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*Stocktaking on quality assurance
in education and EDC*

Country report : Romania

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1. Current interest in the quality of education, EDC and QA in Romania

1.1. Education Policy Level

The reforms carried out in the past 10 years in Romania have had the **implicit objective** of enhancing quality in education. The major changes introduced to the education system (structure, curriculum, evaluation, teacher training etc.) were aimed at making the passage from a predominantly academic and traditional type of education to one better adapted to the new social requirements, more flexible, and focused on developing competencies. Furthermore, a number of selective measures were taken to raise the quality of education in some areas considered deficient in this respect, such as education in rural areas or initial vocational training, and for which programmes were expressly carried out in the '90s.

The *Conference of the ministers of education in European countries*, held in Bucharest in June 2000, prioritised the creation of a policy for quality in education. On this occasion, the Minister of Education of Romania declared quality in education to be a crucial element for achieving social cohesion, and proposed an analysis of several quality indicators for the education system.

In 2002 the Minister of Education **declared an explicit interest** in enhancing quality in education in a strategic document¹ on the development of pre-university education over the period 2001-2004. This document was updated as a result of an invitation from the European Commission, addressed to candidate states, to reach the common goals involved in developing education systems and vocational training. The strategy is based on four priority objectives, one of these being *higher quality of education*. However, the reasons for declaring quality in education in Romania a priority goal for the near future are more of an external nature, determined by development trends in education at European level. The document includes no analysis of internal development needs in the Romanian education system which would provide an explanation for the declared priorities.

According to the Ministry of Education, quality in education will be achieved by implementing a programme on *quality assurance in teaching and learning processes as well as educational services*. For instance, the main components of a programme for the implementation of a quality assurance system are: revision of the national curriculum, improving evaluation and examination of school performance, institutional development by promoting internal and external institutional audits, the continuing training of teaching staff, management training, the development of scientific research in education, etc.

Although the interest declared in the implementation of a quality system ranks high in educational policies for the period till 2010, so far no coherent vision has taken shape. Some of the measures stipulated in the strategy may be considered to be elements of a quality assurance system in education. Others, though, are not relevant for this topic, while others still refer explicitly to **quality control** in education rather than to quality assurance.

Also, in this strategic document there is no **explicit definition** of the concept of quality in education and consequently the reader is offered no clear understanding. The measures intended to enhance quality in education are described in juxtaposition, with no mention of their interdependence within a unified system. It is not possible therefore to identify the degree of priority of the respective measures in terms of operational support for the implementation of a system of quality assurance in education. The role of schools and players

¹ *Development Strategy for Preuniversity Education in the period 2001-2004 – updated in 2002. Prospective planning until 2010*, Ministry of Education and Research, 2002.

in the education system (teachers, pupils, parents, local authorities, etc.) is scarcely discussed, with most of the outlined measures referring to the activity of central or specialised bodies: departments of the Ministry of Education, school inspectorates, the National Council for Curriculum, the National Commission for Evaluation and Examination, etc.

Although education for democratic citizenship has also been declared a priority, this dimension falls into the category of another major reform trend focused on the development of key competencies in the education system. From an educational policy perspective, there are no references to the **relationship between quality in education and education for democratic citizenship**.

From an institutional perspective, so far in Romania **there is no national institution for evaluation**, responsible exclusively for assurance of quality in education. There are, however, a number of bodies accountable for quality assurance amongst other responsibilities. (See chapters 3, 5 and 6). Existing institutions are responsible for institutional evaluation, with quality assurance as an implicit component of evaluation processes. Institutional development policies are focused on extending quality assurance responsibilities to already existing institutions subordinate to the Ministry but there is no explicit proposal to set up an independent specialised body for this purpose.

Prepared in 2001 and revised in 2002, the strategic document of the Ministry of Education has so far only been **partially implemented**. The reasons for the delay are, firstly, the recent date of the document and the complex nature of several aspects of quality assurance measures in education. Secondly, other priorities, especially those related to the extension of compulsory education from 8 to 10 years, have been the hub of Ministry activities lately. Apart from efforts to revise the system of evaluation and examination of pupils' school results and to set teaching standards for teachers, there has been no noticeable progress in terms of quality assurance in education, in the light of the objectives proposed.

Moreover, according to the opinions of experts in education and policy analysis interviewed in the last years², some **decentralisation measures seem to be weakening**, namely those related to school autonomy and the role of school inspection in assuring quality in education. For instance, the school-based curriculum has dwindled and the system of school inspections³ (RODIS), initially designed as a system of quality assurance, is now threatened by bureaucracy, having been assimilated in many cases into the traditional, control-type of inspection. The underpinning reasons for this situation lies first of all with school players (teachers, head teachers) and their adverse reactions to the complete school inspection model based on certain quality criteria and indicators.

These reactions were due to insufficient information and training in this area. Also, a great number of the inspectors who attended training courses designed to apply the RODIS system have been relieved of their functions, so the experience thus gained has been largely wasted.

1.2. Level of specialists

Until now, there has been no perceptible scientific interest in the issue of quality assurance in education. Theoretical reflections and research work in this direction are relatively scarce,

² *Evaluation of education reform impact*, Institute of Education Sciences, 2001.

³ Approved by OMER no. 4682/1998 on Regulations for the Organisation and Deployment of School Inspections (RODIS).

mainly because of the lack of specialists. This has therefore had a limited impact at the level of educational policies.

Scientific work⁴ concerned with issues related to quality assurance in education generally remains at a theoretical-explanatory level (defining concepts, designing theoretical models etc.). A more pragmatic approach is to be found in works dealing with concrete aspects of quality assurance in the various components of the education system (e.g. evaluation standards, occupational standards of the teaching profession⁵).

Since the '90s, **faculties of education sciences** have included in the **Master Program** curriculum specialised courses on the evaluation of educational curricula and total quality management systems applied to education, for the purpose of training specialists in this field. As for **research**, beginning with 2003 the Institute for Educational Sciences will be carrying out a research project on quality in education.

1.3.School and civil society level

Apart from a few isolated initiatives there has been little coherent interest, within schools and teaching staff, in a system of quality assurance. Financial, material and human resources training constraints, especially in rural schools, as well as the lack of information and training in education quality, focuses the priorities of institutional development in areas other than quality assurance.

Some schools and NGOs (e.g. Romanian Association for Quality of Linguistic Services – QUEST, National Association of Trainers in Educational Management in Romania – ANFMER) are interested in defining standards of institutional evaluation with a view to assuring quality. The models of self-evaluation and peer evaluation were seen as complementary to inspection-type external evaluation. Recently, small groups of specialists and teachers with an interest in the field established training and informal consultation networks.

Schools and civil society organisations have been showing more interest in education for democratic citizenship. The European programmes *Socrates*, *Youth* or *Leonardo da Vinci* have proved to be a real opportunity for schools in Romania to develop educational policies in the area of education for democratic citizenship. Some of the NGOs that have carried out sustained activities in this respect are: *Timisoara Intercultural Institute*, *Foundation for an Open Society*, *Centre for Education 2000+*, *Foundation for Civil Society Development*, *Romanian Centre for Human Education and Development*, *Romanian Academic Society* etc.

In the near future we expect to see a heightened interest on the part of schools and other organisations in EDC, especially since the Minister of Education and Research launched the National Programme of Education for Democratic Citizenship (February 2003). The Programme is focused on the acquisition, development and practice of the democratic social-civic skills required for young people to participate actively in community life. The programme aims at drawing up an EDC curriculum for formal education (for each cycle of

⁴ Lisievici, P. *Quality of education: concept outline, evaluation and development*. Bucharest, Didactic and Pedagogic Publishing House, 1997.

⁵ Gliga, L. (coord.). *Professional standards for the teaching profession*. Bucharest: Ministry of Education and Research 2002.

education) and non-formal education (children's palaces and clubs), as well as at diversifying the range of out-of-school projects specialising in education for democratic citizenship.

2. Empowerment and devolved responsibility

The decentralisation of the school system has been one of the most hotly debated issues of the past few years, having been raised in terms of both concept and norm by the most important players in the education system. Nonetheless, the reform process has taken hardly any steps in delegating decision-making to schools and in establishing the provision of education based on the educational needs and demands expressed by the community. Various analyses of an evaluation nature⁶ indicate that so far we have witnessed more of a de-concentration (delegation of decision-making to hierarchically lower levels – school inspectorates and schools themselves) and less a decentralisation – which involves a strong community component. If we analyse the various aspects of decentralisation (human resources, curriculum, financial resources, etc.) we can see that the link with local community needs is still weak, while aspects of real decentralisation sometimes have negative effects as they are opposed by interest groups.

The level of school autonomy depends on the various components of the education system. For instance, at the **curricular level**, the implementation of the new national curriculum at all levels of pre-university education introduced the school-based curriculum. This could take a share of up to 30% of the school curriculum and parents, pupils and other community partners were party to its design. Since the school year 2001/2002, the share it has held has diminished considerably, indicating the school's decreasing autonomy in this respect. Schools have more autonomy in the **choice of alternative schoolbooks**, establishing the **syllabus** and **teaching methods**.

There was also a **human resources management** initiative to delegate authority to the school. This experiment, applied for a short while in "representative schools", gave the school autonomy over the selection and recruitment of its teaching staff. The project was discontinued, and county school inspectorates are now in charge of recruiting teachers and head teachers. As for the continuing training of teaching staff and school autonomy in selecting training/consulting services, schools first analyse their needs then may forward their requests for selective needs-related training programmes to school inspectorates (see chapter 3).

In terms of **financial management**, starting with the school year 2001/2002 the Ministry of Public Finances and the Minister of Public Administration together with the Minister of Education initiated a major process of financial decentralisation⁷. This process of decentralisation does not involve a transfer of decision-making power from national to regional/local level. It is meant only to reduce the budget for education at national level. Without the benefit of any previous pilot-project, compulsory education schools have become the responsibility of more than 10,000 cities and towns.

⁶ See *Analysis of national policies in education: Romania*, Paris: OECD, 2000; *Impact of education reform*, Bucharest: Institute of Educational Sciences, 2001.

⁷ Financial decentralisation is stipulated in the *Emergency Ordinance of February 2001* and the *Methodological norms for financing pre-university education*, adopted by representatives of MER, MPA and MPF on 7th June 2001.

County school inspectorates continue to draw up employment contracts, and recruit and dismiss teaching staff, while the ministry continues to issue educational policies, ensure quality, establish enrolment figures, the continuing training needs of teaching staff, etc. Local administration is currently responsible for the infrastructure, teaching staff salaries, covering the costs of schoolbooks and teaching aids. The major expenses of education (salaries and other rights of teaching staff, schoolbooks, scholarships) are covered from local VAT incomes (which would otherwise have to be remitted to the state budget). This ultimately means that these expenses are still financed from the centre. The outcome of this is that two separate authority channels, financial and educational, are operating at the same time.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education continues to support pre-university education units (providing IT equipment, rehabilitating school buildings, providing assistance to rural schools, school transport for pupils). It should be mentioned that the Ministry of Education is also in charge of providing a school kit (books and stationery) to pupils who come from low-income families. Next year the responsibility for other activities presently covered from the state budget (e.g. a morning snack for all primary school children), will be transferred to local administrations.

Currently, in addition to being financed from the central state budget and complementary financing (from local public administration budgets) schools may also make use of income derived from extra-budgetary school activities such as: renting out space, selling products, taxes levied for examinations and diplomas, etc. This is permitted on condition that the funds are used to finance activities approved (by the Local Council) for the school budget.

Currently in Romania there is an ongoing project financed by the DFID, which has drawn up a set of standards of financing to be piloted in 10 counties. The system allows financial management autonomy at school level but the Ministry has not yet approved the special legislation that would allow the pilot system to be put in place. The project is due to end in 2005.

At present, the schools that are part of the network run by the Ministry of Education are free to take part in any initiative – as long as they do not exceed the approved (human and financial) resources and observe current legislation. In practice, schools take part in any initiative agreed with the Inspectorate or Ministry but prior approval is absolutely necessary. There are also schools that have set up and implemented their own development strategy, with the prior support of NGOs in education or with financing as part of European programmes (Leonardo, Socrates). A key condition for success, declare the representatives of these schools, is to create a participatory management style and encourage local key players to be more active/responsible.

Decision-making structures in schools are represented by the **head teacher**, a **board of administration** (including, besides the head teacher, teaching staff, representatives of the finance-accounting pupils and parents) and the **parents' committee**. Staff meetings take place regularly but the issues under debate are usually purely administrative.

The boards of administration in vocational and high school education have established partnerships with County Employment Agencies, employers' associations and other social partners. The activity of VET schools also has the support of a network of **Local Committees for the Development of Social Partnership in Vocational Training**, involved in setting vocational training standards, the curriculum and keeping them in pace with labour market demand.

Only a percentage of the teaching staff is in favour of assuming collective responsibility. As a rule, teaching staff favour individual responsibility and individual evaluation. As there are no

regulations or official documents stipulating teachers' contribution to school planning, this takes the form of volunteering and goodwill and is often perceived as an additional burden. In many cases, it is the head teacher and the members of the Board of Administration who draw up the planning documents which they then proceed to present to the other teachers. Since not all teachers take part in drawing up school plans and strategies they will of course be unlikely to assume any responsibility.

3. Training and consultancy support for schools

The bodies responsible for continuing training of teaching staff in Romania are:

- **Ministry of Education, Research and Youth** – General Directorate for Continuing Education, Training and Further Training of Teaching Staff – responsible for drawing up policies and strategies for continuing vocational training for teaching staff and co-ordinating the public training system: territorially, **County School Inspectorates** assume these responsibilities and will establish training needs through the organisation of training evaluation of teaching staff performance;
- **The National Centre for Training Teaching Staff in Pre-University Education**, an institution subordinate to MERY with specific responsibilities and accountabilities in developing a training system for teaching staff and accrediting public or private training providers;
- **Teachers' Centres** – institutions responsible for organising training courses for teaching staff at county level.

The main legislation that regulates the system of training and further training for teaching staff in Romania is:

- *Law of education no. 84/1995* – an outline law stipulating the right of teaching staff to continuing training, specifying which institutions are responsible and what their responsibilities are in this area;
- *Teaching Staff status* – an outline law on teachers' activities within the education system which specifies the system of initial and further training of teaching staff, their rights and responsibilities, sanctions and rewards for teaching activities, etc.

According to these regulations the teaching staff must attend, within a 5-year interval of time, **training programmes financed from public funds**, totalling approximately 100 hours. The Ministry of Education may decide, based on consultations with county school inspectorates, to modify the length of these programmes when essential changes occur in the education system. Such programmes have of late been a regular component of reform measures in the education system: curricular reform, VET reform, changes in the system of evaluation, etc.

Also according to the law, training courses may be organised at the request of schools or the county school inspectorate, when specific needs demand it or even at the request of teachers themselves, with the recommendation of the school board. Individual requests are quite rare; usually training needs are set at county or country level and are based more on the rationale of intended changes than on the concrete needs that teachers are presently confronted with. This situation is partly due to insufficient awareness on the part of teachers of their own training needs. Sometimes, the interest of teaching staff in training courses is closely linked to the compulsory number of hours required to obtain teaching grades. On the other hand, the system of institutions authorised to meet these demands remains sluggish and bureaucratic.

The route from a specific training request a school makes to the actual organisation of the training course can sometimes prove quite taxing. For instance, a teacher who asks to attend a training course on a given topic will have to take the following **steps**:

- Hand in an application to the school board of administration;
- Forward the application to the county school inspectorate if the request is considered justified;
- The county school inspectorate analyses the application and sends it on to the Teachers' Centre with a view to running the required course;
- Potential training providers of this particular type of course are identified. To actually hold the course, the instruction proposed by the training provider for the selected theme must be accredited, and there must be enough teachers wanting to attend the course;
- The planned course must be sent to the CNFPPD to be accredited if the training provider does not already have an accredited course of study;
- In order to include the course in the 40 hours of regular compulsory training the topic of the course must rank among the ME training priorities.

We can therefore draw the conclusion that the reaction of the training system to specific requests on the part of schools and teaching staff remains slow. Responsibilities of several ministries overlap (Minister, CNFDP, school inspectorate, TTC, other training providers) making such actions even more bureaucratic. Also, the responsibilities of this hierarchical network fall more into the category of co-ordination, control, organisation and provision of training programmes and less into that of counselling, development of skills related to self-identification of specific needs, planning individual professional development or school development.

Other forms of continuing training for teaching staff include **methodology-scientific and psycho-pedagogy activities**, organised at school or school-group level (methodology commissions, pedagogy chairs and clubs, symposia, meetings). Organised on a regular basis, they also provide an appropriate setting for dialogue on specific issues that teachers are confronted with in their daily activities and can serve to permit the exchange of positive experiences.

The major providers of training courses for teaching staff are universities and the teacher training departments of universities; Teachers' Training Centres; pedagogy colleges, other centres, specialised institutions and organisations.

The training programmes that accompanied the main measures taken to reform the education system and which had the support of international and European bodies (World Bank, European Union: Phare, Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci Programmes, etc.) were addressed **to teachers and managers as well as trainers**. They included aspects of quality assurance in education: curricular standards, civic education, modern methodologies of education, class management, planning and evaluation in education, etc. The courses held as part of the component "Management and financing", funded by the World Bank between 1997-2000 were addressed exclusively to managers (school managers, school inspectors, trainers of managers). They focused on issues such as: democratisation of school management, school leadership, financial decentralisation, school-community relationships, implementation of the new system of school inspection.

Some of these programmes had a real impact on teaching activity. The setting up of a network of national trainers, who had initially been schoolteachers and head teachers, played a major role in extending training activities at local level. The courses were only held for a small number of managers and teachers, but aimed to encourage a wider interest in these issues throughout the entire system.

Alongside public providers there emerged a market of **private providers** of fee-based training courses for teaching staff. These courses do not yet cover a wide range of training content; nevertheless they complement the public system. The courses they provide are better adapted to specific needs. The topics dealt with include aspects of education for democratic citizenship and quality assurance in education. Teachers' access to these courses is, however, limited by financial constraints. These training courses are recognised to the extent that the training programmes are accredited.

Recent efforts made to revise the initial and further training system for teaching staff have been summarised in a policy document drawn up by the Ministry of Education and Research: *Development strategy for the system of initial and continuing training of teaching staff and managers in pre-university education*. The goals proposed by this document allow for the implementation of a system of quality assurance in education, even if such a specific objective is not explicitly stated as a priority. The proposals were as follows:

- raising the professional standard of the teaching career by designing a system of occupational standards based on teaching skills;
- changing the ratio between theory and practice in teacher training;
- developing an "educational market" of continuing training programmes;
- implementing a system of transferable credits in teacher training;
- developing adequate institutional structures to sustain the measures provided.

So far NCVT has designed standards for the initial and continuing training of teaching staff in pre-university education. These standards include some references to quality assurance in education.

4. School development planning

In the late '90s it became mandatory for all school units in pre-university education to draw up institutional development plans, beginning with the school year 1999/2000. To this end, the Ministry designed a structure which included: objectives, measures taken to reach the objectives, deadlines for the various activities, human resources, material and financial resources involved, budget forecast, responsibilities, risks and advantages of the project, performance indicators. It is the head teacher who is responsible for drawing up the plan, with the assistance of the school board and the teaching staff. The procedure begins with a self-evaluation of school performance, according to a number of indicators and within the specific context of the school. In addition to other components, school inspections evaluate the school development plan in terms of relevance, possibilities of reaching objectives, target scope, managerial concept, technical structure, relationship with the role and mission of the school in the community, clarity of the definition of responsibilities, allocation of resources etc. Also under analysis is the relationship between the objectives of the school development plan and indicators of the school's socio-economic context.

Training courses for school directors were held to help them draw up the above mentioned development plans. This training included only a percentage of current managers because many of those who attended the courses at the time no longer hold management positions.

After the school development plans had been implemented it gradually became obvious that most of them were being drawn up for purely administrative rather than managerial reasons. What mattered most was fulfilling legal responsibilities, not drawing up a specific school strategy/policy aimed at tailoring the education on offer to the needs identified. It should also be noted that the structure of the development plan abounds with quality indicators from a quantity perspective (graduation rate, dropout rate, results of examinations) and has few “added value” indicators, a prerequisite for the design of any quality assurance system. Until now, however, the structure of the school development plan has seen no change. Neither have any concrete steps been taken to organise school management according to the school development plan.

To make the development plan an efficient and viable instrument for the system of quality assurance we need first of all to have a training strategy for school managers. They must acquire the skills necessary for all the stages specific to this process: elaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. From this viewpoint, at national level we need to define a clear concept of quality in education based on “added value” indicators. We also need to identify, by consulting experts and by public debate, a number of indicators that must undergo the pilot-project phase, be validated and become official. These indicators will be included in a system of quality assurance and become landmarks for the process of evaluation at system level.

5. National/international benchmarks and assessment process

In 1998 the National Service for Evaluation and Examination (NSEE) was established as an institution specialising in educational evaluation. NSEE is responsible for designing and implementing the new system of educational evaluation (current evaluation and national examinations) and lifelong training of teachers in the area of evaluation and examination.

In the Romanian education system, pupils’ school performance is evaluated by the following methods, in accordance with curricular standards of performance/competencies included in curricula:

- Current evaluations of pupils – based on tests developed by teaching staff or the National Service for Evaluation and Examination (NSEE);
- National evaluation at the completion of the primary cycle of education – based on sets of tests developed by NSEE;
- National examinations at the end of compulsory education (Capacity Examination) and at the end of high school education (Baccalaureate examination) – consisting of sets of tests developed by NSEE.

So far, NSEE has designed a system of performance indicators for the purpose of formative evaluation in the primary cycle and a system of criteria for grading in lower and higher secondary education.

NSEE is **currently developing a system of evaluation standards** for nation-wide use. The standards are to be validated following workgroup debates and testing. They will then be published in the official documents for each curricular area and distributed to schools. Stages of information and training will be held for teachers.

Evaluation standards will be defined according to the levels of performance expectations (minimum, average and high performance). The first step will be to define evaluation standards for the end of high school education with a view to evaluation by Baccalaureate examination. Next in line will be the setting of evaluation standards for all school subjects that are part of compulsory education at all levels of pre-university education (primary, lower secondary and higher secondary education). These standards will represent reference points for the current evaluation.

No national evaluation standards will be set for the **school-based curriculum** because of the wide range of school subjects proposed by schools and the fact that these subjects are not tested at national evaluations.

Civic Education/Culture are not the object of national evaluations; the evaluation standards in this case will be used in the daily teaching activities, namely formative evaluations. Since 1999 Romania has taken part in the IEA – Study on Civic Education which has evaluated knowledge, attitudes and values specific to EDC.

The national examinations and evaluations designed and managed by NSEE are followed by **reports**, which give immediate information on the results. The information is meant for various target groups: decision-makers, research institutes, schools, the public at large, etc. The results are also centralised at national level, and give public access to the data. At local level lists of schools are published in hierarchical order of the results of national examinations and evaluations.

6. Role of school inspectorates

As already mentioned, **there is no national institution for evaluation** in Romania responsible exclusively for assurance of quality in education. However there are a number of institutions with responsibilities for quality assurance, as presented below.

1. The **National Commission for Evaluation and Accreditation of Pre-university Education** is one of the national bodies in charge of institutional evaluation. It was established in 1998 by Government Ordinance no. 87 (Law 196/1999 for the passing of Government Ordinance no. 87/1999). The institution is quasi-independent and is directly subordinate to the minister of education. Its main responsibilities are to:

- Set and regularly update national criteria and standards of evaluation and accreditation specific for each stage of the process of evaluation and accreditation;
- Ensure methodological control to verify whether national standards are observed;
- Analyse evaluation reports for the purpose of granting the trust licensing authorisation or for accrediting education units and to propose that the minister grant reliability authorisation or accreditation;
- Monitor the observance of national standards by education units that already have reliability authorisations or accreditations;
- Propose to the minister of education the withdrawal of the reliability authorisation or accreditation of schools that do not observe national standards.

County Commissions for Evaluation and Accreditation in Pre-university Education are subordinate to NCEAPE. NCEAPE and CCEAPE were set up for the purpose of evaluating and accrediting all units of pre-university education. Kindergartens, primary, lower secondary schools, vocational and apprenticeship schools are the responsibility of CCEAPE while high

schools and post secondary schools are covered by NCEAPE. So far, however, owing to the wide scope of the process (the large number of education units) the reduced capacity of the commission, as well as the high costs that such a process entails, the role of the Commission has been limited to the evaluation of private pre-university education units. The law stipulates that the evaluation process takes place in two stages: trust licensing, which gives the respective education unit provisional rights to organisation, and operation, including final examinations and issuing degrees recognised by the Ministry of Education Research and Youth. Until now, however, the activity of NCEAPE has been limited to the first stage.

The evaluation performed by NCEAPE/CCPEAPE is based on national standards for the evaluation of pre-university education, which includes quality indicators – standards for obtaining the trust licensing – drawn up by the Commission and approved by GD no. 127/2000. The components evaluated according to national standards (quality standards in the ISO 9000 category) are as follows: human resources and the quality of their activity, infrastructure, material and financial resources, curriculum, internal and external efficiency of the respective education unit, school ethos, school-local community relationships and relationships with other partners. Since the curriculum is one of these components, the evaluation implicitly covers EDC.

NCEAPE experts – teaching staff, head teachers and school inspectors - now have 5 years of experience in this area and have generally acquired evaluation skills. Consequently, there is a positive perception of the activity of NCEAPE and the role it plays in quality assurance. It is necessary, nonetheless, to extend the area of activity to public, not just to private institutions – as stipulated by the regulations in the field, in order to make an objective evaluation of the state of the entire system of pre-university education as well as to revise/update evaluation standards according to recent evolutions in the field and quality assurance in education. To this end, as well as for the purpose of enhancing the quality of NCEAPE activities, it is necessary to develop the aforementioned institutions and the components of the Commission, to accelerate the pace of its activities, and to attract new members, preferably from the area of research for education evaluation.

On a yearly basis, NCEAPE publishes a report on the activity of the Commission, the results of the evaluation of education units by various components, examples of good practice in evaluated schools, etc. It also regularly publishes in the Official Monitor the list of education units that have received trust licensing.

2. Another institution that plays a similar role and which is in charge of evaluating higher education is the **National Council for Academic Evaluation and Accreditation**, set up by Law no. 88/1993. NCAEA, which includes academic teaching staff, is directly subordinate to the Parliament of Romania. The activity of NCAEA, which covers both public and private higher education, has also been carried out in two stages. Evaluation for provisional operation authorisation gives the respective education unit the right to organise admission examinations and to carry out the process of education. Evaluation for accreditation gives the institution the right to organise licence, degree or graduation examinations, or to issue degrees recognised by the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth. Evaluation standards differ between the two stages of the evaluation process. NCAEA makes known to the public the list of faculties, colleges and specialisations that have not been accredited. Specialists in the field and the public, in general, consider this institution reliable and appreciate the competencies of the experts and the activities carried out by the members of the Commission.

3. Between 1999 and 2000, the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth included a fully operational Institutional Evaluation Committee for state pre-university education units. The

Commission was made up of representatives of the Ministry of Education, the National Commission for Evaluation and Accreditation of Pre-university Education, school inspectors, and researchers in education evaluation. The evaluation standards for schools, which the Commission issued (and revised from one year to the next), were focused on the following components: human resources in schools, the quality of their activity and the competencies involved (including new basic skills – foreign languages, IT), infrastructure and material resources, pupils' results in the course of the school year and at final examinations, etc. The purpose of the evaluation made by the Commission was to rank education units according to the score gained from various previously established performance criteria and to select „representative” education units. These education units and teachers were granted several benefits and powers: a salary rise for teaching staff, the ability to select and recruit additional teaching staff without involving the school inspectorate (one way of delegating responsibilities to schools – which was subsequently dropped) etc.

In 2001 a General Directorate for Evaluation, Forecast and Development was set up within the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth. It includes a department for institutional evaluation. Its objectives are to draw up the policy and strategy for institutional evaluation and the ranking of school units according to the model: basic units, representative units, national colleges and centres of excellence. Their remit also includes the implementation of an IT system for institutional evaluation; multi-criteria analysis of institutional evaluation; the training of evaluators. In 2003, the staff of the institutional evaluation department, in co-operation with school inspectors from County School Inspectorates and experts in the field, designed an Evaluation Form for units within the pre-university education sector, which consists of a new system of institutional evaluation standards and indicators. The new tools include: evaluation criteria for material and financial resources, human resources (beneficiaries of education as well as teaching staff, auxiliary staff and non-teaching staff), criteria for evaluating school management and development perspectives, plus criteria for evaluating school-community relationships. The new model of institutional evaluation is not yet operational, however.

4. The Ministry of Education, Research and Youth has also taken other initiatives for the evaluation of the system of education:

- in 2002, it brought together a team of experts from the Ministry and the Institute of Educational Sciences. Their objective was to make the national indicators of education system evaluation, including those for the quality of education, compatible with the system of European indicators;
- in 2003, it set up a work group aimed at analysing the system of indicators relevant for the various objectives of European systems of education (one of which is the quality of education) and adapting them to the Romanian education system.

Worth mentioning in the same context is the initiative of having the Project for Education in Rural Areas, financed by the Government of Romania and the World Bank, include the component for Strengthening Monitoring, Evaluation and Policy-Making Capacity, with sub-components: Establishing the Set of National Education Indicators, Improving the National Education Data Base and Preparing a National Assessment of Basic Education. The activities to be carried out by this component will be completed by a **National Report on the Evaluation of the System of Education**. This report will contain quantitative as well as qualitative indicators, implicitly indicators for quality in education. In addition to regular updating the report will also include the results of final evaluations and international examinations TIMSS, PISA, PIRLS etc.).

5. County School Inspectorates play a major role in institutional evaluation. They have explicit responsibilities in terms of quality assurance in education and the observance of national standards by means of the school inspection. With reference to school inspections, in 1998, Order no. 4682 of the Minister of Education approved the Regulation for the organisation and deployment of school inspections (RODIS) and the Methodology for applying the Regulation for the organisation and deployment of school inspections (MARODIS). According to this Regulation, the school inspection aims to: support school units and teaching staff in improving their activities; assist in the evaluation of the quality of the education on offer and the pupils' performance level at national, county and local level by providing inspection reports to the authorities involved.

The school inspection must cover the following areas:

- the extent to which pupils reach educational standards;
- how the school supports and encourages the individual development of pupils;
- the quality of the teaching staff's work;
- the quality of school management and their efficiency in using the available resources;
- the quality of the curriculum, the quality of extra-curricular activities, and how the national and local curricula are applied;
- school-parent relationships;
- school-local community relationships;
- observance of the legislation and regulations in force;
- the pupils' attitudes to the actual delivery of education in schools.

The Regulation for organisation and deployment of school inspections also includes aspects related to quality assurance. For example, inspectors must carry out school inspections according to regulations; attend national and local training courses; monitor and evaluate inspections carried out by the County School Inspectorates; monitor and evaluate inspections carried out by the national body of inspectors.

Following the inspection procedure, the co-ordinating inspector must present a verbal report to the head teacher of the school, the department chairs, the members of the school board and the teachers whose activity has been under inspection. They must also forward a written report to the school in question. A summary of the report will also be handed out to parents and members of the school board. Copies of the full report must also be sent to the general inspector (head of school inspectorate), to county committees for education and to the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth.

The system of school inspections approved by OM, in the form of the Regulation for the organisation and deployment of school inspections, was initially designed as a system for quality assurance. As a result of unfavourable reactions within the system to whole-school inspections based on quality criteria and indicators, and also to the fact that the inspectors trained to apply the Regulation have been for the most part relieved of their functions, the above mentioned system of inspection has become bureaucratic. It has been assimilated into the traditional type of inspection, focused on control and on eliminating deficiencies. It has not been understood as a means of preventing the causes of deficiencies. In other words, the emphasis is placed more on quality control and less on quality assurance.

7. Curriculum and „quality” definitions

At national level the **National Council for the Curriculum** (NCC), established in 2000, is responsible for drawing up, developing, applying and revising the national curriculum. NCC continues the work carried out by Curriculum Component of the Reform Project in Pre-university Education, co-financed by the Government of Romania and the World Bank, during the period 1995-2000. The main **responsibilities** of NCC are to:

- design and draw up educational policies relating to the national curriculum;
- ensure scientific co-ordination in the creation and regular revision of national curriculum components (Courses of study, syllabi);
- provide the methodological support required for the efficient application and operation of the national curriculum;
- design and carry out training programmes designed to help staff use curriculum-related materials;
- provide consultancy in drawing up, applying and evaluating curricular materials designed locally.

To ensure the quality of the National Curriculum in the Romanian pre-university education system, NCC aims to develop a coherent system of internal and external evaluation in the form of regular external evaluations as part of international projects (TIMSS, OISA, etc.). They also aim to use the conclusions of on-going and final evaluations (national examinations and evaluations) to control the quality of the taught curriculum and to set up a system for ranking schools according to curricular performance.

In the case of compulsory education, a model of objectives-based curricular design was used to **draw up the national curriculum** while a skills-based model was used for high school education. The adopted **structure** of curricular design comprises a common core (compulsory curriculum) and a school-based curriculum. **School curricula** are drawn up by workgroups organised by school subject or curricular areas (including specialists and teaching staff), co-ordinated by NCC experts.

Within school curricula, **teaching staff** plan their time management individually, linking elements from the curriculum (objectives/skills, contents, learning activities) within the optimum time span of the school year. Teachers may also develop a specific curriculum for optional school subjects (school-based curriculum) which must be subsequently approved by county school inspectorates.

Curricular performance standards (learning standards) have been defined for the school curricula within compulsory education, at each level of education. The standards have been defined in the form of criteria for the evaluation of the quality of the learning process, indicating the extent to which pupils reach the objectives of each school subject and allowing a record of their progress from one stage of education to the next. In high school education, curricula have defined sets of **specific competencies** that play the same role as performance standards.

Evaluation standards are soon to be set on the basis of curricular standards, together with their performance indicators, namely grading criteria. Curricular standards also help guide teachers in planning their teaching activities (level of handling content elements, setting level of expectations for pupils' achievement, etc.).

The Ministry of Education, Research and Youth has set **no explicit objectives related to school performance standards**. *The strategy of MERY for the development of pre-university*

education during the period 2001-2004 does, however, mention the development of certain programmes ensuring basic education and training in the key skills relating to democratic citizenship, setting a number of objectives and concrete courses of action but no minimum performance standards.

The **formal curriculum** includes two specialised school subjects meant to convey knowledge and develop skills and values related to democratic citizenship:

- Civic education (grades II-IV), with a curriculum focused on the fundamental principles and values of democratic citizenship;
- Civic culture (grades VII-VIII), aimed at developing democratic citizenship skills.

As in all school subjects, school curricula include specific curricular standards. The new measures for the revision of the national curriculum (in view of the move to 10-year compulsory education) propose the introduction of these particular school subjects for all grades of compulsory education as well as the introduction of cross-curricular activities for grades II-IV. These contain elements of EDC. Other extra-curricular activities (focused on inter-ethnic education, education for tolerance, etc.) are aimed at EDC but have not set any quality standards or indicators.

8. Accountability

Law no. 544/12 October 2001 on free access to information of public interest officially regulates the conditions that all public institutions in Romania must observe, and stipulates provision of access to information. The laws in force promote institutional accountability but there are no legal provisions specific for education.

The main institution that regularly provides data on the entire education system is the National Institute for Statistics (NIS). The Ministry of Education also plays a major role in information provision; it draws up an annual report on the state of the education system. In addition, there are a number of institutions subordinate to the MER that provide information on the various levels of education (CNAA, CNAIP), or pupils' results at final examinations (SNEE).

However, the general public does not have access to all the information collected annually by the Ministry of Education. Some of the most important gaps are: certain statistics related to students (e.g. data on school attendance), some data related to teaching staff (e.g. teachers' standard number of classes, teaching staff functions), data on financing etc. The activity reports presented by school inspectorates do not include details related to the results of various school inspections carried out and do not provide individual information, comparisons between, or rankings of schools. Nonetheless, according to the provisions of the inspections regulations, RODIS, the process of school evaluation/inspection should be transparent. It is mandatory for the local community (the press included) to be informed of the results in accordance with the process of decentralisation of the education system. Consequently, there is still a noticeable gap between legal provisions and actual practice. The steps taken to make schools more accountable are still insufficient. The process was also hindered by the high fluctuation of inspectors as previously highlighted. Many of the newly appointed inspectors have had no appropriate training and are less, or not at all, familiar with the accountability requirements for the evaluation process. One significant example is that although, according to the inspection application methodology RODIS specifies, a copy of the inspection report (summary) must be given to parents, in fact this very seldom happens.

In the absence of adequate assistance, and due to excessive institutional subordination, schools are poorly prepared to meet the demands of an accountable public institution and to observe the legal provision on the access of citizens to information of public interest. The fact that head teachers and school boards do not understand that schools are accountable to the community leads to a lack of open and functional communication. At the same time, schools seldom bring up the topic of quality of performance when providing information to parents or the community. In concrete terms, schools usually make public knowledge of the results that pupils obtain at academic examinations and school contests. The results of ongoing evaluations during the school year are only disclosed to parents for a single class and no comparisons are made between same-grade classes in the same school, or between results achieved by pupils from different schools.

No penalties are applied to school managers who block the access of parents or citizens to information of public interest and there is no official regulation regarding classified information on education. The situation will improve when schools, inspectors and teaching staff become familiar with the mechanism and rigours of the process of accountability assurance and become better acquainted with the mechanisms of fulfilling the parents' or citizens' right to be informed.

The lack of school accountability means that there is no ranking according to quality criteria. This has a crucial effect on pupils, as they find it difficult to make decisions concerning any given school in the system. Civil society organisations and various teachers' unions have not so far managed to create the external mechanisms required to ensure accountability

According to the legislation in force, schools may be held accountable for the safety of children while at school, but not for the pupils' school performance. No legal action can be brought against a school for a pupil's poor performance. The same is true for other players' accountability (e.g. representatives of local authorities, representatives of school inspectorates or the Ministry).

9. The way forward

Taking into account the problems and issues presented above, the following steps must be taken to implement a system of quality assurance in education in Romania:

- **MAKE MORE IN-DEPTH RESEARCH AND DEVELOP THEORIES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE**
 - encourage players in the Romanian system of education to agree on a common definition of „quality in education”;
 - organise public debates, specialists' seminars, meetings with decision-makers on the implementation of the QA system in education and promote European practices in the field;
 - develop a set of QA indicators/standards together with an instrument for the evaluation of school performance and test both of these in pilot projects;
 - develop initial and continuing training programmes on QA in education (training stages, scholarships abroad, post-graduate training courses, etc.);
 - encourage players in the education system to take part in European QA projects (Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci, Youth, etc.).
- **Integrate Romanian initiatives on QA in education in a unified policy**

- raise the awareness of decision-makers concerning the importance of implementing a quality assurance system in education;
- adopt a *school based management* model and strengthen local partnership.
- develop methods to ease the difficulties encountered in applying the RODIS school inspection model (training, revision of criteria and indicators, the assumption of specific institutional roles, etc.);
- correlate learning standards with evaluation standards of pupils' school performance;
- make the teaching staff recruitment, selection, evaluation and promotion processes more flexible, based on quality related criteria
- use examples of good practice in QA in education.
- **Develop institutional capacity**
 - set up a national institution specialising in quality assurance in education;
 - restructure school inspectorates by making them exclusively responsible for quality assurance. Have them delegate their current responsibilities to local authorities, namely training providers;
 - implement measures aimed at increasing school autonomy in the following areas: recruitment and selection of teaching staff, administration of funds, identification of training needs, the signing of contracts with specialised consultancy companies;
 - institutionalise the QA system at all levels of education.
- **ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE RESULTS OF EVALUATIONS AT SCHOOL, LOCAL, COUNTY AND NATIONAL LEVEL**
 - draw up annual summaries and reports based on QA indicators for the national education system and for county/regional/priority areas of education;
 - draw up reports based on institutional evaluations with the implicit purpose of ranking schools according to quality indicators;
 - facilitate the access of all players in education (pupils, teachers, parents, inspectors, local authorities) to the results of evaluations;
 - make these reports the foundation for national and regional educational policies.
- **Provide human resources with QA training**
 - MERY staff;
 - School inspectors;
 - Head teachers;
 - Teaching staff;
 - Specialists/researchers in education;
 - Representatives of local authorities.

The following **areas of competency** need to be developed:

- strategic management;
- management of transitions and change;
- marketing and public relations;

- institutional self-evaluation;
- system and process evaluation for quality assurance.

Institutions that could potentially pilot QA interventions;

- research institutes;
- universities;
- NGOs that have the required expertise but lack the resources:
- pilot-schools interested in implementing a QA system.

10. Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of QA issues in the Romanian education system:

- Although quality assurance in education is a major priority of the **educational policy** which the Ministry of Education has set for the next seven years, to date we cannot identify a coherent vision. It is true that the strategies and concrete measures designed and applied so far could be considered, partially at least, to be elements of a system of quality assurance in education:
 - The designing of the curriculum on the basis of performance standards;
 - measures taken to design and implement school development plans;
 - initiatives taken to change the role of school inspections from control to counselling and assistance;
 - the development of standards of excellence for the teaching career;
 - the steps taken towards school autonomy and financial decentralisation;
 - the emergence of new institutions with implicit roles in ensuring a quality assurance system, etc.

Not all the above measures have been adequately implemented, however, for the following reasons:

- limited access of teaching staff to training programmes focused on the changes initiated;
- limited offers of assistance, counselling and monitoring of the implementation of changes at school level;
- institutions responsible for quality assurance have been focusing more on control than on counselling, monitoring and providing assistance to schools;
- a faulty system of data collection related to school performance and the weak development of a system ensuring accountability, etc.

Educational policies give **no explicit definition** of quality in education which would help to make the concept clearly understood. The current policies propose selective measures for increasing quality in education but do not integrate them in a systemic and unified concept. At the same time, the aforementioned measures have a low operational value. Schools and other players in the educational system (teachers, pupils, parents, local authorities, etc.) do not have a clearly specified role in designing the strategies.

- As far as institutions are concerned, in Romania **there is no single national institution for evaluation**, in charge of quality assurance in education. There are, however, a number of bodies responsible for quality assurance as part of their remit. Existing institutions are focused on institutional evaluation with quality assurance an implicit, not an explicit aspect of evaluation processes. Institutional development policies aim to extend responsibility for quality assurance to existing institutions subordinate to the Ministry, but without any well-defined proposal for setting up an independent specialised body.
- **From a theoretical perspective**, so far there is little scientific interest to speak of in any issues of quality assurance in education and specialised literature in the field is extremely limited. Apart from isolated initiatives, schools and teaching staff do not seem to be aware of the need for a quality assurance system. Financial constraints and lack of material resources, as well as the lack of information and training in quality assurance in education result in school development priorities focusing on areas other than quality assurance. This is especially the case in rural schools.

Specialists, civil society and teachers are showing more interest in issues related to democratic citizenship. The European programmes *Socrates* or *Leonardo da Vinci* have been a real opportunity for schools in Romania to develop European educational programmes in the field. Despite this fact, we now witness a **lack of initiatives to relate education for democratic citizenship to the system of quality assurance**.

- With regard to **school autonomy**, educational reforms carried out so far have achieved more of a de-concentration (i.e. delegation of decision-making to lower hierarchical levels – inspectorates and schools) and less of a decentralisation – which also involves a strong community component. An analysis of the various aspects of decentralisation (human resources, curriculum, financial resources, etc.) shows that the link between schools and local communities is still weak. It also indicates that the degree of **school autonomy** varies throughout the different areas of the education system. For instance schools have a degree of autonomy in establishing the **school-based curriculum and teaching methods, and in choosing alternative school books**. In **human resources management and financial management, however**, school autonomy remains limited.
- Initiatives meant to introduce a school-planning instrument (school development plan) have not had the desired result. The plans are being drawn up from an administrative rather than a managerial perspective, with greater emphasis on legal responsibilities and less on individual schools' specific strategies/policies aimed at making the educational experience on offer meet identified needs. This has failed to improve school-based planning. The underlying cause of this is that quality indicators based on quantitative evaluation greatly outnumber „value-added” indicators in the structure of the school development plan. School managers are insufficiently trained.
- As regards **teacher training**, a number of initiatives have resulted in the official stipulation that further training courses for teachers should be provided at regular intervals. The institutional aspect has not been ignored either. A number of specialised bodies have been set up to co-ordinate, evaluate and control teacher training and ensure the quality of the training courses. Despite these efforts, **the training system is slow to respond** to specific requests made by teaching staff. This is partly due to the overlapping of the training-related responsibilities of several central and local institutions. Also, this hierarchical institutional network focuses more on co-ordination, control, organisation and provision of training courses and less on providing counselling and assistance for specific training needs at school level.

- The National Curriculum is one area where quality assurance has been emphasised. Curricula for compulsory education now have **curricular performance standards** (learning standards), for each and every level of education. High school curricula contain sets of **specific competencies**. They have been defined as criteria for the evaluation of the quality of the learning process. Soon to follow, and based on curricular standards, will be standards of evaluation with performance indicators, namely grading criteria.

Education for democratic citizenship ranks high in the national curriculum. The formal curriculum includes two specialised school subjects meant to transmit knowledge and develop skills and values related to **democratic citizenship**: civic education and civic culture.

- Efforts made to ensure quality in education include the setting of **standards for the evaluation** of the education process. So far the National Service for Evaluation and Examination, SNEE, has designed a system of performance indicators of formative evaluation for primary education and a system of grading criteria for lower and upper secondary education. In addition, a **national system of evaluation standards** is currently being designed, in correlation with curricular performance standards.

Following national examinations and evaluations, **reports** are drawn up to inform the various target groups: decision makers, research institutes, schools, the general public, etc.

- There are no specific legal provisions for education in terms of **institutional accountability**, apart from recent official general regulations (2001) on free access to information of public interest. There are a number of institutions that gather information on the education system, but not all of this is accessible to the general public. In the absence of adequate assistance, and due to excessive institutional subordination, schools are still poorly prepared to meet the requirements of an accountable public institution and to observe legal provisions regarding access of citizens to information of public interest. At the same time, the quality of school performance is an issue that **schools** seldom approach systematically when having to inform parents and the community in general.

To conclude, **for the purpose of implementing a system of quality assurance in education** in Romania, a series of measures needs to be put in place in order to integrate existing initiatives in a coherent and explicit educational policy. The steps that must be taken to create the basis for implementing a system of quality assurance in education relate to the following aspects:

- Scientific research and the development of theories must be encouraged by creating an active network of specialists in the field of quality assurance in education.
- Existing institutions with responsibilities for setting standards of evaluation, training and institutional evaluation must extend their role from mere control to more active monitoring and providing assistance to schools.
- The improvement of already implemented tools for planning school development and for the evaluation of institutions must be sustained by a clear strategy of training and assistance in using them.
- Increasing the degree of school autonomy must be accompanied by measures of financial decentralisation and appropriate training programmes for school managers and teaching staff.

- A single and coherent system of criteria and indicators for the evaluation of school performance as a whole needs to be designed and implemented at all levels of the education system (school, inspectorate, designated institutions).
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- The accountability of the educational system and school performance needs to be ensured by establishing systems for reporting information at local, regional and national level, to which the general public must have access.
- Access to education-related information of public interest needs to be legally stipulated, including at school level.
- A good way to initiate pilot projects for the implementation of a system of quality assurance in education would be to identify and involve a group of specialists and school managers who have already shown their interest in this respect by participating in European or national projects in the past few years.

Appendix 1 : Education for Democratic Citizenship projects carried out by NGOs

1. TIMIȘOARA INTER-CULTURAL INSTITUTE

- **Inter-cultural education and education for democratic citizenship** in school in Timis county (2002 - 2003): a project being carried out with the co-operation and financial support of the British Council and Timis Teachers' Training Centre. Its objective is to carry out innovative activities relating to inter-cultural education and activities for democratic citizenship within a network of 8 schools in Timis county.
- **CITIZEN Project** (2002-2003): carried out in partnership with Florida Law related Association as a component of the CIVITAS programme. Its aim is to adapt and implement in Romania an innovative teaching methodology of civic education for grades VII-VIII. The pilot phase is being carried out with the support of the Timis School Inspectorate and Timisoara Teachers' Training Centre.
- **Towards education for democratic citizenship by means of non-formal education (2002 - 2004)**: Project in partnership with the Council of Europe, UNESCO and NGOs in Bulgaria, Spain and Ireland (co-ordinators) that aims to analyse teaching mechanisms of democratic citizenship associated with non-formal education activities organised by NGOs.
- **EDDEM – Education for democracy : the role of civil servants working in a multicultural environment (March 1998 - December 1998)**: Designed to raise the awareness of representatives of public authorities concerning the importance of observing human rights and cultural diversity. Partners: local authorities, Police and School Inspectorates in Zalau, Iasi and Timisoara. (The project was financed by the Programme for Trust Measures of the Council of Europe).
- **EDES – Democratic and European education in Romania** (EDES Project, carried out in 1999, it was included in the programme Education for democratic citizenship of the Council of Europe). It contributed to the improvement of training for teachers of civic education in the countries involved: Croatia, Ukraine, Romania, Slovakia and Lithuania. In Romania the project was co-ordinated by I.I.T. in co-operation with the Ministry of National Education.

Projects focused on inter-cultural education (implicitly EDC)

- **Inter-cultural education in multi-ethnic communities** (June 2000 - June 2001). The goal of the project was to implement inter-cultural education activities for grades V-VIII in the regions of Transylvania, Moldova and Banat. It was financed by the Programme for Trust Measures of the Council of Europe.
- **Inter-cultural communication – exclusion and inclusion in Europe** (2000 - 2001): LEONARDO project co-ordinated by the French organisation Calliope whose main objective is to design and test training modules in inter-cultural communication for three categories of persons: teaching staff, social assistants and organisers of youth activities.
- **Inter-cultural education in multi-ethnic schools** (July 1999 - March 2000). The project, carried out by the Foundation for Human Rights and Education for Peace in Budapest, in co-operation with I.I.T., aimed to introduce methods of inter-cultural education in multi-ethnic schools. Financing: European Cultural Foundation.

2. ROMANIAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (BUCHAREST)

- **Study case - ability of teachers to evaluate pupils' civic skills** (2003 – 2005). The objectives of this project are: to identify tools and means of evaluation of civic skills; increase efficiency in designing the civic education curriculum; train teaching staff by testing a means of professional development focused on the right to intellectual property; present a strategy for class-based evaluation and teaching staff training. 8 schools in Bucharest are involved and the project is carried out with the co-operation of CSI and TTC Bucharest.

3. FOUNDATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY – PROPOSED PROJECTS, WITH EU FUNDS

- **Civic Education** (2003-2004). The goals of this project are to increase the capacity of education institutions to develop civic education activities and encourage the involvement of the mass media in promoting civic values and practices.

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