



Member of the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)

Str. Washington, nr. 38, sector 1, București, România

**RENASIS – the Romanian National Anti-Poverty and
Social Inclusion Network**
Annual Activity Report 2012





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The Board of RENASIS is composed by the representatives of the following member organisations:

1. *"AUR" - A.N.S.R.U. – the National Association of Human Resources Specialists, Mrs. **Raluca Manaila** – Interim President of RENASIS (interim deputy Mr. Paul DRAGAN) ;*
2. *Petre Andrei University, Mr. **Sebastian Nastuta** – Vice-President of RENASIS;*
3. *The Association for European Society, Mrs. **Andreea Răduț**;*
4. *„Cetatea lui Bucur 7 Centre” Association - Mrs. **Carmen Pintilie**;*
5. *SOS Children’s Villages, Mrs. **Mirela Lavric**.*

The membership of RENASIS is the following:

- ✓ REPERE Association
- ✓ Fundatia pentru Invatamant
- ✓ Universitatea “Petre Andrei”
- ✓ SOS Satele Copiilor
- ✓ Asociatia Cetatea lui Bucur 7 Centre
- ✓ Confederatia Caritas
- ✓ Asociatia pentru Dezvoltarea Organizatiei – ADOSAH ROM
- ✓ Fundatia ESTUAR
- ✓ Fundatia World Vision
- ✓ Societatea de Educatie Contraceptiva si Sexuala
- ✓ Asociatia Opportunity Associates
- ✓ Fundatia Synergetica
- ✓ Centrul de Asistenta pentru Organizatii Neguvernamentale – CENTRAS
- ✓ Asociatia APEL
- ✓ “AUR” – A.N.S.R.U. – Asociatia Nationala a Specialistilor in Resurse Umane



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I. Involving the national network RENASIS in partnerships, initiatives and projects co-financed by the European Commission.



1. "Multiplying Decent Work- Decent Life" DCI NSA ED/2012/279-811

The European project "Multiplying Decent Work - Decent Life!" (No. Contract DCI - NSA - ED/2012/279-811, co-funded by the European Commission through its EuropeAid/131141/C/ACT / Multi development education program) represents the continuation of the project "Decent Work for a Decent Life - Enhancing the trade union international strategies and policies", finalized on 30th of June 2012 and aims to increase the efforts so far in answering to social dilemmas caused by globalization.

The project is based on the partnership of the following partner organisations: "AUR" – the National Association of Human Resources Specialists ("AUR"-A.N.S.R.U.) (applicant) and the National Trade Union Confederation "Cartel ALFA" - in Romania, SÜDWIND AGENTUR and the Weltumspannend Arbeiten (Trade Union Federation of Austria) - in Austria , BILSP (the Balkan Institute for Social Policies and Labour Issues) and CITUB (the Trade Unions Federation of Bulgaria) - in Bulgaria, the Information Centre on Women Issues and the Trade Union Confederation of Lithuania - in Lithuania, PGN Polish Green Network and OPZZ (the Trade Union Confederation of Poland) in Poland and IPROS (the Institute for Social Policies) and UGT (the General Workers' Union) in Brazil.

The project is developed during a 3-year period, between 01.01.2013 and 31.12.2016.

The project can be considered as a innovative one, given it is based on a partnership with organizations from Brazil; this partnership was born during the former project, specifically due to the speaker's tour where the Brazilian partners were guests. The project aims to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), namely poverty eradication, gender



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equality and creating a global partnership to promote decent work. The main goal is to inform the public, consumers and the media about the realities related to living and working conditions in developing countries. The major activities to be implemented during the above mentioned three years are: two training courses with a duration of 1 year (consisting of 7 modules of 2 days each, attended by 15 people) one-day seminars, public events, mobile exhibitions, editing and distributing information materials, study visits in developing countries, roundtables and public events.

The National Network RENASIS participates in this project as an ASSOCIATE PARTNER, together with organizations from Moldavia, Bangladesh, Austria, Bulgaria, Brazil, etc.

As ASSOCIATE PARTNER, RENASIS has the following responsibilities and benefits derived from associating in this international consortium:

- Involvement and support for lobbying and advocacy activities conducted within the project at Romanian level
- Participation, support and organizing public events in order to raise public awareness on the topics proposed by the project and especially poverty eradication
- Dissemination of information and educational materials to members, collaborators and network stakeholders
- Ability to provide professional formation (without any financial implications) to the human resources involved in secretariat activities and network co-ordination, as well as to the representatives of member organizations
- Ability to implement specific activities in the project as associate partner, taking benefit of its own budget to implement these activities at national level
- Increase national and international visibility, and enhancing possibilities and instruments to promote and consolidate the network at national level

2. “Fit for Fair – Global learning for decent work in the sportswear industry” DCI-NSA-ED/2012/279-938

The project „Fit for Fair – Global learning for decent work in the sportswear industry” (contract DCI-NSAED/2011/58, co-financed by the European Commission through its education and development programme EuropeAid/131141/C/ACT/Multi) is a partnership aiming to support gender equality, by removing the effects of globalisation on the women’s work conditions.



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The project is inserted in the goal that Romania, as donor state, has assumed to achieve through its Development Cooperation Policy; according to this objective, our country is committed to assist developing countries in order to reduce their poverty, the main obstacle in ensuring social and economic development.

The Declaration of the Millennium, adopted in September 2000 during the Millennium Summit by 191 countries, among which Romania, sets the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), with specific targets to be reached until 2015. Among these, the project „Fit for Fair” meets the MDG No. 1 on the eradication of poverty, the MDG No. 3 on promoting gender equality and empower women and MDG targets No. 8 on creating global partnerships for development.

The project is an international partnership between organizations whose expertise complements each other's. Thus, the Christliche Initiative Romero (CIR) from Germany, as applicant, together with its partner - Labour Behind the Label (LBL) from Great Britain, have sound connections with information multipliers within the lucrative textile industry, while the partners from Gender Education, Research and Technologies Foundation (GERT) of Bulgaria and the Slovak Centre for Communication and Development (CST) have information multipliers in areas of interest to the specific problems faced by women in the labour market. Also, the Gender Centre (GC) from Moldavia and the National Association of HR Specialists ("AUR" - ANSRU) from Romania have established a network to support decent work in Romania and Moldavia.

They are also involved as partners in the Global South Development zone the following organizations *Organisazion Salvadorenas der Mujeres por la Paz (Ormus)* from El Salvador and *Movimiento de Mujeres y Trabajadoras Desempleadas "María Elena Cuadra" (MEC)* from Nicaragua, and other related organizations that support our global initiative: IG Metall-Union (Germany), Verdi's Union (Germany), Clean Clothes Campaign (Germany), Trades Union Congress (TUC) (United Kingdom), Gender Project for Bulgaria Foundation (GPF) (Bulgaria), Scouting Slovakia (Slovak Republic), Stowarzyszenie "Koalicja KARAT" (Karat Network / Poland), National Antipoverty-Social Inclusion Network (RENASIS) (Romania) Women Organization of National Confederation of Trade Unions (Moldova), Students and Scholars Against Corporate Misbehavior (SACOM), Hong Kong.

As ASSOCIATE PARTNER, RENASIS has the following responsibilities and benefits derived from associating in this international consortium:

- Involvement and support for lobbying and advocacy activities conducted within the project



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- Participation, support and organizing public events in order to raise public awareness on the topics proposed by the project
- Dissemination of information and educational materials to members, collaborators and network stakeholders
- Ability to provide professional formation (without any financial implications) to the human resources involved in secretariat activities and network co-ordination, as well as to the representatives of member organizations
- Ability to implement specific activities in the project as associate partner, taking benefit of its own budget to implement these activities at national level
- Increase national and international visibility, and enhancing possibilities and instruments to promote and consolidate the network at national level



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II. RENASIS involvement within EAPN Europe:

- Participation and moderation within the meetings of the Troika Task Force working group: 13th of July 2012, 29th of September 2012, 15th of November 2012, 21st of January 2013 (Moderator: Sebastian Nast, EAPN RO, EU ISG Steering Group)
- Participation: EU Inclusion Strategies Group: "Building a membership-driven approach to EU engagement" 10th of February 2012
- Participation: EAPN Executive Meeting - Brussels, 20th - 21st of April 2012
- Participation: EU Inclusion Strategies Group: "Taking action on EU Inclusion Strategies" 11th of February 2012
- Participation: Inclusion Strategies Group EU: "Europe 2020 - Delivering on the poverty target? Analysing Together - Europe 2020 (National Reform Programmes - NRP and National Social Reports - NSR)"; 4th of May 2012
- Participation: EU Inclusion Strategies Group: "Agreeing how we work and Action on EU policy priorities"; 5th of May 2012
- Participating of RENASIS member organizations' representatives (3 organizations together with the President of RENASIS): EAPN General Assembly in Oslo - "Time for Crisis - Time for Change"; 7th – 9th of June 2012
- Participation: Inclusion Strategies Group EU: "Europe 2020 - reviewing our work on the Europe 2020 strategy and planning our future, work program and action plan for 2013"; 16th – 17th of November 2012
- Participation: Inclusion Strategies Group EU: "Europe 2020 - Agreeing our strategy / work program for action working together on Country - Specific Recommendations and Alternative Reports"; 1st – 2nd of February 2013



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III. The main actions undertaken at national level by the national network RENASIS through its member organizations and Board members

- Partnership between RENASIS and Local Action Group ¹VALEA TAZLAULUI based in Berești Tazlau, Bacau County, represented by Mr. Dumitru Tulpan - In December 2012 it was initiated a partnership between LAG VALEA TAZLAULUI and RENASIS with a view to mutual promotion and developing joint international cooperation - activity supported by the REPERE Association.
- Partnership between RENASIS and LAG BACAUL VERDE based in Tamasi, Bacau County, represented by Mrs. Veronica Dontu – In December 2012 it was initiated a partnership between LAG BACAUL VERDE and RENASIS with a view to mutual promotion and developing joint international cooperation - activity supported by the REPERE Association.
- Supporting the RIGHT FOR WATER campaign– there were initiated 3,112 support letters and this opportunity was taken to present activities held between July 2012 and January 2013 by EAPN and RENASIS. The promoting actions took place in two high-schools from Bacau, namely Gh. Vranceanu HS and Grigore Antipa HS, and the information was gathered from the campaign website www.right2water.eu - activity supported by the REPERE Association.
- Caritas Romania attended, through Caritas Europe network, a project monitoring the progress of Romania on implementation of the 2020 Strategy (we analyzed the NRP and AGS). In February 2013 they presented in Brussels the social and economic situation in Romania and have submitted a set of recommendations / measures to be taken for combating poverty and social exclusion. Moreover, the conference hosted at the European Economic and Social Committee was attended among others by Mrs. Sian Jones - Policy Coordinator EAPN. The deadline to communicate to Caritas Europe network whether the Shadow Report 2012 recommendations have been implemented was March 29. Unfortunately no progress has been reported on subsequent legislation of the Law for Social Assistance, Education, Employment and Creating Opportunities for Social Economy.

¹ are made up of public and private partners from the rural territory, and must include representatives from different socio-economic sectors.



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- Mirela Lavric, as national director of SOS Children's Villages Romania Association, promoted RENASIS by announcing membership of her organisation within the General Assembly of RENASIS and then during the Directory Council meetings, in the annual activity reports and other reports submitted to SOS Kinderdorf international network. The annual activity reports are disseminated in booklet form to all organisation's partners, institutions or companies. Given the mission of the organization, the categories of our social services' beneficiaries overlap with those of EAPN / RENASIS and besides the category "children separated from their biological families due to the economic situation", "family at risk of abandoning children", for the same prevailing reason – the economic situation of the family. Thus, in addition to residential family care services, the organization SOS Children's Villages Romania offers counselling and support services for families at risk through its 3 counselling and support for children and parents centres, in Bucharest, Bacau county and Sibiu county. A total of approximately 900 children and their families are supported through these projects, not only with social counselling (for gaining guaranteed rights) and psychological services, but also with financial support in the form of social coupons for families in great difficulty situations, usually when taking them in our list of beneficiaries. The need for support and action for prevention of poverty that cause subsequent effects, especially given the current economic crisis, determines the to grow and develop specialized service.
- The Association "Cetatea lui Bucur 7 Centre" promoted the RENASIS network both through its internal activities and through attending several economic missions in Europe, North America and Asia. Its representatives took these opportunities to involve in events relevant for the network's specific domain, to contact towns' mayors, non-governmental institutions in towns where the missions have been organized, in order to initiate relations for future experience exchange and development of partnership projects.



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IV. RENASIS - 2013 Future Perspectives

- Strengthening the network by activating the network members and maintaining within it only the members that showed and continue to show interest in network activities and that fulfil their obligations (pay and submit to AG the annual fee)
- The possible involvement of new NGOs, that deal with the following issues: social integration of roma people, elderly people, people with disabilities, people in risk situations, eradication of poverty:

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Mrs. Mihaela Grosu - 0749602083
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Asociatia 1 iunie 2001 - Buzau
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Mr. Gelu Duminica - 0721461007
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Fundatia Alpha Transilvana - Tg. Mures
Mr. Andreia Moraru - 0723686434
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Fundatia Ruhama - Oradea
www.ruhama.ro

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office@dicolodeaparente-autism.ro
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Asociatia Copiii Tuturor - Constanta
Mr. Paul Davies - Manager Program
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- Hiring a network coordinator to allow efficient operation of the network at national and international level and to allow close communication with the membership and the Board



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- Providing multiple opportunities for professional training and capacity building for member organizations and staff (by involving the network in national and international projects)
- Increasing the network visibility at national and international level
- Setting partnerships nationally and internationally
- Developing project proposals at national level for accessing structural funds together with member organizations with extensive expertise in this area.

V. Financial Situation

The financial situation is presented in the Accountancy Report for the year 2012, which will be presented to the Board and membership during the RENASIS GA planned for May 2013.

VI. Thematical Priorities

- Structural Funds
- The European Meetings of People Experiencing Poverty and Social Exclusion, and
- The Social Investment Package.



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VII. Poverty and Social Exclusion/ Overview Romania 2012

Regarding national targets under the Europe 2020 Strategy, Romania has made limited progress in 2011. Some of the objectives remain inaccessible. This is especially true for investments in research and development, the employment of labor, the rate of early school leaving and the number of people at risk of poverty or exclusion. Romania should increase its efforts to accelerate the achievement of the Europe 2020 objectives as a basis for any new growth initiative.

In the last two years, several measures supporting the disadvantaged groups have been implemented.

As a result, **in 2010**, according to EU-SILC30 **the relative poverty rate reached the level of 21.1% as compared to 23.4% in 2008** (source: National Institute of Statistics and Eurostat). That means the reduction of the number of people living in poverty by 466 thousand persons.

We mention that there are no quarterly reports on the relative poverty rate³¹ (such as the employment indicators), the data resulting from the correlated analysis of the derived indicators, such as: ratio of average pension of public social insurance, and the average gross earnings, the ratio of the lowest salary earnings and average gross salary earnings.

In 2011, the analysis indicates a slight improvement of the relative poverty rate, reaching the level of 21.0%. Therefore, **for 2011, the National Forecast Commission estimated a moderate reduction of the number of people living in poverty by 500 thousand persons**³² as compared to 2008.

In the context of **social assistance system reform** implementation, the *Law No 292/2011 on social assistance* was published on December 20, 2011. The law introduced a unitary approach of the social assistance system and its components, namely the social benefit and social service systems, in order to increase the share of services over the social benefits; classification, granting criteria and the organization and administration of benefits and social services; regulation of contracting social services by private providers; regulation of the calculation and setting up the amount of social benefits based on a single indicator –social reference indicator used to determine the unemployment benefits. One intended to simplify the administrative procedures by setting up a single contact point for application, a single application form, and strengthening some social benefits – guaranteed minimum income, allowance for family support and the aid for home heating – focusing them on social categories placed at the highest risk of poverty and social exclusion.

On December 14, 2011, the cabinet approved *The Romanian Government Strategy for the Roma Inclusion 2011 – 2020*, aiming at including on the agenda of the central and local authorities some measures for increasing the social and economic inclusion of this minority.



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The projects designed to reduce the social exclusion among children and young people are under implementation:

- To improve the quality of social services for children, MMFPS financed the purchase of eight apartments that can accommodate at least 64 children by *The Programme of national interest No 1 – Closing the old style institutions and establishment of rehabilitation centres, family houses and/or apartments*. For these eight apartments the furniture purchasing procedures were completed, and for other eight family type houses and two rehabilitation centres, MMFPS started the public procurement procedures for the commissioning of the execution contracts of the construction works;
- To integrate the children/young people with disabilities, within the project - *They should have a chance! – Support programme for social and professional integration of the persons with autism spectrum disorders*³³, 588 doctors, psychologists and psycho-pedagogues, specialists in the recovery of young people with autism spectrum disorders have participated in training courses, out of which 325 persons were certificated. 40 caring and counselling centres have been established in partnership with local public authorities, and they have been equipped with furniture and IT equipment. Also, the final version of the *National Strategy for social and professional integration of the autism disorders spectrum people* was drafted;
- To prevent the school drop out among children belonging to disadvantaged socio-economic communities, 32 guidance centres and resources for inclusive education were financed by the project *The Guidance and Resources Centre for Inclusive Education – comprehensive educational services to prevent and correct the school drop out*³⁴. The centres were established in 30 counties – North West region, South East region, South Muntenia region, South West Oltenia region and Center region and in Bucharest, districts 2 and 5. However, 82 persons have participated in the training courses, and 3,437 children received educational services within the project. Starting with January 23, 2012, the project was suspended for a period of three months, because the reimbursement applications were evaluated later and the payments were made with large delays by the Intermediate Body SOP HRD;
- To set up a standardized public system of the day-care system for children – 665 women were selected to be qualified for the occupation of babysitter within the project *Women for women – training and accreditation program for women in the occupation of babysitter employed in the public system*³⁵. Three training sessions have been already initiated in Bucharest.

As regards **the active social inclusion**, by February 24, 2012, ESF financed 60 projects facilitating the access of the persons belonging to vulnerable groups to the labour market. The payments amounted 228.86 million lei (about 32.60% from the total value of the contracts), 6,855 persons belonging to vulnerable groups participated in the qualification/retraining and professional conversion programmes, out of which 1,483 Roma, 1,070 disabled, 19 young people leaving the public child care system, and 685 drug and alcohol addicted persons. The share of participants to the training/retraining programmes which obtained the certification was 66%.

The draft *Law on social economy* is at the final stage of elaboration. On December 14, 2011, the

project has been published on the MMFPS website, in order to be submitted to the public consultation. MMFPS² postponed again the completion of this action, for the QIV/2012, in order to achieve the consultation of all stakeholders and to follow the chronological order of legislative procedure required for the adoption of the normative act. The postponement of the action deadline was caused by the large number of the stakeholders involved, which called for the extension of the consultation period.

By February 24, 2012, MDRT³ contracted 30 projects conceived to **improve the quality of the social services through the rehabilitation of the social infrastructure**, including the **social housing** for disadvantaged persons. The payments amounted 5,118 million lei, which represents only 4.7% of the total value of the contracts.

Analysing the regional distribution of this type of projects, one could notice that most of them are located in the following regions: North West region – eight contracts, North East region – seven contracts, Centre region – six contracts. MDRT contracted one project on rehabilitating the social housing, located in the North West region.

By February 24, 2012 with regard **the rehabilitation / modernisation / equipping of the health services infrastructure**³⁷ 9 health units were finalized rehabilitation, the payments amounting 34.614 million lei. Considering the finalised projects, the rehabilitated health units stand for 17% of the total value allocated under Regional Operational Programme (ROP). Most of the finalised projects are located in the North West region - three rehabilitated health units, North East and South East regions - two rehabilitated health units each, and in West and South West regions - one rehabilitated health unit each.

The project intended to the rehabilitation of the *Emergency Hospital from Valcea County* was contracted by ROP on September 9, 2011, is included in the *List of the priority projects financed by the Structural and the Cohesion Funds*. Although the implementation pace of this project is very low (3%); one estimates that, after the hospital rehabilitation, the number of persons benefiting by the medical services will increase by 12.5%.

By February 24, 2012, **with regard rehabilitation/ modernisation/ equipping of the social services infrastructures**³⁸ 26 social centres were finalized, the payments for these centres amounting to 30.527 million lei. As compared to the target proposed in ROP for rehabilitated

² The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection

³ The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports



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social centres, the number of finalised projects represents approximately 9.6%. Most of the finalised contracts are located in the North East region – eight contracts, South East region – four contracts, Centre and North West region – three contracts each.

By February 24, 2012, **with regard improving the equipment of the operational units for public safety interventions in emergency situations**³⁹ 40 mobile units (within a single finalised contract) were equipped. The payments made for these projects amounted 29.197 million lei. As compared to the target proposed in ROP for the equipped mobile units, the number of the finalised projects represents only 8%. Considering the regional distribution of the projects, one may noticed that two contracts on the improvement of the operational basis of SMURD (Emergency Mobile Service for Resuscitation and Disentanglement), consisting of purchasing 98 equipments, are located in North East region.

By February 24, 2012, 38 pre-university school units dedicated to the **rehabilitation, modernization, development and equipment of pre-university, university education and continuous vocational training infrastructures**⁴⁰ were rehabilitated, representing only 29.23% as compared to the target proposed in ROP. The payments made for these projects amounted 65.42 millions lei. Analysing the regional distribution of this projects, we may notice that most of the finalised contracts are located in South East region – twelve rehabilitated school units and North West region – ten rehabilitated school units.

Ministry of Health (MS) carried on **the national healthcare system reform**. At the national level, in order to improve the **access to the healthcare services for the vulnerable persons**, 18 preventive and curative interventions for maternal and children health are under implementation on disease prevention and early detection and health maintaining, disease cure, medical complication prevention or at least pain relieve, for which 39.863 million lei was spent. Moreover, 146 patients have received the necessary support to ensure their treatment abroad and 650,722 pensioners (with incomes below 700 lei/month) benefited by the *Programme for compensation by 90% of the reference price of drugs*. The **Strategy on primary healthcare assistance and medical care services in rural areas** for the period 2012-2020 was completed by the consultant (Oxford Policy Management) on January 24, 2012 (the initial deadline was QIV/2011), accordingly MS will start the implementation of the measures proposed by the Strategy.

In order to **render more efficient the healthcare system**, the *Integrated Information System* and *National Health Card* programmes are under implementation; and the *Electronic Patient Card*, *eprescribing* and the *Application of decentralization in the health system* projects are to be implemented throughout 2012. In order to reorganize the hospitals and render them more efficient, 465 hospitals were classified, the legislation on multifunctional centres setting up was



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approved, and the primary care and ambulatory care system was put into practice by creating a multifunctional centre and other 192 permanence centres.

As for upgrading and modernizing the infrastructure of healthcare service providers and for ensuring the medical apparatus/equipment and specific vehicles, the following measures have been taken: (i) investment to the Regional Institute of Oncology in Iasi and Timisoara, and to other six hospitals, (ii) rehabilitation of obstetrics and neonatology departments in 21 hospitals, (iii) purchase of medical equipment for emergency medical units, for the departments providing maternal and newborn services and for departments of cardiology and (iv) purchase of 203 ambulances and a helicopter.



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VIII. Child poverty in Rural Romania 2012

A section was taken from the “Child Wellbeing in Rural Romania 2012” Report, made by World Vision Romania.

Romania is one of the poorest countries in the European Union, some of the indicators being on the last position. At the same time, Romania has the largest percentage of population living in rural areas. Preliminary data of the Population Census last year show, contrary to expectations, that the percentages of those in rural area does not have a downwards trend, but on the contrary, it has slightly increased in the past ten years. Moreover, a series of recent studies emphasise important differences between urban and rural areas related to the quality of life, to the detriment of the former, as well as high percentages of children in Romanian villages who live in precarious conditions.

The research undertaken by World Vision Romania at the end of 2011 analysed some important aspects of child welfare in rural areas using a complex quantitative methodology. Thus, four questionnaires were drawn up and applied in 1,460 households selected at random so as to reproduce as precisely as possible the structure of rural household population with children. The research consisted in applying a questionnaire to one adult in each of the 1,460 sample households, and applying one questionnaire and two tests of Mathematical aptitudes and, respectively of reading and understanding a text to a number of 1,340 children of the selected households. The research structure allowed us to analyse the four databases that resulted both separately and related (for example, household attributes related to academic performance or level of child psychological comfort).

On the whole, the data emphasise serious problems of life quality for an important part of children in rural areas, as well as for their families, problems that risk to stress even more the conditions of economic crisis and increased disparities between urban and rural areas and between regions. From many points of view, gains experienced by population during the economic growth that preceded the crisis seem to have been annulled or even reversed. While in the last 10 years the number of housings in the country has increased, the augment took place exclusively in urban areas, and housing endowment in rural areas hasn't increased substantially. Five years after the country became a member of the European Union, only a third of rural housings have indoor bathrooms, a quarter have indoor toilets and only one out of ten is connected to the sewerage system. Lack of infrastructure for developing rural areas and also deficiencies in enduring decent conditions of living are treated extensively in The National Programme for Rural Development 2007 - 2013 (NPRD). The document, drawn up by the



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Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, stresses the same aspects that have been identified as problematic in the current research³⁸. NPRD is an important programme for improving the quality of life in Romanian villages, but this is not the only frame for investment of European funds. Romania is going through a process of elaborating the framework documents of European financing for 2014 - 2020. In such context, setting up national debates to discuss on the strategy to support the development of rural communities is required. There is also the need that besides ensuring financing, strategies should be elaborated to coherently inform the citizens on how to access European funds for infrastructure, including projects to connect households to water and sewerage systems in as many rural communities as possible. To this respect programmes could be organised to inform citizens on availability and conditions of access for the funds, but also training programmes for drawing up projects, management and project management, appraisal, voluntary participation, etc.

The problems in the Romanian rural area related to demographic structure and level of education are serious and threaten to seriously limit future development. Thus, the number of children is low - only 2.1 children per family (on account that only families with children were selected for the study)³⁹. Even without taking into consideration the effect of migration, many Romanian villages are facing an ageing and depopulation process. Parents' level of education is modest, the middle level is that of unfinished secondary school. As regards the occupational status of surveyed adults, only approximately a third are employed, whereas a quarter declare they are housewives, 13% day labourers, 10% workers in agriculture, and the rest 15% are unemployed, pensioners, beneficiaries of family support or entrepreneurs (only 1%). As for income, approximately 12% of households have no other source of income than child allowance, and approximately three thirds of respondents appreciate their income as insufficient, a quarter of the total consider that income is not sufficient for covering living costs (food, housing and health). The gravity of concrete data presented undeniably raises question marks for the future of Romanian rural area. This data must form the basis for the development of a coherent demographic policy to create housing and employment that would prompt the transformation of rural communities into active entities, attractive for young people and stimulating for professionals.

The research identified a high number of children for whom family faces difficulties in covering basic needs. Thus, one out of ten interviewed children declares that frequently (2%) or sometimes (11%) food was insufficient, a quarter state they are tired because they had to work in the household before or after coming from school, and 12% say they skipped school because they had to work. At the same time, almost all surveyed children positively appreciate the efforts their families make for covering basic needs, feel supported and trust family members.



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The study emphasises a high level of attention and care on behalf of parents as regards child health and nutrition. Over 90% of adults know their children's height and weight, and almost half of the parents declare that they are concerned about their children's healthy nutrition. But a more detailed analysis shows important differences between poor and prosperous families both as regards food quality, and as for the number of meals offered daily to the child. Children's answers indicate that a quarter of them have problems in receiving sufficient food or of quality.

Almost two thirds of interviewed adults stated that they treat their child at home, without taking him/her to a physician when ill, and of those who go to physicians, two thirds visit the physicians in the nearest city and only a third go to the commune doctor. Among poor families the percentage of those who treat children at the doctor's is even lower. Apart from inherent limitations of indicators used, the fact that over half of the ill children in rural families are treated without being examined by a physician is worrisome from the perspective of child's right to qualitative medical care. It is worrisome also the finding that, according to parents' statements, only 41% of children under the age of 2 are examined by physicians, which indicates a possible risk of absence or delay of immunisation with vaccines recommended by the Ministry of Health for the majority of children in this age category. The fact that the percentage of children with medical tests done in the last year is substantially lower than half of the percentage of those who visited a family doctor in the last six months is also worth mentioning. In other words, medical tests seem to be recommended almost exclusively in cases when the child is ill and less frequently for a preventive routine check. The preference to access city medical services, by more educated individuals or those located closer to a city, even if the level of satisfaction related to medical services is lower with these categories, represents an alarm with respect to population trust in rural medical services.

Therefore, in the spirit of equality of chances for children, in order to reduce existent disparities depending on residency and family income, programmes are required that target the population of children in poor rural families and place emphasis on improving food quality and quantity. In these programmes, special attention must be given to inform parents and especially young mothers on the importance of healthy nutrition for child development, keeping in mind that the majority of adults with children under a year of age stated that their main source for information about feeding newborns are family members and friends. This would be a way to tone down the danger of perpetuating unhealthy practices still frequently encountered in rural communities. A model for how to educate mothers is World Vision Romania programme for training medical assistants and communal medical assistants on health and nutrition of mother and child, conducted in partnership with the Order of Nurses, Midwives and Medical Assistants in Romania and the Public Health County Offices. It is also mandatory to inform parents on the importance of child vaccination and monitoring child's health, in as many rural communities as possible, as



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well as to inform authorities and draw them in so as to implement campaigns that support and encourage family medicine in rural areas.

As regards access to early and school education, living in rural areas induces clear disadvantages of access as compared to living in a city. In addition to absence of access to nurseries in rural areas, difficulties were noticed in access to kindergartens and schools, reflected in the medium duration of travel to educational institutions. Thus, almost a quarter of children (23%) spend an hour or more on the road to and from school. Great distance between housing and educational institution is the reason invoked by 5% of adult respondents whose children never attended kindergarten. Difficult access to educational units or not attending kindergarten by a part of children due to distance has an even greater influence on equality of chances, in the context of the new law of education that stipulates the creation of class zero. School endowment with means of transportation and resources to function must include sufficient resources to ensure the improvement of children access to qualitative education. The European funds can constitute also an important resource for covering these needs.

Approximately a fifth of children declare that sometimes they are treated worse than other pupils in school, the level of household endowment is an important predictor for children's subjective appreciation of school environment. Thus, on an average, children in households with modest endowments feel less comfortable in school than other children. In conclusion, data show that in the surveyed schools there still exist discriminations on varied criteria, but having a strong impact on child/pupil. Discrimination between children, irrespective of criteria, should be absent in school. Children's perception of a differential treatment may lead in time to low learning motivation, enhancing the chances for poor academic results, or for interruption of education.

As was the case with the researches conducted by World Vision in 2005 and 2009, the present study captures a substantial interest on behalf of parents for child education, an attitude reflected in psychological comfort and child development. The percentage of parents who support child education by staying in constant connection with school and by homework checking is of 90%, whereas all agree that "one is never too old to learn". But opinions appear better divided when respondents compare the role education and that personal relationships play in finding employment: more than half (54%) tend to believe that personal relationships have a more important role, as compared to only 46% who believe in the importance of education. Surprisingly, attitudes towards the role of personal relationships in comparison to that of education are weakly influenced by the level of household adult education.

As regards educational aims, the most majority of parents (85%) consider that secondary level education represents the path for their children to follow. But, at the same time, the percentage of children who continue their education after graduating from middle school, estimated from

adults' responses, is lower and depends on village location. Thus, in villages situated at less than 20 km to a city, approximately 60% of respondents state that almost all children continue their education in secondary school, whereas in villages located at more than 20 km, only 39% of the respondents state this fact. At the same time, both material shortcomings, and poor academic results in gymnasium are invoked by adults as the main cause for interrupting education after graduating the mandatory level.

The most majority of adult subjects (85%) consider that pupils who abandon education remain in the village, and two thirds believe that the former pupils will work in the household, due to lack of employment in rural areas. On one hand, such a situation is favourable to the village, by the fact that it maintains part of its young inhabitants. On the other hand, though, it indicates both difficulties of former pupils to find employment outside the household, and short term and long term difficulties for ensuring the development of the community: unqualified labour force is a weak predictor for favourable development and augmentation of competitiveness of labour force. Moreover, almost all adult respondents in the study state that qualified employment for young people is rare or lacking completely in their village. These results indicate a serious problem for rural chances of development that offer at present few positions and, most often, of low level of qualification. That is why, the development of programmes to create employment, alongside the one for infrastructure and attractive spare time activities are solutions that could diminish labour migration and under-usage of rural human capital.

Another aspect that distinguishes living in rural areas from living in the city is the intense involvement of children in household activities. Thus, children in rural areas spend two hours a day on an average with cleaning activities, looking after animals or taking care of other household members. Even if children's participation in household activities is both a form of informal education, and a contribution of the child to household needs, it is necessary that their involvement should be carefully monitored by community members so as to avoid cases of abuse. The entire community must understand the obligation, but also the responsibility of each adult member to prevent and early identify any form of child abuse. That is why, means to inform the masses, placed at hand by governmental authorities responsible for child protection and local non-governmental organisations must offer sufficient and clear information on the means, place and coordinates of institutions where possible abuse can be alerted. At the same time, population must be informed on dysfunctions in child development, physical, intellectual or emotional that may develop in the short or long run by school abandonment or absenteeism, insufficient attention given to preparation for school or child involvement in activities with high consumption of energy, that surpass their physical possibilities.



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Another important aspect that describes the environment for child development and is captured in this study is that of household adults' attitudes towards the usage of beating as a means of education. Thus a quarter of respondents do not completely exclude the statement "Sometimes you need to beat children in order to educate them well". We may presume that the percentage of those who answered positively to this question would have been even higher in the absence of the social desirability phenomenon. World Vision Romania captured the phenomenon in researches performed in 2005 and 2009 and included in its own programmes activities to fight against it. It is a worrisome result given the conditions in which numerous campaigns were conducted at a national level so as to promote educational principles alternative to beating. In order to address this phenomenon, public campaigns against beating in education should restart.

The research also comprised a component to evaluate Mathematics knowledge and abilities as well as reading and understanding of a text among rural children from the 1st up to the 7th grade. Although the tests were applied for the first time and that is why respondents' performances cannot be compared to different moments in time or other populations, the overall results are clearly unsatisfactory. Thus, for the Mathematics test, 20% of respondents obtained a lower score than the average scores that could have been obtained by choosing answers at random. At the same time, the relation between age and result is positive but of weak intensity, after the age of 10, the performances at the test remain almost the same, a fact which is extremely worrisome combined with overall poor results.

The reading test, applied to the same category of subjects and which assessed reading and understanding of a simple 60 words text in a finite time, also reveals overall poor results. Thus, only 40% of children read the text without mistakes and only half of them answered correctly to all four questions that assessed the level of understanding.

The study reveals another surprising aspect about the relation between housing and school performances: pupils in isolated villages, at great distance to a city and communal centre, do not have overall poorer results in the tests⁴⁰. Educational aims are though lower among those in isolated villages, a fact that leads to inequality in educational chances and also similar school performances.

Data in this study do not allow us to make comparisons between performances in urban and rural areas, but recent studies in which the two categories of pupils are compared show important differences (Hatos 2011). Thus, the PISA academic performance tests in the last 10 years, as well as TIMMS data show that there are major discrepancies between pupils living in rural areas and those in urban areas. On the TIMMS data, Istrate, Noveanu and Smith (2006) emphasise important differences between pupils in the 8th grade in rural areas in Mathematics and Natural

Sciences tests. Whereas pupils in urban areas obtain higher results than the international average, pupils in rural areas get scores that are much below the international average.

In conclusion, poor academic results of pupils in rural areas are worrisome and demand immediate concerted measures of school, family and community in order to increase performance and equity, reducing the impact of social, cultural and family economic resources on individual results. For that purpose it is necessary to develop programmes that aim at characteristics of education in rural areas and have as objective to lead simultaneously at increasing quality of education and diminishing inequality of chances between rural and urban pupils.

The research assessed the level of civil participation in the Romanian rural areas, including children. Citizen participation is not just a right, but also an important premise for a qualitative government. For the children, participation offers the context to learn abilities and knowledge favourable to democracy. At first sight, adults seem to have been quite frequently involved in common decisions and activities of the village. At a closer look, things are different: meetings with no connection to decision making about community life ("village days", school festivities, religious events) are given as examples of civil participation by adult subjects. Moreover, a large majority of respondents (86%) state that decisions related to different problems of the community are made by authorities without citizen consultation. The overall image as shaped in the study is that of villages where mayors and councillors are considered efficient, but little interested in consulting adults and, the less, in consulting children in the village. Even if children's voice does not seem to matter in debates that take place on a community level, things seem to look better on family level, where more than half of adult responders state that in their household children are consulted when important decisions are made.

Moreover, besides attributes of the environment children live in (family, school, community), the research assessed some aspects that describe their psychological comfort and happiness. Only 44% of children respondents obtained a maximum score to an index formed by combining four questions, stating they have friends they can count on, they feel healthy, are capable of doing things other children their age do and are as happy as other children are. On the other side of the scale, there are 11% children with a low level of psychological comfort. Once more statistical analyses show the most extremely important role of household resources on child psychological comfort.

Data in this study allowed to assess the impact labour migration has over many aspects related to child welfare: covering basic needs, such as food, housing, safety, access to health services and education, as well as academic performance and psychological comfort. The analysis of collected responses reveal that the medium duration of a member's departure is of 16 months, half of



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departures are longer than a year and a quarter surpass two years. In 15% of the cases both parents are abroad, mothers in a percentage of 79%, and fathers 21%.

Indicators referring to covering basic needs, health, education, but also psychological comfort are slightly positively influenced by the departure of one or both parents. At the same time, these results do not exclude the possibility that long term effects may be mostly negative, or the fact that consequences can be ill-fated, especially when both parents are away. Overall tendencies are accompanied by high variations in quality of life among subjects, a result that supports the importance of public policies, as well as punctual interventions initiated by authorities or non-governmental organisations to diminish the difficulties due to parents' departure.

The abundance of information comprised in this third World Vision study on child welfare in rural areas completely supports the utility of this endeavour. The results of the research are an important source for analyses, debates, programmes, policies, as well as for further research, all having as purpose the increase of children's quality of life in Romanian rural areas and reducing the disparity between rural and urban.

Macro economical indicators
Main indicators

Tabelul I. Indicatori macroeconomici

Public administration

Legal entities (% of GDP)

Households (% of PIB)

Others (% of PIB)

	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Indicatori principali								
Rata de creștere a PIB	0,4	5,4	6,4	-6,6	-1,6	2,5	1,4	2,9
Output gap ¹	-4,2	-2,8	7,2	0,4	-3,2	-2,8	-3,7	-3,3
IAPC (variația anuală %)	74,6	26,0	7,1	5,6	6,1	5,8	3,1	3,4
Cererea internă (variația anuală %) ²	2,0	7,5	10,6	-12,0	-1,5	3,1	1,9	3,8
Rata șomajului (% din forța de muncă) ³	5,6	7,1	6,7	6,9	7,3	7,4	7,2	7,1
Formarea brută de capital fix (% din PIB)	20,1	20,8	27,9	24,4	24,0	24,6	25,9	26,6
Economia națională brută (% din PIB)	14,0	17,6	16,9	21,2	20,9	24,7	25,1	25,7
Administrația publică (% din PIB)								
(-)	-3,5	-2,6	-3,0	-9,0	-6,8	-5,2	-2,8	-2,2
Datoria brută	14,1	22,7	13,6	23,6	30,5	33,3	34,6	34,6
Active financiare nete	42,8	29,9	10,0	-2,2	-7,3	n.a	n.a	n.a
Venit total	31,8	32,8	33,7	32,1	33,4	32,5	33,4	33,2
Cheltuieli totale	35,3	35,4	36,7	41,1	40,2	37,7	36,2	35,4
din care: dobânzi	3,4	2,6	0,9	1,5	1,5	1,6	1,7	1,7
Societăți (% din PIB)								
Capacitate netă de finanțare (+) sau necesar net de finanțare (-)	-0,8	-5,4	-5,3	4,9	6,6	n.a	n.a	n.a
Active financiare nete; societăți nefinanciare	-85,4	-85,1	-109,3	-121,6	-158,3	n.a	n.a	n.a
Active financiare nete; corporații financiare	-0,9	0,3	-0,9	4,5	7,1	n.a	n.a	n.a
Formarea brută de capital	10,3	17,0	21,4	17,7	13,1	n.a	n.a	n.a
Excedent brut de exploatare	26,6	23,3	26,7	29,2	25,8	n.a	n.a	n.a
Gospodări și IFSLSGP (% din PIB)								
Capacitate netă de finanțare (+) sau necesar net de finanțare (-)	-1,2	4,1	-2,4	0,0	-5,1	n.a	n.a	n.a
Active financiare nete	35,7	33,9	56,2	46,1	92,2	n.a	n.a	n.a
Indemnizații brute și salarii	28,6	32,0	33,6	34,3	34,0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Venit net din proprietate	5,0	3,5	1,0	0,7	0,0	n.a	n.a	n.a
Transferuri curente încasate	20,9	15,9	15,1	17,0	17,5	n.a	n.a	n.a
Economii brute	2,5	-1,9	-5,9	-0,8	-1,5	n.a	n.a	n.a
Restul lumii (% din PIB)								
Capacitate netă de finanțare (+) sau necesar net de finanțare (-)	-5,6	-3,8	-10,6	-3,6	-3,7	-4,0	-4,9	-4,9
Active financiare nete	10,8	23,4	45,8	76,1	69,8	n.a	n.a	n.a
Exporturi nete de bunuri și servicii	-6,4	-7,0	-12,3	-6,0	-5,2	-5,1	-6,2	-5,9
Venituri primare nete încasate de la restul lumii	-1,1	-1,8	-3,2	-1,4	-1,2	-1,3	-1,4	-1,5
Tranzacții de capital net	0,3	0,4	0,6	0,5	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,1
Sectorul bunurilor comercializabile	65,0	59,2	54,5	53,2	55,1	55,2	n.a	n.a
Sectorul bunurilor necomercializabile	27,3	30,6	34,2	36,7	35,2	32,8	n.a	n.a
din care: Sectorul construcțiilor	5,6	5,6	8,6	10,5	10,0	9,8	n.a	n.a
Rata de schimb reală efectivă (index, 2000=100)	71,4	95,8	138,7	141,3	150,4	152,5	147,3	148,8
Raportul de schimb bunuri și servicii (index, 2000=100)	92,1	102,7	122,7	134,7	138,1	140,2	139,2	143,0
Performanța pe piața a exporturilor (index, 2000=100)	92,4	123,3	148,8	169,6	173,9	182,8	186,1	188,8
Note:								
¹ Output gap-ul reprezintă diferența dintre produsul intern brut real și produsul intern brut potențial la prețurile pieței din anul 2000.								
² Indicatorul privind cererea internă include stocurile.								
³ Șomerii sunt persoanele care nu au fost încadrate în muncă, au căutat un								
Surză:								
Previzunile serviciilor Comisiei din primăvara anului 2012								

Labour market and social indicators

Tabelul VIII. Indicatori ai pieței muncii și indicatori sociali

Indicatori ai pieței muncii	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Rata ocupării forței de muncă (% din populația cu vârsta cuprinsă între 20-64 ani)	64,8	64,4	64,4	63,5	63,3	62,8
Creșterea ocupării forței de muncă (variația % față de anul anterior)	1,9	0,7	0,2	-1,3	0,0	-1,1
Rata ocupării forței de muncă a femeilor (% din populația feminină cu vârste cuprinse între 20-64 ani)	58,5	57,9	57,3	56,3	55,9	55,7
Rata ocupării forței de muncă a bărbaților (% din populația masculină cu vârsta cuprinsă între 20-64 ani)	71,2	71,0	71,6	70,7	70,8	69,9
Rata ocupării forței de muncă a lucrătorilor în vârstă (% din populația cu vârsta cuprinsă între 55-64 ani)	41,7	41,4	43,1	42,6	41,1	40,0
Ocuparea forței de muncă cu fracțiune de normă (% din ocuparea totală a forței de muncă)	10,2	10,3	10,4	10,3	11,5	10,9
Ocuparea cu fracțiune de normă a femeilor (% din ocuparea forței de muncă a femeilor)	10,4	11,0	11,5	11,2	12,1	12,1
Ocuparea cu fracțiune de normă a bărbaților (% din ocuparea a forței de muncă a bărbaților)	9,9	9,7	9,6	9,5	11,0	10,0
Ocuparea forței de muncă cu contract pe perioadă determinată (% angajaților cu contract de muncă pe perioadă determinată)	1,8	1,6	1,3	1,0	1,1	1,5
Rata șomajului ¹ (% din forța de muncă)	7,3	6,4	5,8	6,9	7,3	7,4
Șomaj pe termen lung ² (% din forța de muncă)	4,2	3,2	2,4	2,2	2,5	3,1
Rata șomajului în rândul tinerilor (% din forța de muncă tânără cu vârsta cuprinsă între 15-24 ani)	21,0	20,1	18,6	20,8	22,1	23,7
Rata tinerilor care nu sunt încadrați profesional sau nu urmează un program de educație sau de formare (NEET) ³ (% din populația cu vârsta cuprinsă între 15-24 ani)	14,8	13,3	11,6	13,9	16,4	:
Abandonul școlar din sistemele de educație și formare (% din populația cu vârsta cuprinsă între 18-24 ani, cu cel mult educație gimnazială, care nu mai urmează un program de educație sau formare)	17,9	17,3	15,9	16,6	18,4	:
Proporția persoanelor cu educație terțiară (% din populație cu vârsta cuprinsă între 30-34 ani, care au absolvit un program de învățământ terțiar)	14,8	16,6	18,8	19,5	20,6	:
Productivitatea muncii per lucrător (variația anuală în %)	7,1	5,9	7,3	-4,7	-0,2	2,0
Număr de ore lucrate per lucrător (variația anuală în %)	0,9	0,5	0,0	0,4	-0,2	-0,3
Productivitatea muncii per oră lucrată (variația anuală în %; la preturi constante)	6,2	5,4	7,3	-5,1	-0,1	2,3
Compensația per lucrător (variația anuală în %; la preturi constante)	1,7	7,5	14,5	-5,9	1,5	-4,0
Creșterea nominală a costului unitar al forței de muncă (variația anuală în %)	4,9	15,2	22,9	2,9	7,9	1,7
Creșterea reală a costului unitar al forței de muncă (variația anuală în %)	-5,1	1,5	6,6	-1,2	1,8	-5,9
Note:						
¹ În conformitate cu definiția OIM, grupul de vârstă 15-74 ani.						
² Proporția în forța de muncă a persoanelor care au fost în șomaj timp de cel puțin 12 luni.						
³ NEET include persoane care nu sunt nici încadrate profesional, nici nu urmează un program de educație sau formare.						
Surse:						
Comisia (Ancheta privind forța de muncă în UE și and conturile naționale europene)						



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