

bologna process

NATIONAL REPORTS 2004 – 2005

Country:	ROMANIA
Date:	18.01.2005
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1. Main achievements since Berlin

1.1. Give a brief description of important developments, including legislative reforms

Romania has made major steps towards the European Higher Education Area by reorganizing the entire higher education system. A new higher education structure has been adopted following the discussions that occurred within the National Rectors Council in November 2003 which have shown a general consensus regarding the adoption of this structure. The Declaration of the National Higher Education Conference released on 5 November 2003 expressed the commitment of all academic representatives (Universities, National Rectors Council and Ministry of Education and Research) to sustain the objectives stated in the Bologna declaration and in the Prague 2001, and Berlin 2003, ministerial meetings.

The new legislation of June 2004 (law no. 288/2004) stipulates the reorganisation of university studies in three cycles (Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral). Starting with the academic year 2005-2006, Romanian higher education structure will be as follows:

- First cycle (180-240 ECTS) – Bachelor degree;
- Second cycle (90-120 ECTS, exceptionally 60 ECTS) – Master degree;
- Third cycle (3 years and in special situations 4 or 5 years) - Doctoral degree.

All candidates for the title of doctor must be graduates of master's study programmes.

According to the new law, the applying of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is mandatory to all universities and these will mandatory deliver for free, including in a foreign language of widespread circulation, the Diploma Supplement, whose content is in conformity with the European provisions, starting with 2005/2006 academic year.

The provisions of the law 288/2004 shall apply to the public and private higher education, accredited or temporary authorized, according to the law, starting with the academic year 2005/2006.

The studies leading to professions regulated by European Union sectoral directives are not subject to this law.

As regard the quality assurance field there is a draft law available for public debate on the website of the Ministry of Education and Research (Ministerul Educatiei si Cercetarii-MEdC). At national level is the intention to set up the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, under the coordination of the MEdC; its purpose shall be to develop and implement the national framework for quality assurance in the national education system.

2. National organisation

2.1. Give a short description of the structure of public authorities responsible for higher education, the main agencies/bodies in higher education and their competencies (For example, do higher education institutions report to different ministries?)

Higher education in Romania is provided in higher education institutions: universities, institutes, academies, conservatories and colleges. Higher education institutions are coordinated, financed and supervised by the Ministry of Education and Research, which is the National Authority for Education. At the end of every academic year, rectors of higher education institutions must submit a report on the state of the higher education institution to the MEdC, which is a public document.

Under the authority of the ministry a number of councils and agencies play a very important role in fields such as financing and scientific research.

The National Rectors Council is composed by all rectors of accredited higher education institutions and is a very active body consulted by the ministry. Its role in adopting the new legislation regarding the reorganization of university studies was fundamental. According to the new law 288/2004, the length of study cycles on fields and specializations will be set by the Ministry of Education and Research, at the proposal of the National Rectors Council which will be approved by Government decision.

The National Council for Higher Education Financing (CNFIS) is a consultative council constituted in 1994. Its main responsibilities are to present to the minister of education proposals regarding the financing needs of higher education, taking into account the objectives of the universities and national strategies in order to develop higher education system and to propose the distribution of the funds provided by the national budget to higher education institutions.

The National University Research Council (CNCSIS) created at the end of 1994, has been an important part of the reform in higher education. CNCSIS is the main institution to finance scientific research in Romanian universities. It works as a consultative council under the authority of the MEdC and expresses the point of view of the academic community regarding scientific research.

In order to promote a strong partnership between higher education institutions and socio-economic environment the National Agency for Partnership between Universities and Socio-Economic Environment (APART) has been established by Government decision (2001). The Agency has the mission to promote and support cooperation actions between higher education institutions, economic agents and other institutes and organizations, with the purpose to provide specific partnership development, in the fields of professional training and specialization, technology transfer, organizing of business incubators and technology parks, labour market research, academic opening towards the economic and social environment, facilitation of higher education graduates' absorption by the labour market, development of entrepreneurial dimension of Romanian universities.

2.2. Give a short description of the institutional structure

(For example, number of public/private universities/other HE institutions or numbers/percentage of students in public/private sector. To what extent are private and State higher education institutions covered by the same regulations?)

The national higher education system comprises both state and private accredited education institutions and units. The state higher education sector in Romania includes 56 public higher education institutions and other 20 private accredited higher education institutions. In the academic year 2002-2003, there were enrolled 596.297 students in higher education institutions (source: National Institute of Statistics, Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 2003), of

which 462.293 at day education, 3006 - evening education, 70.778 - part-time education and 59.581 at distance education. In private higher education institutions were enrolled 139.038 students in academic year 2002-2003 of which 88.741 at day education, 254 - evening education, 27.281 - part-time education and 604 at distance education.

According to education law no. 84/1995, private accredited higher education institutions are included in the national education system and are covered by the same regulations as public higher education. Private higher education represents an alternative and is complementary to public education. It is subject to an accreditation process. These institutions are autonomous in content of organizing and functioning in accordance with the education system legislation. In private higher education tuition fees are established by each institution or unit according to the law.

2.3. Give a brief description of the structure which oversees the implementation of the Bologna Process in your country

(National Bologna group, thematic working groups, composition and activities, stakeholder involvement)

The representative of Romania in the follow-up group is the secretary of state for higher education which works directly with the National Rectors Council. General Direction for Higher Education within the MEdC is in charge with the implementation of Bologna objectives and strategies.

In June 2004 was created Romanian Team of Bologna Promoters with the support of European Commission through a Socrates grant. The main outcome of the Romanian Team of Bologna Promoters will consist in advising higher education institutions in order to fully implement the Bologna provisions in all Romanian universities starting with autumn 2005. The TBP members are directly implicated in Romanian higher education system having a long and fruitful expertise in higher education and an accurate knowledge of the requirements of the Bologna Process. Among them there are Rectors, Deans, Senior Academics, International Relation Officers, selected by the Ministry of Education and Research on the criteria of representative geographical distribution in order to cover all important academic centres (Bucharest, Iasi, Cluj-Napoca, Craiova, Timisoara).

The Team is composed of three thematic groups acting in the fields of the Bologna Process' priorities: Quality Assurance, the Three Cycle System and Recognition issues (ECTS and Diploma Supplement). Each group has four members with a deep knowledge of the specific theme (e.g. the Recognition sub-unit has among its members three former ECTS national counsellors and the Head of National Centre for Recognition and Equivalence of Diplomas Granted Abroad).

TBP's activities consist in:

- Expertise and consultancy for HEI in order to modify the present curricula according to the requirements of the new three cycles structure (through "in situ" visits at universities).
- Dissemination of Bologna Process objectives focusing on quality assurance (through regional workshops) and forms of mutual recognition (an ECTS guide).
- Elaboration of the detailed structure of the Diploma Supplement.

The first step, namely issuing the brochure has been done and, in this way, it offers relevant informations to all interested partners.

3. Quality assurance

The following questions have been included in the template at the request of the Working Group on Stocktaking.

3.1. National quality assurance systems should include a definition of the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.

Please specify the responsibilities of the bodies and institutions involved.

The Ministry of Education is responsible to account for the national education system evaluation.

The National Council for Academic Evaluation and Accreditation (CNEAA) functions since 1993 and has been responsible, according to the law, for assuring the quality and the accreditation procedures for higher education institutions. CNEAA activity includes commissions for external evaluation of higher education institutions, in order to assure a temporary functioning authorization and of a later accreditation.

Each higher education institution is responsible for ensuring quality for all activities and at all levels, in agreement with the standards of reference, which are being updated. The quality management system within the higher education institution has as its objective the internal processes for assuring quality, including self-evaluation at every level, in accordance with the standards of reference, including the requirements of the systems of external evaluation of quality.

3.2. National quality assurance systems should include a system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures.

Describe the system of accreditation, certification or comparable procedures, if any.

According to the law no. 88/1993 regarding the higher education institutions accreditation and the recognition of degrees higher education institutions are established only by law.

Standards and criteria for accreditation are set down by this law. Quality assurance encompasses ongoing internal evaluation of higher education institutions and external assessment. The latter begins with a temporary authorization of new institutions, accreditation three years after the temporary authorization, and repeated assessment every five years.

New programmes also must be initially temporary authorized. Accreditation is awarded after several assessments. The periodic institutional assessment covers all study programmes. The institutions that do not meet the required standards are given a year to improve.

The reports of the initial review group are confined to facts and are first given to the university for verification. The next stage of the report is written by the expert committee and is based on the self-evaluation report of the institution and the review team report. The final report is discussed and approved by the full Council and may include recommendations for the university. The report is then submitted to the Minister who may return it for reassessment to the commission. The report of the Commission and the comments of the Minister are sent to the institution, and if the latter agrees, may be made public. The final decision on accreditation is made by the Government for programmes at accredited institutions or by the Parliament for new institutions.

3.3. National quality assurance systems should include international participation, co-operation and networking.

Are international peers included in the governing board(s) of the quality assurance agency(ies)?

The Ministry of Education and Research is financing CALISRO, a research programme on the quality of higher education in Romania, which constitutes the basis for the structuring bodies responsible for ensuring quality at the level of institutions and at national level. The project aims to find out and implement efficient mechanism of quality assurance based on detailed studies and discussions with academic representatives.

CNEEA activity regarding quality assurance doesn't include international peers. The future agency (Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) will cooperate with higher education institutions from Romania and abroad, as well as with other European institutions (ex.: ENQA), in order to support the efforts of assuring quality of higher education in Romania at the level of European Union requirements. One of the main responsibilities of the Agency is to assure periodically, at request, external assessment of educational providers, independently or by association with other institutions and experts from abroad (Article 12 (g) - Draft Law regarding Quality Assurance in Education).

Please add any general comments, reflections and/or explanations to the material on quality assurance in the stocktaking report.

The draft law regarding the quality assurance in education is in final stage of public discussions and will be submitted to the Parliament for approval.

4. The two-cycle degree system

The two-cycle degree system is covered by the stocktaking exercise. Please add any comments, reflections and/or explanations to the stocktaking report.

The existence of the two distinct forms of education has been an extremely favourable premise for the implementation of the cycles stipulated in the Bologna Declaration. Short-term education, present in many fields of university education with the purpose to train graduates with a great capacity of insertion on the labour market, can easily be transformed into a first cycle, granting the graduates the title of Bachelor.

5. Recognition of degrees and periods of study

Recognition of degrees and periods of study is covered by the stocktaking exercise. Please add any comments, reflections and/or explanations to the stocktaking report.

Romania has signed the Lisboa Convention, April 1997, on recognition of qualifications obtained in the higher education and has ratified this document through Law no. 172/1998. The National Center for Recognition of Diplomas (CNRED), a structure affiliated to the networks ENIC/NARIC, functions within the Ministry of Education and Research and it is in charge of the recognition of diplomas.

Romanian Higher Education Institutions use as instruments for recognition of degrees and periods of study the European Credit Transfer System.

Several official regulations of the Ministry of Education have gradually enforced the use of ECTS in Romanian higher education institutions – from ECTS as a recommended system (1998) to a compulsory system (the law of June 2004). Some Universities have been using ECTS since 1996.

According to the law 288/2004, starting with academic year 2005-2006, the universities will mandatory deliver the Diploma Supplement free of charge to each graduate, in a foreign language of widespread circulation.

These measures will facilitate the recognition of degrees and periods of study of students in Europe and worldwide.

6. Doctoral studies and research

6.1. Give a short description of the organisation of third cycle studies

(For example, direct access from the bachelor level, balance between organised courses, independent study and thesis)

Doctoral studies are regulated by the Education Law no. 84/1995 and the Government Decision no. 37/1999. Doctoral Diploma (Diploma de doctor) is the highest academic degree awarded in all fields after 4-6 years of study and original research. It is preceded by the first academic degree - "Diploma de Licenta" and requires the passing of examinations and the submission of an original thesis. University senates may require a master degree for the admission at the doctoral studies.

The doctoral training programme is structured into:

- a) High general training. Duration: 2 years for attendance system and 4 years for no attendance system;
- b) Preparation and elaboration of the doctorate thesis. Duration: 2 years.

The structure of the training programme consists of theoretical and practical activities for the specific field of the doctorate, at least 3 examinations and 3 essays or at least 3 creative works in the artistic field. For the doctorate with regular attendance, the structure of the training programme includes besides examinations and essays/ creative works the attendance of minimum 4 courses and their respective seminars.

The Doctoral studies finish with a Doctorate thesis and graduates receive the scientific title of Doctor, respectively, the Doctor Diploma.

According to the new law 288/2004 regarding the organisation of university studies a third cycle (doctoral studies) is foreseen to have 3 years and in special situations 4 or 5 years. All candidates for the title of doctor must be graduates of master's study programmes or its equivalent. The specific regulations for the organization of doctoral university studies shall be elaborated by MEdC and they have to be submitted to Government's approval.

6.2. What are the links between HE and research in your country?

(For example, what percentage of publicly-funded research is conducted within HE institutions?)

MEdC has encouraged the universities to increase the international cooperation in research field by disseminating informations on European research programmes, including FP 6 programme. Universities can compete for the national research programmes financed by MEdC (AGRAL, VIASAN, BIOTECH etc).

The National University Research Council is the main Romanian funding organisation for university and postgraduate research programmes. Since 1995 CNCSIS is organizing selection stages for grants financed by public budget. CNCSIS budget represent maximum 8 % from the total budget allocated to Romanian research.

The grant is a special form of financing based on competition for scientific research themes of national interest and distinct originality. The grant, which is non-reimbursable, is given to an individual researcher/coordinator of a research team from an accredited higher education institution, public or private research unit and institution to carry out, in a definite period of time, specific scientific research that may contribute to the development of science. The grant may also fund activities connected to research (the purchase of research infrastructures, publishing or patenting the results of the research, scientific seminars, research scholarships, etc). The grant is based on the evaluation of the research project that has been proposed, of the applicants' previous achievement, and in keeping with the national strategy for the scientific research development, and the strategy of each institution or unit activating in the field. The grants are approved by the MEdC following the proposal of the CNCSIS.

Universities can also compete for grants awarded on basis of bilateral and international programmes.

7. Mobility of students and staff

7.1. Describe the main factors influencing mobility of students from as well as to your country (For instance funds devoted to mobility schemes, portability of student loans and grants, visa problems)

Higher education institutions in Romania have been involved in SOCRATES and LEONARDO da VINCI programmes since 1997. Responsible for academic mobility are National Agency Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci Agency, both under the coordination of the Ministry of Education and Research.

For the academic year 2003/2004 the sum allotted for Erasmus mobilities was 3.100.000 Euros and 3.122.308,38 were spent (due funds transfer from the decentralised action "Mobilities") and a number of 3005 students have participated in mobility programmes (Source: Socrates National Agency). Some minor visa problems of Romanians students have been solved.

The Socrates National Council has requested all universities to supplement the grants for their students in order to assure 500 EURO per month/student.

The special scholarship "Romanian Government" is offered with the purpose to train young leaders in public administration. The National Office for Student Grants Abroad manages grants through which the Government of Romania supports Romanian students, in order to study abroad for relatively short periods of time (2 to 10 months). Grants are financed by the budget managed by the MEdC. Furthermore, the Office manages grants set through bilateral agreements in the field of higher education.

The external portability is not yet regulated but the internal portability, between Romanian universities, is in use. Students may benefit from bank loans to support their studies within various mobility programmes.

In order to increase the number of foreign students, Romanian Universities will have to promote more actively their image abroad, invest in their courses, modules, degrees in international languages. Romanian universities are in the process of expanding their presentations on web-pages, thus providing transparency and reliable information to possible partners / visitors. Moreover, incoming students benefit not only from access to all university facilities, but also, where the course is taught in Romanian, from free Romanian language courses, tutoring and literature in their preferred language. Many universities invested a lot in the infrastructure relevant for international exchanges (residences, restaurants etc.)

In order to increase the number of outgoing students the study of languages should be diversified and extra financial support should be provided.

7.2. Describe any special measures taken in your country to improve mobility of students from as well as to your country

A Phare project called "PHARE END USERS SUPPORT" has been initiated by MEdC and Socrates Agency, in amount of 2.678.000 EURO, in order to supplement the exchange students grants for the academic year 2003/2004. Almost all exchange students will benefit by this grant supplement.

Most of the universities are co-financing the grants of their exchange students.

7.3. Describe the main factors influencing mobility of teachers and staff from as well as to your country (For instance tenure of appointment, grant schemes, social security, visa problems)

In the academic year 2003/2004, 807 Romanian exchange teaching staff was involved in mobilities and in the academic year 2002/2003, 330 foreign teaching staff came to Romanian universities. From our experience we have noticed that many foreign teachers coming into Romania are also interested in developing exchanges in their research fields as well.

Compatibility and / or complementarity of curricula and syllabi, as well as reliable information are factors which play an important role in teaching / staff mobility. Participation in the Tuning project and the implementation of Bologna Declaration will help in this respect. International cooperation takes often the form of modules or intensive courses inserted in the existing curricula – a practice which needs to be expanded; joint degrees may be instrumental.

7.4. Describe any special measures taken in your country to improve mobility of academic teachers and staff from as well as to your country

A PHARE project of Socrates Agency for supporting the teaching staff was approved under PHARE 2004. It is designed to last until 2006.

We can mention teaching staff exchange in the field of education and research, in order to cover an existing need in the field at the host university or to offer aid in the development of new syllabi, new support for learning, new technologies of teaching and learning etc.

8. Higher education institutions and students

8.1. Describe aspects of autonomy of higher education institutions

Is autonomy determined/defined by law? To what extent can higher education institutions decide on internal organisation, staffing, new study programmes and financing?

University autonomy is fully guaranteed by the provisions of Romania's Constitution, art.32 (6), which stipulates that "the autonomy of the Universities is guaranteed" and those of the Education Law no.84/1995 (Section 7), article 92 (2) "academic autonomy refers to institutional management, structuring and operation, teaching and scientific research activities, administration and financing", consolidated. It relies on the right of the university community to its own leadership and on its right to benefit from academic freedom without any political, ideological or religious constraints. It also relies on its right to assume a set of competencies and obligations in accordance with the national strategic directions set for the development of higher education, stipulated by the law.

The whole set of rights and obligations as well as the norms underlying the life of the university community are to be found in the University Chart adopted by the university senate, according to the law.

8.2. Describe actions taken to ensure active participation from all partners in the process

Most of the universities have developed partnerships with the stakeholders in order to promote Bologna objectives and to harmonize Romanian HE with European trends.

8.3. How do students participate in and influence the organisation and content of education at universities and other higher education institutions and at the national level?

(For example, participation in University Governing Bodies, Academic Councils etc)

According to the Statute of Teaching Staff Law no. 128/1997 students are represented in the

university senate (minimum 25%), elected according to the law.

The executive administration of the university is assured by the University Senate Office composed by rector, vice-rectors, scientific secretary, administrative general director and a representative of students or students' legal entities. The rector can invite at the Office meetings representatives of syndicates and students' associations or any other stakeholders. In the Faculty Councils students are represented in a proportion of 1 out of 4.

At national level student's associations are consulted by the ministry in each concern and regulation related to their status.

9. The social dimension of the Bologna Process

9.1. Describe measures which promote equality of access to higher education

The changes within higher education due to the Bologna Process require the restructuring of social support national system. In Romania the social dimension of Bologna Process is shaped by state scholarships and grants (study and social grants, performance scholarships - excellence and merit scholarships, research grants), subsidized accommodation and meals, help with travelling expenses, support with health services.

In 2004 the budgetary support was extended to acquisition of PCs for pupils and students. The amount provided for each PC was of 200 EUR, 105.000 persons have benefitted from this program.

In addition to budgetary scholarships and loans, students may receive private scholarships from employers to fully or partially cover their tuition fees and living expenses.

In order to improve the access of students from rural areas to higher education, there are study scholarships awarded on the basis of the commitment to teach in rural education for a period of time at least equal to the duration of their studies. In order to assure an equal access for disadvantaged groups, Roma population may benefit at the university admission examination from 400 public budgetary places under the condition of fulfilling admission minimum criteria.

Offering subsidies for non-residence halls accommodation was a helpful measure taken for solving the issue of student accommodation.

From 2004 Romania participated as observer to EUROSTUDENT project, a monitoring system with regard to the socio-economic living conditions of higher education students in EU countries. This could easily develop to become an important instrument for Romania to provide valuable information for higher education policy.

10. Developments in lifelong learning

10.1. What measures have been taken by your country to encourage higher education institutions in developing lifelong learning paths?

Higher education institutions offer four types of postgraduate studies following the first degree, long-term university studies, as follows: in-depth specialization studies, master's degree studies, postgraduate academic studies, postgraduate studies of specialization and doctoral studies and postgraduate thoroughgoing studies for graduates of short-term and long term university studies. Also, universities provide assistance on a contract basis to initiators of adult training schemes as part of continuing education and re-training programmes, or may initiate such schemes by themselves.

A comprehensive legal background for adult education was set down in the education law no. 84/1995, revised and updated, which has a special chapter regarding lifelong learning and in

the Government Ordinance no. 129/2000, consolidated.

Ministries, national authorities, commercial companies or other legal entities, jointly with education units or separately, run adult training and refresher programmes, to improve qualifications of their present or future employees or re-train them. These training courses grant qualification certificates or professional competence recognized on the labour market. The law stipulates incentives for those who follow further-training courses for professional training, namely the right to standard salary, for those issued from public institutions and the payment of housing, per diem and transport, for those who take courses in other localities than that of their domicile.

For the training of adults the same law stipulates the possibility of organizing institutions and networks of open or distance education, that make use of modern communication and information technologies. These provisions of the law are applied in all universities.

10.2. Describe any procedures at the national level for recognition of prior learning/flexible learning paths

Such flexible learning paths are regulated only for the non-academic sector. In this respect a system of accumulation of credits should be implemented.

The National Council for Adult Vocational Training, a tripartite and autonomous body , is the social dialogue forum that promotes quality of lifelong training and contributes to the elaboration of policies and strategies in the field. The Council will be tranformed in a National Qualifications Authority.

11. Contribution to the European dimension in higher education

11.1 Describe any legal obstacles identified by your country and any progress made in removing legal obstacles to the establishment and recognition of joint degrees and/or joint study programmes

The emerging European Higher Education Area will create an attractive educational space based on the specific of European higher education. Joint Programmes give a great added value to higher education with reference to the University mission to form the human capital and the European citizens.

Romanian legislation does not regulate specifically the procedures to award joint or double degree. However, there are no legal obstacles related to this field. In the Romanian legislation, these universities, Romanian and foreign, must be accredited according to their national procedures and may offer study programmes leading to a double degree.

11.1.1. Describe the extent of integrated study programmes leading to joint degrees or double degrees

Romanian universities are establishing such study programmes through mutual agreements between universities as well as Governmental arrangements leading to a double degree, most of them in technical and agricultural fields but also in economic and law (ex.: "delocalisation des diplomes"). There are numerous (hundreds) of co-supervised PhD studies.

11.1.2. How have these programmes been organised? (joint admissions, mobility of students, joint exams, etc.)

Students and teachers staff mobility and mutual recognition of examinations represent the main tools used by universities in organizing this kind of programmes.

11.2. Describe any transnational co-operation that contributes to the European dimension

in higher education

Institutional cooperation between Romanian and European universities is the basis of the European dimension. Networking between higher education institutions has lately become a common practice.

Romanian HEIs have prepared themselves for being an effective partner by participating in EU programmes on education and training since 1996.

Two Romanian institutions (university departments - Physics and European Studies - from Bucharest and Iasi Universities) have been participating in the Tuning Project, the results of which are of significant relevance to the majority of Bologna action lines.

Five universities have been involved in the "Quality Culture" EUA project, their activity within the created networks being extremely efficient in the context of an emerging European culture of quality.

11.3. Describe how curriculum development reflects the European dimension

(For instance foreign language courses, European themes, orientation towards the European labour market)

The development of the study programmes in foreign languages has been an added value for the attractiveness of Romanian higher education. Departments in foreign languages at university level have been created in order to fulfil the increasing need on the labour market for high-quality personnel with very good language skills.

Curriculum development has been a priority of the universities, several of them participating in European thematic networks supported by European Commission through Socrates grants. Romanian universities have adapted their curriculum to the social and political context of EU enlargement by offering study programmes in European affairs.

Through Jean Monnet programme 9 universities have developed modules and training programmes for students aiming to achieve a deep knowledge of European construction, institutions and policies. Within this framework, departments/centers of European studies offer possibilities of academic research in Euro-Atlantic relations.

12. Promoting the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

12.1. Describe actions taken by your country to promote the attractiveness of the EHEA

The ministry has promoted the attractiveness of EHEA through seminars, conferences and workshops, organized in order to disseminate European trends in HE. It has also encouraged an active participation of Romanian HEIs within the projects developed by European associations involved in Bologna process (2003 EUA meeting in Cluj organized by "Babes-Bolyai" University). CNRED, representing NARIC-Romania, has organized, with the support of NARIC Socrates, a Conference on Bologna objectives (May 2004) with the participation of all Romanian rectors.

The new law no. 287/2004 on setting-up university consortia allows universities to voluntarily set up consortia, on the basis of a partnership agreement, in which they can include research and development units. These consortia should promote in a more efficient way an European and international attractiveness of EHEA in content of programmes and funding.

13. Concluding comments

13.1. Give a description of your national Bologna strategies

The multiplication of efforts in view of ensuring quality particularly with higher education institutions and through a national body, in the context of European recommendations and evolutions;

To elaborate a national framework of qualifications in correlation with studies on the labour market and compatible with the future European Qualifications Framework;

Monitoring of graduates' insertion within the labour market;

A full operationalization of European transfer credit and accumulation system;

The participation of Romania in programmes and actions aiming at the internationalization of higher education.

Following the meeting in Bergen, Romania will review these priorities, adding others, according to the recommendations that will be adopted.

13.2. Give an indication of the main challenges ahead for your country

Romanian higher education system has to cope with the following challenges:

- Candidates' focus only on some higher education fields, which leads to a lack of correlation between higher education offer and current employment possibilities on the labour market;
- A possibility that employers to fear about the relevance of first degrees on labour market;
- To create new specializations in order to fulfil labour market demands;
- The massification of higher education which will have to lead to the development and improvement of quality assurance procedures and funding mechanism;
- Insufficient contribution of the private sector to lifelong learning;
- Adult's low participation in lifelong learning;
- To create a better connection between the universities and socio-economic/cultural environment ;
- Improvement of transfer mechanisms regarding scientific research outcomes.

*Special mention

This report was drafted just before the nomination of the actual minister of education and research.