for special education). However, certain costs are supported from the state-budget through the County School Inspectorates budgets.

Part of the Local Councils (town, commune) has established school service units as institutional structures of the local public administration authorities, acting independently from the County School Inspectorates. The main functions of the Local Council school service are to ensure maintenance of the buildings and to support schools in establishing and executing the yearly budget, according to specific financing rules and the needs of schools and local community.

### 3. School leadership concepts and practices

#### Conceptual framework – School Leadership and Organisation

Schools management is ensured by head teachers (directors) and, depending on the number of students/classes, by deputy head teachers (deputy directors). The directors and deputy directors of pre-school units, primary and gymnasium level schools and arts and trades schools as well as the deputy directors of lyceums and post-secondary schools are appointed by the general inspector. The directors of lyceums and post-secondary schools are appointed by the minister of education upon the proposal of the general inspector. The directors and deputy directors of schools are appointed for a four-year term of office, as a rule, from nominations made by the school teachers' councils on professional and management expertise criteria. The appointment methodology is established through ministerial order and it usually involves a presentation of a managerial offer, detailing the medium term institutional development project of the given school and an interview on legislation in educational area.

In discharging their managerial duties, directors rely on two councils established in schools: the teachers' council and the administrative council.

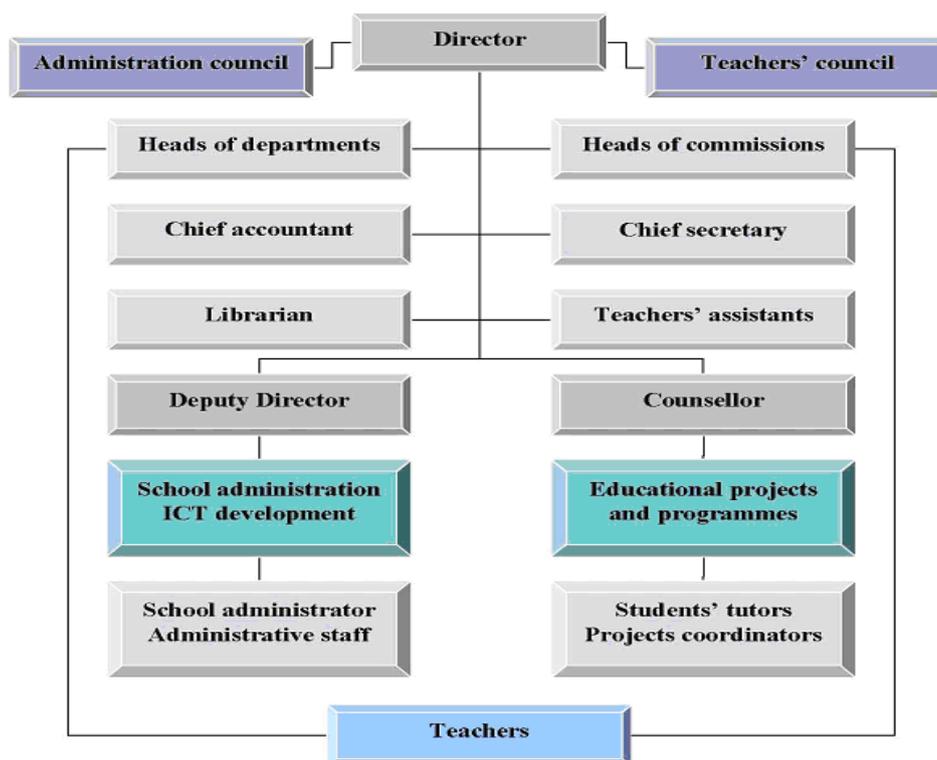
The teachers' council includes all the teaching staff of school and is chaired by the director of school. It has decision competencies in the educational area and functions according to rules established through ministerial order.

The administration council has 5 to 11 members and comprises the director and the deputy director(s), the counselor for educational projects and programmes, the chief accountant, teachers elected by the teachers' council, representatives of local public administration and representatives of the students' parents. If school co-operates with certain local enterprises in order to ensure students' vocational education and training, the administration council also includes representatives of these enterprises. At secondary education level, the administration council includes a representative of the students – nominated by the Students' Consultative Council.

The director of school is by law the president of the administration council. The administration council has decision competencies in administrative area and functions according to rules established through ministerial order.

Every school year, the teachers' council elects out of the teachers of school a counselor for educational projects and programmes. The educational counselor is the commission head of the students' tutors and has specific responsibilities in planning, organising and coordinating educational projects and programmes for students, both in school and out of school. Probably the most important role of the

counselor is to coordinate the school European projects (e.g. within Socrates programmes). The teaching staff of the same or related subjects is organised in departments. The heads of departments are nominated by the director based on the teachers' proposal and have specific responsibilities in educational area (planning the teaching activities within the department, methodology of evaluation and assessment of students, information and training activities, class assistance etc.). The work of the heads of departments is currently not remunerated. However, depending on the quality of the activity and the actual involvement in the school problems, the heads of departments have a certain priority for specific incentives.



In order to ensure the school management, the director can propose settling of various commissions and working groups with specific responsibilities to the administration council. Upon approval, the members and the responsibilities of the commissions and working groups are stated through directorial decisions. The director usually relies on the heads of these

commissions and working groups in order to ensure communication with the teaching staff and to deal with management issues in specific areas of competencies. The organisational chart of school is established in the administration council based on the legal provisions, the educational level, the size of school and the actual school needs. For example, in a medium size school (400

to 800 students), a basic organisational chart might look as above.

### Functions

The director of school is subordinated to the general inspector. The job description and the evaluation criteria for the director's activity are elaborated by the Ministry. The director benefits from a salary incentive and has a reduced teaching load – according to the school size and concrete conditions. The director has the legal right to guide and control the activity of all the school personnel and chairs the administration council and the teachers' council.

The director's responsibilities are established through ministerial order and can be divided in the following main categories:

- 1. To plan, organise, coordinate, monitor and evaluate the entire educational process in school and the institutional development of school. Under this category the in-force legislation provides a total of 21 specific activities – from elaborating school reports and medium term development plans to students' enrolment and repartition in classes etc.
- 2. To manage the human resources of school. Regarding the teaching staff, the director has limited competencies – as the teaching staff mobility is entirely managed by the Ministry through the County School Inspectorate. However, beside organising and coordinating teams, the director:
  - a) acts as an employer for the non-teaching staff of school;
  - b) monitors and evaluates the performances of the entire personnel of school;
  - c) applies – based on the administration council and/or teacher's council decisions – the legal provisions regarding recompenses and sanctions of the personnel;
  - d) guides and assists the professional development of the teaching and non-teaching staff.
- 3. To manage the financial resources of school. The director elaborates the school

budget project and monitors the execution of the approved budget.

- 4. To administrate school. The director is responsible for the utilization, conservation and development of the material resources of school and has to ensure that the educational conditions provided by school comply with the national standards.

The main papers that a director has to elaborate during a school year are as follows:

- 1) The medium term institutional development project of school, covering the usual four-year appointment period;
- 2) The semester and annual evaluation reports on the school entire activity;
- 3) The annual management plan of school and the semester programmes to implement the management plan;
- 4) The financial and material resources development projects;
- 5) The annual budget project of school.

The deputy director is subordinated to the director. The job description is elaborated by the director of school, usually as a result of a negotiation process in establishing the work division in the school management. As a consequence, the responsibilities of the deputy director may considerably vary from one school to another.

### The focus on teaching and learning

According to the provisions of the Education Law (Law 84/1995), the in-service training of the teachers in pre-university education is a right. At the same time, the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997) stipulates that teachers and management, guiding and control personnel in pre-university education participate to an in-service training programme once every five years, according to the methodology established by the Ministry. The condition is considered fulfilled for the teachers obtaining the "on-the-job-confirmation" or any didactic grade in the considered period.

According to the Ministerial Order 4796/2001 the periodic in-service teachers' training is structured in modules quantified in professional transferable

credits. The minimum standard for the periodic in-service teachers' training is of 90 credits distributed among the following compulsory modules:

- Speciality subject (the training can be provided only in higher education institutions – centres for in-service teachers' training) – 23 credits;
- Didactics of speciality – 23 credits;
- Psycho-pedagogy subjects (the training can be provided only in higher education institutions – centres for in-service teachers' training) – 23 credits;
- Complementary subjects:
- Complementary compulsory (ICT assisted education) – 9 credits;
- Complementary optional (at the disposal of the trainees) – 8 credits

The in-service teachers' training is accomplished through various forms and programmes, according to the exigencies of education and the evolution of different subjects, educational cycles and profiles, as well as depending on the needs and interests of the teaching staff. Teachers may independently choose the training programme that better fits their needs. However, in certain situations, teachers may be guided by the educational authorities towards specific training programmes. This situation has occurred rather frequently in the recent years when national training programmes financed from the state budget were provided on specific high-interest topics:

- Applying the new competence-based curriculum in the classroom;
- Designing the school-based curriculum and syllabi for optional subjects;
- Using new methods and instruments in pupils' evaluation;
- Standardising pupils' evaluation;
- Decision from the choice of textbooks on the one that is appropriate for the class;
- Developing multi-cultural educational environments (under the access to education for disadvantaged groups initiative);
- Use of ICT in teaching various subjects (under the e-Learning initiative).

The County School Inspectorate and the Casa Corpului Didactic, together with the above

mentioned institutions ensure organisation and accomplishment of the in-service training, according to the methodology established by the Ministry.

The main forms to organise in-service training are as follows:

- Scientific-methodological and psycho-pedagogical activities organised at the level of the pre-university education institution or by groups of pre-university education institutions (methodological commissions and pedagogical groups);
- Scientific-methodological and psycho-pedagogical communication sessions, symposiums, experience exchange on specialty and psycho-pedagogy topics;
- Periodic information stages in the subject-area and in the area of the sciences of education;

The teachers' professional development in pre-university education is a two-stage process – each involving continuous and final evaluations and being attested through a professional-degree certificate. The professional-degrees that can be obtained by teachers after promoting the "on-the-job-confirmation exam" are, in this order, the didactic grade II and the didactic grade I. Both the didactic grade II and didactic grade I lead to higher salaries on the salary scale for pre-university teachers. Admission to the competitions organised for management, guiding and control positions is conditioned by the didactic grades.

### **Restructuring and re-culturing school organisations**

The management of the pre-university educational institutions is ensured by heads of schools assisted, according to the concrete conditions and the provisions of the law, by deputy heads of schools. When exercising their managerial duties, the heads of schools rely on the teachers' council and the administrative council. Organisation and functioning of these bodies as well as the specific attributions of the heads of schools and of the deputy heads of schools are established through the Education Law (Law 84/1995), the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997) and the Regulation for Organisation and Functioning of the Pre-

University Education Institutions (Ministerial Order 4925/2005).

The teachers' council of school comprises all the teaching staff of school, regardless their specific employment status (permanent or substitute teachers), and is chaired by the head of school. The auxiliary teaching staff (support personnel; teachers' assistants) can participate in the teachers' council meetings when issues regarding their activity are discussed. Subject to the topics of the meetings, the head of school can also invite representatives of the parents, of the pupils' consultative council, of the local public administration authorities, etc. Participation of the teachers to the meetings of the teachers' council is compulsory. The teachers' council has the following attributions:

- To debate and approve the medium-term development plan of school;
- To debate and approve the activity reports, the semester activity programmes and the annual activity plan;
- To elect the teachers for the administration council;
- To propose to the head of school the members of the schools commissions and departments;
- To validate the semester and annual reports on the academic situation of the pupils;
- To analyse and decide on the sanctioning of the teachers and teachers' assistants failing to respect the provisions of law or of the internal regulation of school;
- To decide on the disciplinary sanctioning of the pupils;
- To decide the rewards to be granted to pupils, teachers and teachers' assistants, according to the provisions of law;
- To validate the pupils' behaviour marks lower than 7 (on a 1 to 10 marking scale);
- To establish the optional subjects provided within the school-based curriculum;
- To approve the project for the enrolment quota;
- To approve curricular projects developed in school;
- To elaborate synthetic appreciations on the activity of the teachers requesting the merit salary or the merit grade (forms of salary incentives to promote quality teaching);

- To approve in extraordinary meeting, in the presence of all the school personnel, the internal regulation of school, elaborated with the representatives of the teachers' unions.

The administration council of school, with decision role in the administrative area, comprises 5 to 11 members and is chaired by the head of school. According to the provisions of law, the members of the administration council are as follows: the head of school, the deputy head(s) of school, the chief accountant, elected representatives of the teachers, the representative of the parents and of the local public administration authority (town, commune). The representative of the teachers' union participates as an observer to the administration council meetings. The administration council also includes representatives of the economic agents that ensure practical training of the pupils. The high schools and post-high schools administration councils include representatives of the pupils/students. The kindergartens or primary schools that do not have legal personality and are affiliated to another school, nominate 1 or 2 teachers in the administration council of the coordinating school.

The administration council has the following attributions:

- To ensure observance of the Education Law (Law 84/1995), the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997), legislative acts issued by the Ministry and decisions of the General School Inspector;
- To elaborate the short-term educational strategy of school;
- To elaborate in cooperation with the representatives of the teachers' unions the internal regulation of school;
- To elaborate in cooperation with the teachers' unions the job descriptions for the non-teaching staff of school, as well as the evaluation criteria for their professional performance;
- To annually evaluate the individual professional performance and to establish the corresponding annual ratings for all the school personnel, based on the propositions of the chairs of the school commissions/departments;

- To approve, according to the provisions of law and following the proposition of the head of school, granting of the merit salary for the school personnel;
- To establish the monthly bonuses to be awarded to the school personnel;
- To establish, following teachers' unions consultation, the leave periods for the school personnel, based on individual written requests and the propositions of the head of school;
- To establish the members and the attributions of the operational commissions of school;
- To periodically control the accomplishment of syllabi and the rhythmic evaluation and assessment of the pupils, based on the synthetic reports of the chairs of the schools commissions/departments;
- To approve granting of scholarships, according to the provisions of law;
- To analyse and propose the approval of the annual budget project;
- To establish the strategy for attracting and use of the extra-budgetary funds, according to the provisions of law.

Members of the administration council coordinate and assume responsibilities for various domains, as a result of the delegation of managerial responsibilities by the school heads. They make proposals to the administration council concerning various commissions and working groups with specific responsibilities in schools.

### **Establishing and negotiating the direction of school development**

The Education Law (Law 84/1995), the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997), the Regulation for Organisation and Functioning of Pre-University Education Institutions (Ministerial Order 4925/2005) and the University Charter of each higher education institution specifically establish the organisation (including composition) and functioning of the management structures at different education levels.

According to these legislative acts, participation to the decision-making process of the pupils/students, teaching staff, representatives of the social partners (teachers' unions, professional associations, students' unions etc.) and players in

society at large (parents, local public administration authorities, economic agents, religious cults etc.) is guaranteed at all education levels of the system. The legislation also establishes the organisation and functioning of various external consultative bodies, stating the domains in which consultation is mandatory. In various administrative matters the documents issued by the administrative bodies produce the envisaged legal effects only if endorsed by the representatives of the external consultative bodies established by law.

At the school level, internal consultation process and participation of the pupils and teaching staff to the decision-making process is ensured through the pupils' consultative council, the teachers' council and the administration council.

The pupils' consultative council comprises all prefects of the classes and is organised and functions according to the internal regulation of school. The prefect is designated by the tutor-teacher of the class based on consultations with the pupils. The pupils' consultative council elects a chair and the representative of the pupils in the administration council of school (usually the chair) among its members. Meetings are held at the initiative of the chair or of the head of school and focus on matters concerning pupils' activity in school: educational conditions, discipline, cultural and social activities, teacher-pupil relations, participation in various school projects etc. Following decisions taken in the meetings, the chair of the pupils' consultative council presents to the head of school or to the administration council concrete propositions regarding improvement of the school activity. The decision to implement or reject the propositions is taken either by the head of school or by the administration council – depending on the exact area concerned.

The teachers' council of school, which has a decision-making role in the instruction and education areas, comprises all the teaching staff of school, regardless of their specific employment status (permanent or substitute teacher), and is chaired by the head of school. The auxiliary teaching staff (support personnel; teachers' assistants) can participate in the teachers' council meetings when issues regarding their activity are discussed. Subject to the topics of the meetings,

the head of school can also invite representatives of the parents, of the pupils' consultative council, of the local public administration authorities or of the social partners. Participation of the teachers at the meetings of the teachers' council is compulsory. The teachers' council meets at the beginning and at the end of each semester and whenever the head of school considers it to be necessary. The teachers' council can also meet in extraordinary session upon the request of a minimum one third of its members. Decisions are taken by vote and are binding for the entire personnel of school. According to the Regulation for Organisation and Functioning of Pre-University Education Institutions (Ministerial Order 4925/2005), the teachers' council has specific attributions in evaluating and planning the educational activity, in deciding on the school-based curriculum, pupils' enrolment quota, awards and sanctions etc.

The administration council of school, which has a decision-making role in the administrative area, comprises 5 to 11 members and is chaired by the head of school. According to the provisions of law, the members of the administration council are as follows: the head of school, the deputy head(s) of school, the chief accountant, elected representatives of the teachers, the representative of the parents and of the local public administration authority (town, commune). The representative of the teachers' union participates as an observer to the administration council meetings. The administration council also includes representatives of the economic agents that ensure practical training of the pupils. The high schools and post-high schools administration councils include representatives of the pupils/students. The pre-schools or primary schools that do not have legal personality and are affiliated to another school, nominate 1 or 2 teachers in the administration council of the coordinating school.

The administration council meetings are held monthly or whenever the head of school or one third of its members consider it to be necessary. Decisions are taken by vote and are binding for the entire personnel of school. According to the Regulation for Organisation and Functioning of Pre-University Education Institutions (Ministerial Order 4925/2005), the administration council has specific attributions in ensuring observance of

legislation in school, evaluating and planning the administrative activity, human resource development and management, monitoring the personnel's activity etc.

At the school level, the parents' support and consultation is ensured through the council of parents' representatives, whilst the parents' participation to the decision-making process is ensured through the administration council.

The class parents' committee is elected every year in the general assembly of all pupils' parents in that class and comprises: a chair, a member and a treasurer. The class parents' committee represents the interests of the parents in the general school parents' assembly, the council of parents' representatives and the teachers' council. The communication between the class parents' committee and the school is ensured by the tutor-teacher.

The general school parents' assembly comprises all the chairs of the class parents' committees in school and every 2-3 years elects the council of parents' representatives and the censors' commission. The council of parents' representatives comprises 5 to 7 members: a chair, a vice-chair and members with specific attributions. The communication between the school and the council of parents' representatives is ensured by the head of school. The chair of the council of parents' representatives is a voting-member of the administration council and represents the parents' interests within this management structure. According to the Regulation for Organisation and Functioning of Pre-University Education Institutions (Ministerial Order 4925/2005), the council of parents' representatives has specific attributions in supporting the school management regarding the improvement of educational conditions, attracting and use of extra-budgetary funds, educational and vocational guidance and counselling, support and direct involvement in school projects and extra-school activities etc. All the funds created from or with the help of the parents are entirely administrated by the council of parents' representatives, under the supervision of the censors' commission.

The local public administration authorities (town, commune and, only for special education, county

level) are responsible for financing most of the schools activities and for the maintenance of the buildings. In order to have a clear understanding of the schools problems and to directly contribute to the management of school, the local public administration authorities designate a representative (voting-member) in each school administration council. However, the school-community relationship is not restricted to this framework and specific relations, more informal, develop in order to respond to various needs of the school and of the community respectively. Some of the main needs to which the school-community relationship actually responds are as follows:

- Information needs. Generally, the exchange of information is accomplished at the class level and implies, from the school point of view, the pupils, the tutor-teachers and, more rarely, the teachers. From the community side, the parents may be involved as well as the representatives of various institutions (educational, cultural, health and hygiene, police etc.). In most cases the information flux is oriented towards the pupils. In this category is, for example, the tutoring of classes on specific issues.
- Training needs. These can be localised both at the level of the pupils and of the community members. In the case of the pupils target-group training can signify practical training at various economic agents (on a contract basis) as well as education in non-formal environments: participation to cultural and artistic manifestations, museum visits, trips etc.
- On the other hand, the role of school as a provider of education and training services becomes more and more important. Within the legal framework established by law on organisation and functioning of the continuing education system through educational institutions (Law 133/2000) schools can provide education and training for adults for professional (re)qualification, development of key competences (e.g. ICT competences) etc.
- Financial needs. In various occasions schools may attract sponsors from the community

members – in order to support specific development projects or extra-curricular and extra- school activities. The parents' involvement in finding sponsors is very important and the school management usually turns for support to the council of parents' representatives in this matter.

- Humanitarian and social needs. Various reports outline the fact that the pupils have organised themselves on a voluntary basis in order to offer support to disadvantaged persons – such as the elderly people living in retirement homes or children in orphanages. This form of support can include small presents, regular visits etc. and are generally encouraged by both the school management as part of the civic education and by the community. At the same time, the community members provide financial help for pupils with social problems, supplementary to the state support in some cases.
- Educational and vocational guidance and counselling needs. The community support in this area can be achieved through various forms – from simple debates organised in school with different professionals to study visits, open-days events etc.

### **System leadership and cooperation in networks**

Participation of the community in the decision-making process at the county level is ensured through the consultative councils of the County School Inspectorates and the Local Committees for Social Partnership in VET Development. The consultative council of the County School Inspectorate comprises heads of schools, highly estimated teachers and professors, representatives of the parents, of the local public administration authorities, of the economic agents and of other social partners. The chair of the consultative council is elected from its members through secret suffrage. Considering that special attention is required in the consultation process for the projection and development of the TVET, Local Development Committees for Social Partnership in VET were established in each county through ministerial order. These are consultative bodies cooperating with the County School Inspectorates in

projecting the educational network and pupils' enrolment quotas, local curriculum and educational offer, qualifications and specialisations which are offered.

The representatives of the nationally recognised teachers' unions are involved at all decision-making levels in the education system. The meetings of the administration councils – both at the school level and at the County School Inspectorate level – are held in the presence of the representatives of the teachers' unions. Their role is to observe and express the unions' opinion on the decisions taken (nonvoting members) and their comments are registered in the written reports of the meetings. On a number of specific matters concerning the teachers' employment and mobility, the papers issued by the head of school or by the General School Inspector have to be endorsed by the representatives of the teachers' unions in order to produce the envisaged legal effects. The consultation process at the local (county) level and central level is also accomplished through the social dialogue commissions, organised according to the provisions of law (Decision of the Government 314/2001 amended through Decision of the Government 569/2002). At the county level, the social dialogue commission comprises representatives of the prefecture, of the decentralised public services of ministries (including the County School Inspectorate), of the employers' confederations and of the trade unions.

At the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation level, the social dialogue commission comprises representatives of the ministry and leaders of nationally recognised teachers' unions.

The commissions for social dialogue have a consultative role and their activities are intended:

- To secure relationship between social partners – administration, employers and unions – in order to permanently inform on the specific needs and to facilitate solving various requests and problems (e.g. work conflicts, job descriptions etc.);
- To consult the social partners on legislative initiatives (e.g. amendments to the existing laws, orders of the minister, regulations etc.);

- To consult the social partners on various measures to be implemented in the system (e.g. regarding teachers' mobility, teachers' salaries and incentives, projection of the school network, pupils' enrolment quota, National Curriculum etc.).
- To propose solutions for other problems under the remit of the respective ministry, on which the social partners reach agreements.

#### Examples of good practice / success stories

An example of good practice in the field is the Romania Reform of Finance and Management of Education (Know How Fund) carried out between 1996-2000. This project reformed the financial planning and management of education at central, district and local levels through a training needs analysis, head-teacher training, school mapping, school inspection training, and developing Management Information Systems. In addition, it improved education finance and management at pre-university level through Technical Assistance to officials in the Ministries of Education and Finance, regional and local authorities and to school head-teachers. A network of seven regional resource centres was established to deliver training in education finance and management to inspectorate staff and head-teachers. The project was focused on school management and all the head-teachers in pre-university education were trained in the cascade system: a body of national trainers were trained, they developed teams of regional trainers and thus every In-service Teachers' Centres (the Casa Corpului Didactic) and the County School Inspectorate organised courses for all the school leaders in the regional educational system. This training programme generated expertise in the in-service teachers' training that has continually been renewed and extended by the Casa Corpului Didactic which develops further training stages for leaders and aspirants to being leaders.

## 4. Recruiting and educating school leaders

### Recruitment and retention of leaders

According to the provisions of the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997), the management

positions in pre-university educational institutions are head of school and deputy head of school. The management positions of head and deputy head of school can be occupied only by permanent teachers with at least didactic grade II and five years seniority in education, distinguished for their professional, managerial and moral qualities.

According to the provisions of the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997), the teachers in management positions that do not have any attested training in the area of educational management have to attain such a training programme following the appointment. The candidates for a management position have to be recommended by the teachers' council of school and have to prove their professional competence through the "very good" rating awarded for the previous year activity.

Appointment for the head and deputy head positions is based on open competitions organised by the County School Inspectorates (open recruitment procedure). The competition involves analyse and evaluation of the CV as well as an interview to assess the candidate's knowledge in the area of school legislation and educational management. The methodology for organising the competition as well as the topics and the bibliography are approved annually through Ministerial Order. The competencies and professional skills that are considered to be crucial for the leadership career are as follows:

### Categories of competences – Specific competences – Fields of application

#### I. Competences of communication and relationship

- To select the adequate ways and means of communication in order to make the managerial approach efficient.
- To adapt oneself to various/unpredictable situations in order to properly solve education problems.
- To solve conflicting situations following an investigation made by mediation and negotiation in order to assure a climate of trust and responsibility.
- → work climate
- → counselling and offering audiences

- → relationship with community and partner institutions
- → communication with pupils.

#### II. Psychological – social competences

- To value the individual and group features of the interlocutors in order to achieve an efficient communication.
- To adopt an adequate behaviour in the relations with interlocutors in order to achieve a proper collaboration climate.
- → professional ethics

#### III. Competences of using IT

- To synthesize information in order to create a data base which should be useful in the managerial act
- To turn to good account the information from the data base in order to make the decisions in concordance with the realities specific to educational environment
- To use informatics techniques and technologies in order to make their activity efficient and to assure its quality
- → managerial activity

#### IV. Competences of management and coordination

- To project the activities in order to achieve an educational approach of quality
- To organize the activities in order to achieve the managerial plan objectives
- To coordinate the educational process in order to achieve the school progress
- To manage the decision making act through assuming responsibility or delegating responsibilities within the school working groups
- → educational process
- → management of meetings

#### V. Competences of evaluation

- To establish evaluation objectives and criteria having regard for the principles of total quality management □ To use the evaluation techniques and instruments specific to the educational process
- To evaluate the educational approach in order to identify the teaching staff's training necessities

- → educational process
- → initial and in-service training of the teaching staff

#### **VI. Competences of managing and administrating the resources**

- To manage the material and financial resources according to the priorities of the managerial plan and having regard for general and specific legislation
- To manage the decision making act through assuming responsibility or delegating responsibilities within the school working groups
- To select the human resources in accordance with the school specifics
- → financial and material resources
- → human resources

#### **VII. Competences which aims at institutional development**

- To analyse the educational context in which the school works in order to project an adequate strategy of institutional development
- To project the strategy of institutional development
- To promote the national and European values in education through programmes and partnerships
- → institutional frame
- → projects, programmes, partnerships

#### **VIII. Competences which aim at self-management**

- To evaluate his/her own activity with the object of raising the quality of the managerial activities
- To select his/her own training direction in order to develop his/her career in accordance with personal aspirations and with the institution specifics
- → managerial career

#### **Attractiveness of school leadership**

Appointment in a management position is based on an educational management contract and is accomplished by the following authorities (acting as employers):

- The General School Inspector for the deputy heads in all educational institutions;

- The General School Inspector for the heads of kindergartens, primary and lower secondary level schools, as well as VET schools;
- The Minister of Education, Research and Innovation for the heads of high schools and postsecondary non-tertiary education institutions.

As a general rule, the heads and deputy heads are appointed for a four-year term of office. The conditions of service are established within the Teaching Staff Statute, the Regulation for Organisation and Functioning of Pre-University Education Institutions (Ministerial Order 4925/2005), as well as within the job-description elaborated by the Ministry. The job description signed by the two parts – employer and employee – becomes an annex of the individual educational management contract (labour contract).

The heads and deputy heads of schools have reduced teaching norms – as established within the job description and based on the methodological norms elaborated by the Ministry. The management personnel can be paid for supplementary teaching hours – in the limit of 4 to 6 hours per week. The working time is of 40 hours per week, including teaching hours. The heads and deputy heads manage their time such as to accomplish all their duties set by legislation.

The basic salaries of heads and deputy heads of schools are established according to their teaching positions. A management indemnity established within the following ranges is added to the basic salary:

- 15-25% for kindergarten and primary school teachers appointed as heads;
- 20-25% for teachers appointed as deputy heads;
- 25-35% for teachers appointed as heads.

The exact management indemnity depends on various factors (number of pupils, canteen and boarding facilities, etc.) and on the managerial performances – as established by the Ministry. The management indemnity may be revised annually based on the managerial performances as evidenced through the annual individual evaluation. The heads and deputy heads of school may also benefit of the following salary

supplements and incentives: indemnity for isolated area, indemnity for special education and orphanages, "merit grade", "merit salary", doctoral supplement, "stability" supplement, "neurological-mental over-challenge" supplement, mentor-related activities supplement.

Teachers appointed in management positions benefit of teaching post reservation – meaning that upon finishing their term of office they can return to the previously held teaching position. At the same time, upon finishing the term of office, they can compete again for the same or another management position.

The individual professional performances of the heads and deputy heads are evaluated annually by the General School Inspector. The evaluation is similar to the one undertaken by the teachers except that it is focused on the managerial duties established within the job-description.

Considering the fact that for all the management positions in pre-university education there are appointed teachers for a limited period of time, all the general provisions of the legislation concerning condition of service of teachers apply accordingly.

### **National structures of pre-service, induction and in-service education of school leaders**

Based on various surveys, studies and assessments performed by national and international bodies, the Ministry has established a national strategy regarding improvement of education and training for teachers. The "Strategy for development of the initial and in-service training system for teachers and managers in pre-university education" establishes objectives and reform measures aligned to the commonly agreed priorities in this area at the European level (more specifically "Education & Training 2010" programme).

The Strategy proposes the following major objectives:

- Improving the professional dimension of the teaching career in Romania;
- Reconsideration of the ratio between the theoretical and the practical parts of the curriculum for teachers' training through

extension of the initial training route up to the "on-the-job-confirmation exam";

- Development of an "educational market for in-service teachers' training programmes" based on loyal competition, and enabling the teaching staff to benefit of a more diverse offer from the in-service training providers;
- Correlation of the structure and moments in the teaching career with the educational standards and ensuring professional dynamism through using a system of transferable professional credits;
- Development of modern institutional structures in order to optimise the in-service teachers' training activities: the National Centre for In-service Training of the Pre-university Education Staff (CNFP).

### **Coaching and other forms of support**

The in-service training is a right of the teachers in the pre-university education.

At the same time, the Teaching Staff Statute (Law 128/1997) states that the teachers in pre-university education participate to in-service training programmes at least once every five years or whenever they are recommended by the administration council of the school or by the County School Inspectorate.

The condition is considered fulfilled by the teachers who obtained "on-the-job-confirmation exam" or any of the didactic degrees. This period of time can be diminished and thus leaders at various levels may receive support and counselling:

- When there are essential curricular changes;
- When there are introduced new methods or technologies of training and assessment;
- When they are appointed as school leaders without an attested training in the field of educational management;
- When the school administration council or the County School Inspectorate ask it if they notice lacks in a certain leader's academic, methodological and psycho-pedagogical training;
- When the leader himself/herself requests it on the teachers' council recommendation.

A school leader can ask for support, assistance and counselling in two places: Casa Corpului

Didactic and the department of management within the County School Inspectorate:

- At the Casa Corpului Didactic when we speak about managerial projecting, elaborating strategies, educational offer;
- At the County School Inspectorate when we speak about legal documents, ministry methodology – everything that means rules and law.

## 5. To sum up: challenges, areas of innovation and underlying evidence

Decentralisation of administration and financing system for the pre-university education has been a major objective since the promulgation of the Education Law (Law 84/1995). Government Ordinance 32/2001 (amendments in 2001 and 2002), Government Decision 538/2001 (amended through Government Decision 174/2003) as well as the Law 195/2006 have contributed essentially to the decentralisation of the financing system, leading to a more decentralised allocation of funds and execution of budgets through local public authorities. The local councils received essential attributions regarding the projection and execution of budgets, including the task of ensuring from their own funds the current materials costs, subventions for boarding and schools canteens, for investments and major repairs. As a result of the modification of the Education Law, by the Laws 713/2001 and 529/2002, the public domain property of the communes, towns and counties over the public schools has been established.

In parallel with legislative efforts, a series of studies regarding administration and financing of public education have been elaborated by the National Council for Financing Public Pre-University Education and experts of the World Bank. These studies form the basis for the proposed reforms on administration and financing of pre-university education, included in the Law 195/2006. The most important reforms are intended:

- to increase the decision competences of local councils (town, commune);
- to increase decision competences of the schools' heads;
- to promote quality in school management;
- to institute flexible didactic curricula;
- to assess the teachers according to performance criteria;
- to promote quality;
- to have an external evaluation done by an autonomous assessment agency (ARACIP).

Following the substantial progress of the Enlargement Process of the European Union, the Task Force Education and Youth/Enhanced Graz Process has together with Senior Officials from the SEE proposed an initiative aimed at supporting education reform in the region, taking into account both country-specific needs and demands in education reform as well as present trends in the development of the envisaged European Area of Education. The ERI SEE is seen as an interface between ongoing SEE education reform at the national level and the European trends in order to achieve common European standards in education – i.e. the "Education & Training 2010" programme, the "Copenhagen Declaration" and the "Bologna Process". The development and amelioration of leadership in our country will have the following priorities:

- Adjustment and review of existing national legal frameworks in line with ongoing European developments and national reform priorities;
- Decentralisation of education management and administration, with a focus on quality enhancement and accountability;
- Development of education management information systems and quality assurance mechanisms;
- Ensuring access to, and effective use of ICT;
- Development of opportunities for lifelong learning as a key means to stimulate economic regeneration in the region.

The participation to the European Union action programmes in the field of education and training proves Romania's institutional capacity to run the European Union projects. At the same time, the corresponding activities ensure:

- Harmonisation of the Romanian education system with European systems concerning curricular objectives, contents and teaching methods;
- Creation of an evaluation system, compatible to the European standards;
- Information of decision-makers concerning the education in the European Union Member States and elaboration of studies and comparative analyses.

From our point of view, the values that must be developed in the next decade are: social responsibility, trust, integrity, honesty, professionalism, performance, social intelligence, courage of civic action, creativity, personal commitment, sensibility to problems and situations, sense of team, pro-activity.

If the values are the ones mentioned above, the school life and leadership in education will definitely be better.

## Appendix

### Legal situation / Institutions

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010174, Bucuresti
- Tel: (+40) (021) 315 50 99  
Fax: (+40) (021) 315 50 99
- www.edu.ro
  
- Institute for Education Sciences, Str. Stirbei  
Voda nr. 37, Sector 1, 010102, Bucuresti
- Tel: (+40) (021) 313 64 91  
Fax: (+40) (021) 312 14 47
- E-mail: info@ise.ro  
www.ise.ro
  
- National Agency for Community Programmes  
in the Field of Education and Training, Calea  
Şerban Vodă, Nr. 133, Sector 4, 040205  
Bucureşti
- Tel: (+40) (021) 201 07 00  
Fax: (+40) (021) 312 16 82
- E-mail: agentie@anpcdefp.ro  
www.anpcdefp.ro
  
- National Assessment and Examination Service,  
Str. General Berthelot nr. 26, Sector 1, 010174,  
Bucuresti
- Tel: (+40) (021) 314 44 11  
Fax: (+40) (021) 310 32 07
- E-mail: astoica@snee.ro  
www.edu.ro/snee.htm
  
- National Centre for Training of Pre-university  
Education Staff, Str. Spiru Haret nr. 10-12,  
Sector 1, Bucuresti
- Tel: (+40) (021) 311 10 83  
Fax: (+40) (021) 315 28 80
- www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/8065
  
- National Commission for Evaluation and  
Accreditation of Pre-university Education, Str.  
General Berthelot nr. 28-30, Sector 1, 010174,  
Bucuresti
- Tel: (+40) (021) 310 43 20  
Fax: (+40) (021) 314 26 80
- www.edu.ro/index.php/articles/c642/
  
- National Council for Curriculum, Str. Stirbei  
Voda nr. 37, Sector 1, 010102, Bucuresti
- Tel: (+40) (021) 313 64 91  
Fax: (+40) (021) 312 14 47
- E-mail: info@ise.ro
- www.cnc.ise.ro
  
- Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-  
University Education, Str. Spiru Haret Nr. 12,  
Sector 1, Bucureşti
- Tel: (+40) (021) 310 42 13  
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- UNESCO-CEPES, Str. Stirbei Voda nr. 39, Sector  
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- www.cepes.ro

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