

# System of early education/care and professionalisation in **Romania**

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The educational ideal of the romanian education system stipulates the free, integrated and harmonious development of individuals, for educating autonomous and creative personalities. The early childhood education represents a component of the national education system, reflecting, through its educational services, the generic lines of the educational ideal mention in the fundamental law of education.

The profound and complex changes which take place at all levels of the society (economic, political, social and cultural) are influencing the evolution and education of the human personality. Education is challenged to offer response strategies to the challenges of contemporary society. The general tendencies of educational reforms produced serious curricular, institutional and managerial reforms at all educational levels, early childhood included.

## Contextual data

In order to have a clear image on the system of early education, we need some general statistic information about the situation in Romania.

According to the last official data offered by the INSSE<sup>1</sup> in 2005, there were 1.723.561 children of 0-7 years in Romania. For a more detailed view, we present the following chart:

Age Group	1-3 years	3-5 years	6-7 years	Total (1-7 years)
Number of children	840122	436919	446520	1. 723. 561

Tab. 1 Children in Romania

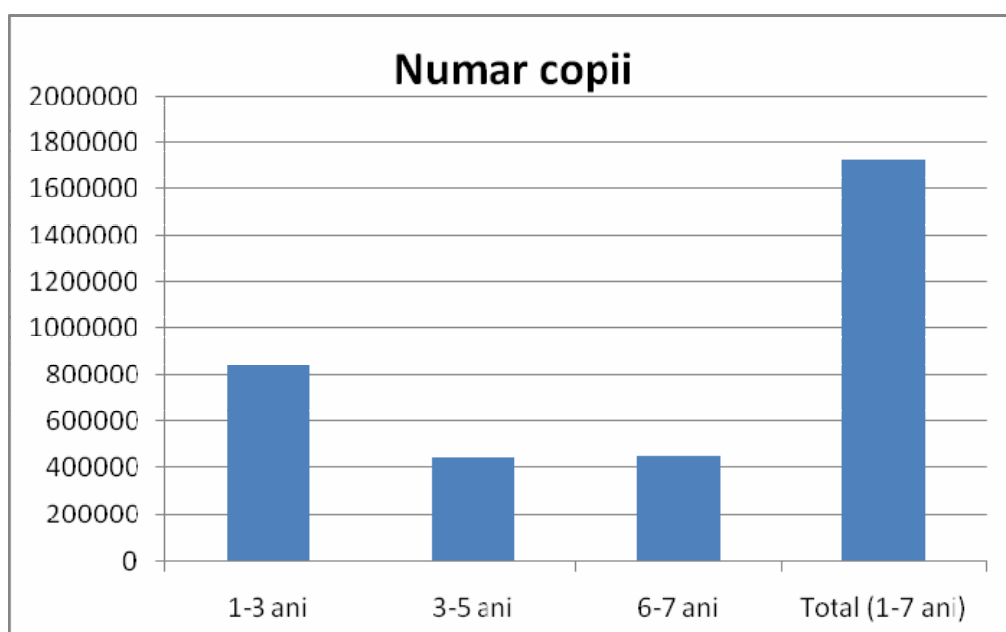


Abb. 1 Children in Romania

There is a falling tendency of the birth rate (calculated on 1000 dwellers) which reached 10, 2 ‰ in 2005<sup>2</sup>.

The natural birth rate in Romania is negative: -1, 9. The proportion of the number of children born alive at 1000 births in 2005 was of 10, 2. Child mortality (beneath 1 year) is of 15,0 and is falling (from 27 in 1990).

<sup>1</sup> [www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro)

<sup>2</sup> Idem.

As to the family type, global indicators at national level specify (for the year of 2005):

- Marriage rate of 6,5
- Number of divorces implying families with at least one child: 16.708.

A study of the year 2006 heightens the proportion of the families with two parents and single-parent ones according to the urban or rural region<sup>3</sup>. The study was based on a sample representative for the Romanian population of 0-1, 1-3, 3-5, 6-7 years, with a confidence level of 95% and a sample error of +/-6,23, +/-5,92, +/- 4,85, +/-4,99.

	Age	Two par- ents	One par- ent	No answer	Total
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>0-1 year</b>	94	5,2	0,8	494
	<b>1-3 years</b>	94,3	4,8	0,9	549
	<b>3-5 years</b>	93,5	6,5	0	817
	<b>6-7 years</b>	94,3	5,7	0	771
<b>Urban (%)</b>	<b>0-1 year</b>	93,9	5,2	0,9	229
	<b>1-3 years</b>	91,4	6,9	1,7	234
	<b>3-5 years</b>	93,8	6,2	0	417
	<b>6-7 years</b>	93,1	6,9	0	374
<b>Rural (%)</b>	<b>0-1 year</b>	94	5,2	0,8	265
	<b>1-3 years</b>	96,5	3,2	0,3	315
	<b>3-5 years</b>	93,2	6,8	0	400
	<b>6-7 years</b>	95,5	4,5	0	397

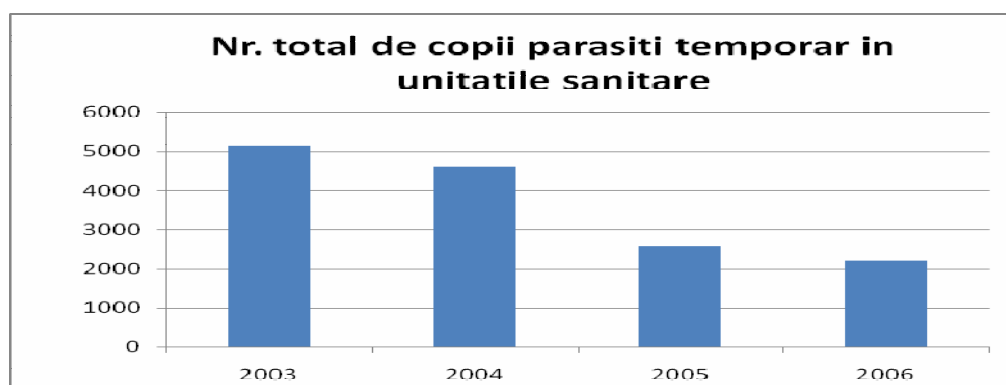
Tab. 2 Distribution of families as to their type and to their place of residence

The percentage of children living in a family where none of the members has a job has decreased: from 11% in 2004 to 10% in 2006.

An important aspect regards children abandoned in hospitals. 2216 cases have been registered in 2006, in spite of a significant decrease of this number:

2003	2004	2005	2006
5130	4614	2580	2216

Tab. 3 Total nr. of children temporarily abandoned in hospitals



<sup>3</sup> coord Angheliescu C, Iliescu M (2006)- *Cunostinte, atitudini si practice parentale in Romania*, Bucharest

## Abb. 2 Total nr. of children temporarily abandoned in hospitals

The rate of abandon in maternity hospitals in 2003 and 2004 was of 1,8%.

As to the nutrition of children, we can point out the following indicators corresponding to the year 2005:

Indicator	%
New born children beneath normal weight	8
New born children only nursed	16
New-born children on a mixt diet (complementary and lactation)- 6-9 months	41

Tab. 4 Nutrition of children

The child care leave (Romanian: CIC) can be received by any of the parents, mother or father, as well as by the person:

- who has nursed the baby,
- to whom the baby was given for adoption,
- who has the child in disposal or in emergency regime disposal,
- who was named tutor (in this situation, the fulfillment of the conditions for 12 months before the adoption, disposal or guardianship, according to the situation, must be taken into consideration).

The CIC is accorded to persons “which have had for 12 months, in the last year anterior to the child’s birth, an income liable to income tax according to the fiscal code and which are qualified for a child care vacancy of up to 2 years (3 years in the case of children with a handicap)”<sup>4</sup>.

CIC and the due indemnity is granted for the first three children born after the 1st of January 2006 (the children born before this day are also taken into consideration, if the petitioner has fulfilled the conditions for according the indemnity valid after the 1st of January 2006).

There are several forms of family and child support through allowances and indemnities legally settled:

the allowance for newborns<sup>5</sup>: 204 RON

the state allowance for children: from 0-2 years - 200 RON/month, and from 2-18 years – 25 RON/month

SUM (RON)	NR CHILDREN / FAMILY
54	FAMILY WITH ONE CHILD
65	FAMILY WITH TWO CHILDREN
73	FAMILY WITH THREE CHILDREN

<sup>4</sup> By incomes liable to the income tax, we understand: incomes from salary, from independent activities, from agricultural activities

<sup>5</sup> The term newborn refers to a child up to the age of 12 months. The mothers of the first four new-born children born alive can benefit from this new-born child allowance.

SUM (RON)	NR CHILDREN / FAMILY
83	FAMILY WITH 4 OR MORE CHILDREN

Tab. 5 single-parent allowance

**Beneficiaries:**

Families and single persons whose incomes are situated under the monthly level of the minimum wage guaranteed through governmental edict, have the right to a quantum aid of:

- single person - 96 lei (RON)
- a family of 2 persons - 173 lei (RON)
- a family of 3 persons - 241 lei (RON)
- a family of 4 persons - 300 lei (RON)
- a family of 5 persons - 356 lei (RON); for every other person surpassing this number of 5, the social aid will grow only by 24 lei (RON).

# Data on provision / early childhood services

## Current statistics

From an institutional point of view, the educational system for children up to 6-7 years contains:

- „Creșă”, nurseries (which can be of state or private) for children between 0 and 3 years:
  - The small group, up to the age of one year;
  - The middle group, between one and two years;
  - The big group, between 2 and 3 years.
- Kindergartens (which can be of state or private) for children between 3 and 6-7 years:
  - The small group 3-4 years;
  - The middle group 4-5 years;
  - The big group 5-6 years;
  - The group preparatory for school 6-7 years;
- „Centre de zi”, day care centers for children under 6 years in a situation of risk, coordinated by the „Directia Judeteana de Asistenta Sociala si Protectie a Copiului”;
- „Centre de zi” day care centers or particular kindergartens for children under the age of 6, approved by the MECT, which offer some examples of good practice in this field of activity;

Both the kindergartens and the „crese de stat” are financed by the local council and coordinated by the MECT and can benefit of budget contributions from other sources than from the state; the kindergartens and „crese particulare” are supervised by the MECT. The nursery schools have lost their formal identity, as they do not receive any governmental support.

From the point of view of the program:

- Crese
  - With a daily working program - they function in the interval between 7.00-19.00;
  - With a daily working program, they can function with a flexible program as well, at the parent’s or legal representative’s request and depending on their options; they ensure the safety conditions for the children;
  - With a weekly working program- they function on 5 working days a week<sup>6</sup>.
- The kindergarten
  - With a normal program (5 hours a day) – ensures the education and the corresponding preparation of the children for school and for the social life;
  - With an extended program (10 hours a day) – ensures the education and corresponding preparation of the children for school and for the social life, as well as their social protection (food, supervision and rest);

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<sup>6</sup> By weekly working program we understand the period of care and education of the children between Monday, 7.00, and Friday, 19.00.

- With a weekly program- ensures for the whole week the education and corresponding preparation of the children for school and for the social life, as well as the protection, food, supervision and rest for the children coming from disadvantaged social backgrounds and families;
- It can function with integrated groups (normal schedule with extended schedule and/or weekly program) no matter what program the parents request, the operative legal provision.

In the year 2006, there were:

- 3769 kindergardens
- 287 nurseries<sup>7</sup>

For the year 2007-2008

- The number of children registered in kindergardens is of 593.079;
- The number of children expected to register for a “kindergarten” for the year 2008-2009 is of 624.158;
- The number of children expected to register for primary school education for 2008-2009 is of 934.547.

The number of teaching jobs estimated for the year 2007-2008 is of:

- Nursery school teachers – 37.060
- School masters – 49.339

- 79% of the staff for primary school education is appointed, and 17% represent qualified substitutes
- from 2005 till 2007, 46.441 nursery teachers have completed continual training courses.
- 86% of the staff from the primary school education is appointed, and 13% represent qualified substitutes
- from 2005 till 2007, 92.710 school masters have completed continual training courses

Even though there is a clear educational policy for children between 3 and 6-7 years, the legislation for early education (0-3 years) is still insufficiently elaborated (in spite of the new educational law project discussed now, that presupposes important changes).

## **Governance, regulation, administration and inspection of services**

### **The nursery school**

- The methodological coordination of the services offered by the nursery schools is completed by the Ministry of Labor, Family and the Equality of Opportunities, by

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<sup>7</sup> The numbers referring to the nursery schools are from a study of the year 2004, but it seems that this number has decreased drastically.



the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, and by the Ministry of Public Health.

- The control is exercised by each of the above named institutions, according to the specific attributions.
- The Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, the Ministry of Public Health and the “National Agency for Occupying the Labor” elaborate and implement, according to the law, training, qualification, requalification and professional reconversion and courses on the field of education.

## **Kindergarten**

- It is in the coordination of the MECT.
- It is financed from governmental sources at a local level (local authorities, for example town halls), but also from own sources.
- It is founded with the agreement and accreditation of MECT, but at the initiative of the interested factors (Local Councils, parents, private firms etc.).

From a professional point of view, the MECT is developing coordination and control activities through the regional school inspection offices (the inspectorates). These are destined primarily to the kindergartens, but they can also be active in nursery schools (due to the unsettled statute of the nursery schools as institutions).

The types of inspections organised by ISJs/ISMB<sup>8</sup>:

- Thematic inspections- they aim at professional activities with a previously settled subject;
- R.O.D.I.S. inspections- the institution’s (kindergarten/nursery school) activity is analyzed in all its respects - administrative-financial aspects, management, didactic activities, human resources; the inspection is done by the whole team of inspectors, coordinated by one of them; the institution’s activities from the last 2 years are analyzed;
- Special inspections/ speciality - inspections carried out by the speciality inspectors in order to administrate the didactic degrees;
- Integral inspections- the evaluation of the quality by checking the institution’s documents and didactic activities;
- Return inspections- following other inspections, they inspect the fulfillment of the previously given recommendations at the fixed terms.

The managers of the institutions but also the coordinators of the methodic circles can develop assistance and inspection activities for their subordinated personnel.

Beside the inspections and control activities organised by MECT, the other implied ministries (mentioned above) develop analyze, control and counseling activities, concerning the activities from the ministry’s area of responsibility.

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<sup>8</sup> The guidance and counseling function of the staff from the institution is assured through the inspections.

## Key politics and practices

The offer of educational services for children between 0-3 years includes forms of the state institutions as well as some private forms.

„A specific feature of the current system for early education in Romania is that, because of the lacking legislation concerning the education of the children from 0 to 3 years, a number of nurseries or kindergartens have appeared, without there being a consistent structure and without clear educational standards. There is a diversity of institutions for early education, some of them listed as follows:

- “*Centre de zi*” (day centers) for children under 6 years which are in a situation of risk, coordinated by the “*Direcția Județeană de Asistență Socială și Protecție a Copilului*” (the regional direction for social assistance and protection of the child);
- “*Centre de zi*” (day centers) or “*grădinițe particulare*” (private kindergartens) for children under 6 years, approved by the Ministry of Education and Research, which constitute examples of good practice in this field;
- “*Grădinițe cu creșă*” (kindergartens with nursery) for children of the same age group as the ones from the day centers (under 6 years);
- “*Grădinițe*” (kindergartens) for children from 3 to 6/7 years. These are financed by local councils and coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research;
- “*Creșe*” (nurseries) for children from 4 months to 3 years, which also admit children older than 3 years, so as to maintain the hired personnel. They are financed and coordinated by the local councils, without supervising the quality of the work and without educational standards or standards of any kind”. (in: Strategy... 2007-2008, MECT, p.14).

In 2007, the law concerning the founding, organizing and functioning of the nursery schools was approved. The educational institution of the public system is the nursery school. This is “a structure which offers specialized social services for the raising, care and early education of children up to the age of 3. The beneficiaries from the services offered by nursery schools are children of Romanian citizens with their home or residence in Romania.

The nursery schools generally develop the following activities:

- they ensure care and supervision services to children aged up to 3 years;
- they ensure a program of early education, fit to the age, the needs, the potential of development and the particularities of the children up to 3 years;
- they ensure the supervision of the state of health and hygiene of children and accord the first aid and the necessary medical care in case of disease, until the child is taken away by the legal upholder or hospitalized, according to the case;
- ensure the nutrition of the children, abiding by the in force legal norms.
- they collaborate with the families of the children visiting the nursery and build a relation of active partnership with the parents/legal representatives in respecting the child’s interest;
- they ensure counseling and support for the parents/legal representatives of the children;
- they contribute to the early detection of risk situations which can lead to the separation of the child from his/her parents.” (art. 1 and 2 from law nr. 263/2007)

The coordination of the nurseries is done by the Ministry of Labor, Family and the Equality of Opportunities, by the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, and by

the Ministry of Public Health. Within the nursery schools, there are three age groups: the small group (children up to one year), the middle group (children of one and two years), the big group (children of 2 and 3 years). They can function with a daily or weekly program. At the parent's request, they can have a flexible daily program.

The financing of the nurseries of the public system can be done from one of the following sources: the budget of local councils, sums from the state budget, monthly contributions of the parents/legal representatives, donations, aid money, and other sources legally constituted. The personnel structure, the number of offices and the personnel categories are approved by the representatives of the three ministries that coordinate the nurseries.

The activity of children education is carried out in accordance with the program of every nursery and usually seeks the socializing of the child, his/her interaction with others, the developing of language, of psychic and motion functions and of some elements of personal autonomy. In the nurseries which are in partnership with kindergartens, the nursery school teachers have a teacher from the kindergarten as a spokesperson. The activity with the children is usually run with the 2-3-year-old ones. Up to 2 years, according to the in force law, there is a maternal/paternal vacancy for raising and nursing the child, as we have mentioned before. In the placement centers where children of 0-3 years are integrated, abandoned children, children who have no parents, from poor backgrounds etc. who need assistance and social protection; a "maternal assistant", prepared by short-time courses takes care of raising and nursing the child. This "maternal assistant" becomes a "substitute mother", paid by the General Office of Social Assistance and Protection of the Child and can take care of the child until he/she turns 18. The maternal assistant has no psychological and pedagogical training.

The evaluation of the child's progress in this age interval (0-3 years) is made from a medical and/or psychological point of view.

"For better representing the children's interests in the relation with the nursery school, the parents/legal representatives of the children subscribed at the nursery school can put themselves together in a parents committee. The representatives of the parents committee are necessarily to be consulted by the leadership of the nursery school concerning the activities and services dedicated to the children, as well as the increasing of the efficient management of the nursery school (art 7 from law nr. 263/2007). Parents participate at the activities conducted with the children, they are in a relation of collaboration with the specialized personnel from the nursery school, but a real, coherent partnership cannot be mentioned or outlined among these factors.

As part of the staff working in the nursery schools for children, we mention: the "caretaker" or, in some cases, the "education instructor", this person taking care, complementary, of the stimulation and development of the child through games and activities specific for his/her age. Some education instructors are graduates of the "Scoala Normala", the pedagogical high-school, who work in nursery schools because the previously occupied position has been dissolved or because they have not occupied any position in the primary school education. The caretakers have elementary schooling, some of them also the secondary school.

At the present moment, there is no early education personnel in the nursery schools qualified with superior studies or a specialization.

An imperative of the formation system of teaching staff is the specialization of the personnel offering early education to children aged between 0 and 3 years. In order to ensure the quality of the early education program in the nursery school, the hired personnel would benefit of formation courses, specializing, readjustment, change of profession and refresher courses in the field of child education.

Besides the nursery schools of the public system, there are private nursery schools which undergo the legal regulation previously mentioned.

The age period from 0 to 3 years is of great interest for the following changes at the level of early education in Romania. The new law project stresses the integration of the children in institutions offering care services and specialized education, with personnel qualified correspondingly, with superior studies on the field of early education, as opposed to the present moment, when the nursery schools are in a period of reorganization under the aspect of the curriculum, the educational space, the qualified personnel. The stress is set on the educational aspect, an aspect which at the moment is out of balance reported to the aspect of raising and caretaking. This stage of age appears in the law project as “preschool education”.

We mention that within this paper, there will be enough space and detailed information about the schooling level of 3-6/7 years, due to the fact that this level is representative for the early education services of our education system.

The preschool education is a stage of the education system addressed to all children who correspond as age, including those with special needs, who need recovery/rehabilitation and integration. Children with special educative needs can integrate in mass teaching, according to the current methodological norms, as well as to the norms referring to the social protection in these cases. The organization of this integrated groups or sections is prescribed by the stipulations of the special teaching Regulations. Besides, groups with different profiles, such as artistic, sportive, modern language profile and so on, can be set up in kindergartens, according to the legal stipulations.

By preschool education, a global and individualized education is promoted, thus making use of the whole potential of the children, in the totality of the dimensions of their personality. At the same time, all the rights of the children are integrally assured.

The kindergartens are set up by the regional school inspection offices. Economic agents, legal as well as natural persons can set up a kindergarten in the conditions stipulated by the laws, with the agreement of the school inspectorates. As a consequence of the requests of the parents, the economic agents or the legal or natural persons, kindergartens with a minimum effective of children under school age can be set up, abiding to the legal stipulations. The dissolving of kindergartens is done by the school inspectorates.

The groups of children under school age are to be constituted of 15 children, and should have not less than 10 and not more than 20 children. But actually, due to the lack of space and the numerous inscribing requests, these numbers are often exceeded, leading to an overstraining of the teaching staff.

Several principles referring to the organization and functioning of these preschool education institutions are stated in the teaching law. We mention the principle of guaranteeing the social services for children in special situations; by it, social services are guaranteed in kindergartens with extended and/or weekly program for children coming from detrimental backgrounds, from single-parent, broken up families, or from families where the parents or legal representatives have health problems, etc.

Coordinating and organizing the preschool teaching institutions is among the tasks of the principal of the unit. A special situation is the one in which the kindergarten becomes integrated in another teaching unit. In this case, the managerial responsibilities are distributed according to the law in force.

The curriculum for preschool teaching comprises in first place the teaching plan and the curriculum of the instructive educational activities in the kindergarten. We further present the teaching plan for types of kindergartens, including examples of suggestions for optional activities (in “Programa...,2005, p.7-9).

## Teaching plan-Preschool level- Kindergartens with normal program

Nr.	Category of activity	Level I 3-5 years	Level II 5-7 year
I	Common Activities	7	10
A	Language education activities	1	2
A	Mathematic activities	1	2
B	Environment cognition	1	1
A	Education for society	1	1
B	Practical activities and elements of housework		1
A	Music	1	1
B	Art	1	1
A	Physical education	1	1
II	Selected activities, games and other activities with children	17	14
III	Expantion	0-1	1-2
IV	Optional activities	0-1	1-2
	Minimum number of activities/week	24	26
	Maximum of activities/week	25	28

Tab. 6 Teaching plan

## Teaching plan- preschool level-kindergartens with extended and weekly program

Nr.	The place of activity in the daily program	Category of activity	Level I 3-5 years	Level II 5-7 years
I	Morning	Common activities	7	10
A	“	Language education activities	1	2
A	“	Mathematic activities	1	2
B	“	Environment cognition	1	1
A	“	Education for society	1	1
B	“	Practical activities and elements of housework		1
A	“	Music	1	1
B	“	Art	1	1
A	“	Physical education	1	1
II	“	Selected activities, games and other activities with children	17	14

Nr.	The place of activity in the daily program	Category of activity	Level I 3-5 years	Level II 5-7 years
III	“	Extension	0-1	1-2
IV	“	Optional activities	0-1	1-2
V	Afternoon	Recreation and détente activities	10	5
VI	“	Development activities and activities of exercising the personal skills	15	15
VII	“	Recovery activities	-	5
		Minimum number of activities/week	49	51
		Maximum of activities/week	51	53

Tab. 7 Teaching plan

Nr.	Optional
1.	Literature, literary creation Modern languages Languages of the national minorities
2.	Diverting mathematics The computer, my friend Great discoveries The ecologists
3.	Elements of personal security Sanitary education How do we circulate Let's make our toys ourselves
4.	The little instrumentalists Theater/ Puppet theater Painting
5.	Rhythmic gymnastics Mini sportive games Dances

Tab. 8 Proposed optional activities

The curriculum for preschool education comprises:

- All activities of the organizational structure of the kindergarten;
- The objectives of the activities, as well as the examples of behavior;
- The informal curriculum (extracurricular activities).

The preschool education, in the context of early education, has set some priorities in defining the general and specific purposes:

- Every child is unique, has particular needs;

- The education is continuous, it starts the first moments of life and extends on the whole course of it;
- The educative act from the kindergarten is governed by the child and his/her developmental needs;
- The child's development depends on the occasions the game offers;
- Early education does not address „children”, but every child individually;
- The child's learning is realized through play, and it is social and based on experience;
- The arranging of the educational environment in areas with activity/play domains represents an optimal form of realising experimental occasions, an activation of the independence of choice and action must be combined with group activity and with supporting the interpersonal relations.

The fundamental objectives of the kindergarten refer, on the one hand, to offering complex educational assistance for the forming of the basic abilities which are necessary for the whole life, and, on the other hand, to the harmonious development of the child according to the specific tendencies, the particular rhythm and the individual potential.

The integration of children under school age (especially those from level II – the big group and the preparatory group) in the cycle of fundamental acquisitions specific to the elementary grades is a consequence of the compulsory statute the preparatory group has in the school course of the child and in the recognition of it as a component of the elementary education.

The necessity of the concordance between the final aims of the two levels, kindergarten and elementary school, has also stressed a common desideratum: the child's preparation for school, for permanent education.

The teaching staff in kindergarten and school will keep in mind, during the whole instructive-educational process, the major objectives of the cycle of fundamental acquisitions and specific objectives:

- Adjustment with the demands of the school system;
- The initial alphabetization:
  - The assimilation of the basic elements of the main conventional languages (writing, reading, calculating);
  - The child's stimulation to the knowledge of the close environment;
  - The stimulation of the child's creative potential i creațional al copilului, a înțruitei și a imaginației;
  - The forming of the motivation to learn (Curriculum Național, 1998, pag. 17).

From the perspective of the integration of the preschool education stage into the national educational system and in direct relation to the other school stages, the final aims are specified for the two levels:

- Level I – socializing the children
- Level II – preparation for school.

In kindergartens, the evaluation of the children's performances is done according to standards elaborated by the ministry responsible for it. The measure and evaluation items are established in concordance with the categories of the disciplines comprised in the curriculum, on the levels for 3-5 and 5-7 years, and less according to the

behavior of the child, to its development (as regarding the cognition, the language, the psycho-motor function, the socio-emotionality, the elements of personal autonomy).

Practices regarding the transition, with consideration to the preschool education. The tendencies and general orientations of the education have led to a new dimensioning of the curricular documents which settle the organisation and unfolding of the instructive-educational process in the teaching units. The education at a preschool age represents - at the level of a schooling level – all demands of „new education”.

In reconsidering the preschool education programs, several aspects were considered:

- The deep changes of society and the dynamic of the labor, of the requested professions;
- The inclusion of recent contributions on the field of psychopedagogic research as to what concerns the development and learning at a preschool age;
- The general principles and paradigmes governing the education system in the new context;
- Establishing structural, value and content compatibilities with the schooling levels of the education systems of other countries, but with keeping sight the „expectations” of the Romanian society, the necessities of the labor market, the cultural, economic and human potential of which we have and with which we can engage in the formation and development of the young generation.
- The access to the global policies and to the sheltering and education programs on international level allowed for a better understanding and sistematization of the complex field of preschool education.

From our point of view, the most significant change of stress in the pedagogy at young ages is the fact that the participation of professionals (with speciality pedagogical schooling) as well as parents, community members and, last but not least, of children themselves, at the growth, education and development of children is accepted. The integration in structured educational programs according to pertinence criteria and final aims can no longer be the unique „solution” of the developmental needs the preschool child has. The permanent communication with the family, with the representatives of the community and with the child – in order to find the most efficient answer strategies – is a desideratum of the instructive-educational process of the kindergarten.

The activation of independence of choice and action must be combined with group activity and with supporting the interpersonal relations.

From the perspective of the integration of the children with disabilities, according to the Law of Education (art. 47, 48, 49), at the level of preschool, elementary and „gimnazial” education (grades 5-8), beside some representative teaching units in this field, there are interschool logopedic centers, coordinated by the school inspectorates, being structures of special, integrated education. The interschool logopedic centers function with teachers of logopedics, with a qualification in special psychopedagogy, psychology or pedagogy; these have obligation to guide the nursery school teachers, school masters and institutors in the methodology of development and in language correction for the children with speech disorder.

For children with chronic diseases, the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth organizes, according to the case, groups or classes within the respective sanitary units.



At the national level, there are centers of psychopedagogical assistance; these ensure the activity of school and professional orientation and are present at the level of every „judet”. They also coordinate the activity of the specialized psycho-pedagogical consultants in schools.

Regarding the collaboration with the family, the teacher will keep in mind some reference marks pointed out by the educational practice:

- The parents are the first teachers of the child. They know many things about their children and this must be respected and used by those working in the field of pre-school education, so as to consolidate the partnership with the family.
- The people working in preschool education develop themselves new knowledge about a child in the context of the organized learning programs, which, at their turn, must be shared with the parents, so as to strengthen the previously mentioned partnership.
- There is a multitude of modalities for persons working in preschool education to contribute to the partnerships with the parents: home visits informal discussions with the parents, the creating of support groups with both the nursery school teacher and the parents implied.
- There often appears a break or divergence between what is happening home and the preschool education programs, due to the different perceptions and interpretation between the two sides. In many cases, the nursery school teachers consider that the parents are not sufficiently educated or do not know enough things about their child's education. The parents can consider the nursery school teacher as an expert in the field and thus not be further interested in getting implied themselves as well...
- The term partnership is defined as the relation or alliance of colleagues working together for the same cause. The colleagues can differ in their knowledge, abilities and skills, but it is important that they channel them to the child's benefit. The two parts must respect each other as complementary instances of education. The child's needs can be best addressed when the two parts are working together efficiently.

The parents' culture and their role constitute the essential aspects for establishing the partnership with them. The specific cultural elements in the child's life leave their mark on his/her emotional, cognitive and social development. The cultural context is very often disregarded when the development of the child under school age is analysed; the parents' roles and especially the way they exercise these roles differ significantly from one culture to another, in spite of the strong elements of similitude. The parents, but also everybody else implied in taking care of the children, must initiate them in the labyrinth of social desirability, a desirability expressed – implicitly or explicitly – by the respective society.

The „Agentia Romana de Asigurare a Calitatii in Invatamantul Preuniversitar” (the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-university Education) stipulates the management and evaluation of the quality of pre-university education.

Each newly founded educational institution will undertake an evaluation procedure in two phases, the provisory authorization and the accreditation.

- The provisory authorization attests the fact that there are all premises for the education offer of the institution, abiding the legal demands.

The evaluation for the authorization has to consider the following points:

- the procedures for the institutional development - of strategic and operational planning;
- the management and the institutional structure;
- the human resources planed;
- the facilities (the spaces for schooling, the auxiliary space etc.), the material and financial resources;
- the educational offer – including the curriculum adopted by the educational institution the stipulated curricular auxiliaries;
- the informational system;
- the procedures of quality assurance and management;
- the prognosis and expectations about the schooling results.

Curriculum	Planning the curriculum	The national or alternative curriculum approved by the “Ministerul Educației și Cercetării” for every education level, profile and specialization/professional qualification within the school’s offer is to be used.
	Completing the curriculum	The existence of a strategy for developing and projecting the curriculum at the decision of the school / of the curriculum in local development for every education level, profile and specialization/professional qualification within the school’s offer
		There is no evaluation at the authorization

Tab. 9 Example

The accreditation of the educational institutions certifies that the educational processes, especially the processes of teaching and learning, respect the legal regulations and the results are those expected, while at the same time conforming to the limits considered acceptable at a national level. These results refer to:

- actual school results – indicators of school „success”;
- the satisfaction of the direct and indirect beneficiaries (students, their parents, employers or, according to the case, other institutions schooling graduates etc.) with the offered education;
- the results of the personnel’s development and of the managerial development;
- the increase of the social role and the social and community responsibility;
- the reference to the main indicators established on national level.

Curriculum	Proiectarea curriculumului	The national or alternative curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education and Research” for every education level, profile and specialization/professional qualification within the school’s offer is to be used.
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		The existence of a strategy for developing and projecting the curriculum at the decision of the school / of the curriculum in local development for every education level, profile and specialization/professional qualification within the school's offer
		Settling the timetable / study schedule of the students according to the hygienic and pedagogic demands.
		There is a corresponding scheduling of the learning contents for all the disciplines/ modules of the curriculum.
		The projection of the learning units promotes and encourages a centering on the student.

Tab. 10 Example

From: Repere conceptuale..., MedC, www.edu.ro)

Principles of ensuring the quality of education in Romania:

- **The quality education is centered on the clients and beneficiaries of the educational services.** All organizations depend on their clients and hence have to understand their current and future needs, to comply with their demands and to succeed their expectations.
- **The quality education is offered by responsible institutions.** The social responsibility becomes the fundament of the quality management at the level of the school organization. All educational institutions, no matter their juridical statute, will be officially chargeable for the quality of the educational service offered, and the state, through the institutions authorized by the law, is the guarantor of quality education offered through the national education system.
- **The quality education aims results.** The results as “added value” and “created value” and offer the best definition of quality and excellence.
- **The quality education respects the individual autonomy and has the institutional autonomy at its basis.** Education at all levels and in all of its forms will seek the development of individual autonomy, of the capacity to take pertinent decisions. The educational institutions will have a greater autonomy at the elaboration of an educational offer adequate to the individual and common needs, an autonomy corresponding the growing responsibility of these institutions for the quality of the educational offer.
- **The quality education ensures the participation of the educational factors and the valorizing of human resources.** People are the essence of any organization. The way they use their competences for the benefit of the organization depends on their involvement and development.
- **The quality education is realized in dialogue and partnership with institutions,** organizations, with direct and indirect beneficiaries from education. The system of quality assurance is not only an attribute of the school, but the whole educational community is implied in this process. As a result, the dialogue with all educational actors will be the basis for the development on national and local level.
- **The quality education is based on innovation and diversification.** Within the current legal framework, innovative, original and creative educational approaches

will be encouraged, as well as the application of the newest results in educational research and of the new methods and techniques in education and formation, the introducing of new informatics and communication technologies etc.

- **Quality education has a unique, systematic approach on the educational process.** The result wanted cannot be reached unless the necessary activities and resources are approached in a unique way, and the developed processes are planned and managed in a systematic way. At the same time, the educational decision of quality has a pertinent, credible and transparent system of indicators.
- **The quality education has as its objective the permanent improvement** of the performance. Considering the rhythm of social changes, permanent learning innovation and continual development become the main fundamentals of the functioning and development of educational institutions. The assurance of quality is to be regarded as a process of individual and institutionalized learning, its goal being to identify the areas of development and the orientation of the personal development towards good directions.
- **The quality education takes into consideration the interdependence of the supplier and beneficiaries** implied in the offer of education. An organization and its suppliers are interdependent and the mutual advantage increases the institutional capacity of creating value. (Declaration of principles, ARACIP, [www.edu.ro](http://www.edu.ro)).

The fact that the Ministry of Education, Research and youth has elaborated a law project, which is currently debated, is remarkable. The project is putting a new perspective, new dimensions on preschool education, implying the whole age group from 0 to 6 years in a coherent, scientific and methodological way.

We further present a selection of the most important legislative settlements referring to services of early education.

The strategies and programs for the Early Development of the Child have to address the multiple needs of the child, considering also the health, nutrition, early education, psycho-social stimulation and, at the same time, strengthening the role of the environment where the child lives. However, for an intermediary period, it could be practical and useful to develop branch strategies for education, health and social protection with a long-term aim for the convergence of the branches (p.1)

The present strategy will focus on the problem of early education in Romania with a long-term outlook and will seek a convergent approach that should include health, nutrition and social protection of children aged between 0 and 6 years (p.2).

The aim and the objectives of the strategy: the aim of the strategy in the field of the early education of the child is to ensure for every child the right to education and full development, so as to offer him/her the possibility to reach its greatest potential and to reach the European and international standards.

In a particular way, the strategy will offer the frame for the developing of projects and programs leading to:

- The greater access to preschool education (children aged between 3 and 6/7 years) and the creating of opportunities for early education for children aged between 0 and 3 years, including children belonging to minority groups, such as gipsy children;
- The improvement of the quality of the Early Education of the Child through an adapted curriculum, through a specific schooling for the teaching staff (initial

schooling as well as continual schooling) and through the wording of some standards of social, cognitive and emotional development;

- The assurance of the equal access to a quality education at the state of early education (between 0 and 6 years) of the children from disadvantaged and vulnerable groups;
- The improvement of the efficiency of the educational system by introducing the alternative, common opportunities for children from isolated areas of the rural region (p.11).

Principles at the basis of the Strategy for early education

1. The principle of partnership
2. The principle of quality
3. The principle of transparency
4. The principle of professionalism
5. The principle of decisional decentralization
6. The principle of non-discrimination
7. The principle of equality of sexes and equity (p. 13)

Proposed activities in the future stage

- The improvement of the legal framework for the establishment, as a national priority, of the System of Early Education of the Child (ETC) – p.14-18.
- The improvement of the access to education starting with early education.
- The improvement of the quality of educational services for children aged between 0 and 6 years.
- The assurance of an equitable access for children from ethnic minorities and for those from disadvantaged groups (children who are in a situation of risk or who have been left outside the system)
- The development of alternative and communitarian options for the improvement of the efficiency of early education services.
- The coordination with other branches (for example: health and social protection) for the development and implementation of a convergent program for Early Development of the Child (the Strategy regarding early education as a part of the convergent strategy regarding the child's early development, MECT, 2007)

## **Important aspects and tendencies influencing the policies and practices of ECED**

The contribution of preschool education to the process of development of the human being is a value of general recognition. Changing the stress from the content and institution with a specialized personnel, the kindergarten is looking towards the labor market, with the understanding that it has to assume some roles in the educational offers it presents.

The preschool educational institution does no longer represent a unique authority on the field, it has to be regarded in the social, cultural, economic and political context where it is integrated. It renders the characteristics of the individuals and of the society as a whole, and it tries to elaborate educational programs by which it can offer equal access chances and occasions of diversified, individualized learning.

The open-mindedness and receptivity of the preschool education institution towards new tendencies is incontestable.

The teaching staff have assumed the role of promoters of change at the early ages, they have accepted the new exigencies and principles in the organization and development of the instructive-educational process.

We do not intend to reveal in these pages the functioning regulation of the preschool education institution, but only to realise a short description of the most important aspects/approaches/tendencies in its organisation and functioning.

- Accepting the cultural diversity in the context of the challenges of the contemporary world (mass emigration, change of professions, pollution, the rejuvenative fluctuation of the population) is an essential condition for the kindergarten's openness to cultural change.

This acceptance of ethnical, cultural, religious diversity must start with the mentality of the teachers and the parents.

The intercultural education does not represent a new discipline or a new form of education. It is a principle, a desideratum of education in its totality. It is our duty to offer equal chances to all children. The diversity can be found on more levels: the economical, social, cultural, religious, ethnical, political level, the level of individual potential, and so on.

The curricular documents of the Romanian educational system allow and sustain the necessity of structuring some programs and activities sustaining the positive development of children under school age.

When these preschool children are integrated in groups, the teachers often have an unilateral approach of the intercultural education: the children are allowed to participate in artistic programs with roles, songs, dances, poems specific to the culture, ethny, religion they belong to. However, this occasion does only make the differences deeper, stressing the elements which are not common, and thus putting the children in uncomfortable situations towards the other children or the adults present.

Intercultural education (the acceptance of diversity in the kindergarten) is a quality of the instructive-educational process which enriches the contents, final aims and individual realities.

- The quality of schooling of the personnel in preschool education is another aspect of the institution's organizational exigencies and its display. We accord special attention to the internal, personal motivation and desire of every teacher to be permanently implied in a process of professional schooling, be it initial schooling or a perfecting course organized by one of the different accredited institutions. Making these programs compulsory does not represent a successful strategy for increasing the quality of contemporary education.

The change and the need for change should be intrinsic landmarks for every one of us, for a better production.

- The management of change is a consequence of the previously mentioned desideratum, which reflects the qualities and the statute of the leadership of the preschool education institution – the statute of promoter of change in preschool education. The need for acceptance of the new is present at this level as well.

The managers of the institution are no longer implied only in leading, but they should also prove their professional and leading competence by the organized activities, by sustaining the colleagues' viewpoints, by the interest and motivation for the development of the institution.

The manager's capacity to maintain him/herself in direct relation to the superior for a as well as to the other teachers from the educational institution is a quality worth admiring.

- The organization of the play-space in concordance with the exigencies of contemporary preschool education offers a great degree of applicability for the preschool curriculum and for the tendencies specific to the age.

Surpassing the current and extremely acute problem of lacking materials, of the minimum of physical endowment, the nursery teacher promotes the change and the reaching of the established objectives through creativity, motivation and effort to convey unity and educational value to any esthetic detail of the play environment in the kindergarten.

- The fundamental principles of early/preschool education are centered on the idea of the individuality in the psycho-physical development and in the treatment of the child.

All didactic approaches completed by the nursery school teacher must reflect the specific development needs of the age stage, but also the specific individuality of these needs. It is not enough to consider the age characteristics when talking about the educational activity, but we also have to add the complex manifestation of the aspiration, experiences and needs felt by every child. By respecting this principle of individuality, we apply another: the one of individualizing and differentiating of preschool education.

- All the exigencies/demands of a preschool education open to change which we have previously described remain abstract ideas if the persons implied in preschool education do not show flexibility and creativity in the approach of the educational situations. The ability of the teacher to be creative and to find new solutions with new variables is a condition for the success of education at this age.

We insist on the insertion of new solutions and situations for learning, not from the perspective of their uniqueness; we do not aim exclusively at the deepness, complexity and uniqueness of them; often, the simple change of the sequences of a day or of a detail in the educational space, of the toys, can lead to the successful reaching of the proposed final aims, with a minimum of effort from the teacher as well as the child. The desire to explore, the curiosity for the new represents a strong motivation for the participation to the activity.

- "The parent as a teacher" represents another aspect of the role the parents have in the growth of their own child. This demand of the organization and display of the preschool education has the purpose to underline the necessity to imply the parents with all their capacities (and not only the material resources) in the daily program of the kindergarten. The parent is an equal partner in the education of the pre-

school child. The bigger the compatibility between the parents' and the teacher's educational objectives for the child, the easier will it be for the child to understand the educational influence (formal and informal) he receives. A program of education for the parents or meetings on different subjects with the parents can be the key of success for a complex, real relation, from which all should benefit.



## Data on personnel

In the education system, at the preschool level, there are several categories of personnel (according to the initial and continual schooling). In this respect, we mention:

- “*educatoare*” who have only high-school studies – the pedagogical high-school with specialization in preschool education;
- “*institutori I*” who have only high-school studies in this field – the pedagogical high-school and superior studies in another field;
- “*institutori invatamant prescolar*” with superior studies at the “Colegiul Universitar de Institutori” – the College for Preschool Teachers;
- “*profesori pentru invatamantul primar si prescolar*” (teachers for preschool and elementary education)- in the study year 2007-2008, there will be the first series of graduates with this double specialization.

As a consequence of the Bologna process, the College for Preschool Teachers- the short time form of superior study which ends with a final exam, has transformed into the Department for Pedagogy of Elementary and Preschool Education – ends with a diploma examination, the graduates having a double specialization: preschool teaching and elementary school teaching.

The category of preschool and elementary school personnel classified as “institutor” (be it for preschool or for elementary school education) have the possibility to take part to a 2-semester long program for continuing education, by which they can receive the statute of preschool and elementary school teacher. This continuing education program is organized by the Department for Pedagogy of Elementary and Preschool Education and ends with a diploma examination.

We have to mention the fact that there is, at the level of preschool and elementary education, a major tendency to complete the primary studies by these previously mentioned departments, fact which can contribute to increasing the quality of the services in preschool education. As an example, we present the results of a study conducted in the year 2008 by the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, concerning:

- the qualification of the personnel from preschool and primary education;
- the norms/ didactic posts (holders, qualified substitutes, substitutes without studies corresponding to the didactic office);
- the presently qualifying personnel;
- the personnel with high-school and no further studies

		<b>Nursery school teachers</b>	<b>Elementary school masters</b>
Didactic norms/ post	Total	37060.56	49339.56
	Urban	20654.66	21152.27
	Rural	16402.90	28199.21
Holders	Total	29108.76	42363.96
	Urban	16781.79	18983.67
	Rural	12337.97	23373.23
Qualified substitutes	Total	6052.65	6201.52

	Urban	3179.87	2055.35
	Rural	2870.78	4164.15

Tab. 11 Specialization of the teaching post

<b>Substitutes</b>		<b>Nursery school teachers</b>	<b>Elementary school teachers</b>
Substitutes with university studies in another field than that corresponding to the teaching post	Total	211.00	97.00
	Urban	97.00	37.11
	Rural	114.00	59.89
Students still at the university	Total	616.11	287.20
	Urban	224.00	19.61
	Rural	391.11	267.59
With high-school studies	Total	1046.04	389.88
	Urban	371.00	57.53
	Rural	675.04	332.35

Tab. 12 Specialization of the teaching post - Substitutes

In the report from 2005 concerning the state of the national education system during minister Miclea, the share of didactic personnel with full-time working program is presented; thus, for preschool and superior education, the variations registered in the period 2000-2004 are quite reduced, showing the highest shares of full-time personnel.

As to the continuing education of the personnel in preschool and elementary school teaching, there is a complex system of obtaining the didactic degrees; these can be obtained when certain criteria, stages, obligatory exams elaborated by the Ministry of Education, are completed and fulfilled. Another aspect of continuing education is the obligation of the didactic personnel to participate at specialized schooling once every five years. All these aspects of continuing formation are included in a system of credits, which a teacher can obtain and which have an effect on his/her wage-class and payment.

For a more complete image on the institutions offering initial/continuing schooling for the preschool and elementary school personnel, we will present the most relevant pieces of information regarding the mission, functioning and teaching plan of the Department for Pedagogy of Preschool and Elementary School Education.

## **THE DEPARTMENT of PEDAGOGY for PRIMARY and PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION- Bucharest**

### **OUR OBJECTIVES:**

- Professionalization in the field of education management;
- Connecting the existing system of initial and continuous training of primary and pre-school teaching staff to corresponding national and international rules, in view

of diploma recognition and in order to create and develop efficient, functional psycho-pedagogical competences;

- Improving alternatives in the field of education policy related to the initial training of pre-university teaching staff;
- Restructuring the primary functions of the Teachers College, by creating a continuous training department and by expanding its interests to include education management;
- Formulating a set of proposals regarding the initial and continuous training, as well as the managerial training of primary and pre-school education teaching staff, in view of improving teachers' training;
- Constructing a modern laboratory for education technologies.

## COURSES

University courses - day courses (3 years)- two areas of specialization Primary and Preschool Learning Pedagogy

- Post-university courses:
  - MA (starting with 2008-2009)
  - Psycho-pedagogy and pedagogy specialization course, in the field of pre-school education;
  - Specific courses and activities, designed to help teachers in their training for professional exams and degrees:
    - “definitivat”;
    - 1st Degree;
    - 2nd Degree;
- Psycho-pedagogic and pedagogic assistance:
  - for professional development of teaching staff in pre-school and primary education;
  - for institutional development: pedagogy commissions, professional meetings, conferences etc.;
  - For the development of teaching aids and specialty bibliographies.
- Continuous training courses for preschool and primary school teachers („Colegium” Program approved by MECT, Decision no 86/19.12.2003, long program- 90 credits)

## PEDAGOGY OF PRIMARY AND PRE – SCHOOL TEACHERS EDUCATION

Sem.	Study program	Course Type	Credits Total	Hours per week	Evaluation
1	Fundamentals of psychology	compulsory	6	2+2	WO
2	Theory and methodology of curriculum	compulsory	6	2+2	WO
1	Information and communication technologies	compulsory	4	2+2	WO

Sem.	Study program	Course Type	Credits Total	Hours per week	Evaluation
1	Fundamentals of special psycho - pedagogy	compulsory	6	2+2	WO
1	Fundamentals of pedagogy	compulsory	6	2+2	WO
1	Psychology of personality	compulsory	6	2+2	WO
1	Psychology of ages	compulsory	5	2+2	WO
2	Education Psychology	compulsory	5	2+2	WO
2	Romanian Literature	compulsory	5	2+1	WO
2	Mathematics	compulsory	5	2+1	WO
2	Pedagogical Practice (Primary and Pre- school education)	compulsory	5	2	OE
2	Foreign languages	optional	4	2	OE
2	Physical Education	elective	4	2	-
3	Theory of instruction	compulsory	5	2+2	WO
3	Theory of evaluation	compulsory	5	2+2	WO
3	Methodology of educational research	compulsory	5	2+1	WO
3	Pedagogical doctrines (History of pedagogy)	compulsory	3	1+1	WO
3	Class/ group management	compulsory	5	2+1	WO
4	Pedagogy of pre – school education	compulsory	5	2+1	WO
4	Romanian contemporary language	compulsory	5	2+2	WO
4	Methods in language development	compulsory	4	1+2	WO
4	Children's literature	compulsory	5	2+1	WO
3	Mathematics	compulsory	5	2+2	WO
4	Methods of mathematical activities	compulsory	4	1+2	WO
4	Pedagogical practice in pre – school education	compulsory	5	2	OE
4	Pedagogical practice in primary education	compulsory	5	2	OE
4	School – family partnerships	optional	2	1+1	OE
4	Sociology of education	optional	2	1+1	OE
4	Foreign languages	elective	-	2	-
5	Romanian contemporary language	compulsory	3	1+1	WO
5	Psycho – pedagogy of games	compulsory	4	2+1	WO
5	Methods of teaching Romanian language and literature	compulsory	4	2+1	WO
5	Methods of teaching Arithmetic	compulsory	4	2+1	WO

Sem.	Study program	Course Type	Credits Total	Hours per week	Evaluation
5	Geography and methods of teaching Geography	compulsory	4	2+1	WO
6	Musical education and methods of teaching Musical education	compulsory	4	2+1	WO
5	Psycho – motor education/ Physical education and methods of teaching Psycho – motor/ Physical education	compulsory	4	1+1	WO
6	Methods of teaching Civic education	compulsory	4	1+2	WO
5	Art education and methods of teaching Art education	compulsory	4	1+1	WO
6	Sciences/ Environmental sciences education and methods of teaching Sciences/ Environmental sciences education	compulsory	4	2+1	WO
6	Methods of teaching Practical abilities	compulsory	4	2	OE
6	Pedagogical practice in pre – school education	compulsory	5	2	OE
6	Pedagogical practice in primary education	compulsory	5	2	OE
6	Intercultural education	optional	3	1+1	OE
6	Educational management	optional	3	1+1	OE
6	Chorus assembly	elective	-	2	-

Tab. 13 Teacher education - 3 years, 6 semesters, 180 ECTS credits

#### ABBREVIATION LIST

WO = Written and oral examination, OE = Oral examination, Sem = Semester

Remarkable progress can be noticed in terms of the evolution of the teaching career. That is to say that there have been taken special measures to restructure the methodology for continuous teacher training and modify the teaching career evolution system and promotion by restructuring the teaching degrees and introducing the degree of excellence in teaching. Likewise, progression in the teaching career is nowadays reconsidered by making use of professional transferable credits and substituting the criterion of “age” with complex psychological, social and professional criteria.

The concrete measures proposed for the implementation of teacher education reform has been focused on:

- **Extending initial teacher training** until the stage of undergoing and successfully passing the examination for the acquirement of the “Definitive” degree (Diploma) in education (after one year in-service teacher training run by his/her mentor and methodologist);
- Linking certificating and teaching career development systems (teacher contest for employment on a permanent position in school will take place after the “definitive” degree diploma)

- Introducing a complex evaluation system to obtain the teacher/tutor diploma (after the initial teacher training stage) by means of:
  - Professional lay-out, “pedagogical notebook”
  - Written examination
  - Diploma essay (with psycho – pedagogical - methodological contents).
- Introducing certain qualification levels in initial teacher training: Teacher / tutor certificate: This is to be obtained after having graduated a higher-education institution and acquired the pedagogical training certificate from teacher education institutions ;
  - Pre-primary and primary school teacher certificate. This is to be obtained after having graduated the Pedagogical High-School;
  - Teacher/tutor diploma. By attending the in-service teacher training, undergoing and successfully passing the examination to acquire the “definitive” degree diploma;
- Issuing a teacher training file alongside the teacher/tutor diploma for each student.

Concerning the relationships between teacher education institutions and schools regarding the professional development we can remark:

- Developing a permanent institution network (schools and kindergartens) to apply pedagogical activities by means of bilateral agreements between higher-education institutions and county school inspectorates;
- Establishing a large variety of partnership-relations with service provider institutions for alternative pedagogical activities (consulting centers, clubs and extra-curricular activities for pupils in other centers, media, language deficiency centers for children, NGOs etc.).

A regulated domain in which debate has begun and which must be materialized, is the analysis of the correspondence between the list of specializations in higher education and the educational plan in the undergraduate education alongside with the mobility of personnel in this domain.

The bachelor graduate holds general and specific knowledge and competencies as well as profession-specific cognitive skills. General knowledge can be used for a scientific approach of the field of concentration which can lead to understanding, innovation and acquirement of new knowledge, and effective oral and written communication in that field and in complex cultural backgrounds.

At the institutional level, professional practice for students will be a compulsory discipline and will be a part of the educational planning, while the number of credit points for this discipline remains to be established in relation to the specific study domain.

The higher education graduates who want to teach at pre-university education schools need to promote a psychopedagogic theoretical course during bachelor years and to accumulate 30 ECTS, as well as extra psychopedagogic training standing for other 30 credits. This extra training can be achieved through university programs (for example teaching master’s degree) or post-graduate courses and it is a standard to be met before taking the tenure exam. In other words, in order to get a permanent teaching position in the pre-university education and to teach in higher education institutions one should accumulate 60 ECTS credits of psycho-pedagogic training held by licensed teaching staff training departments (Opre, Adrian, 2007)

The pedagogical practice organization represents a particular activity of professional development, and is under the coordination of the Department for Teacher Education (the comprehensive list of skills and tasks for this activity will be presented as follows).

The competencies that the study of psychological and pedagogical disciplines – their component of pedagogical practice – seeks to train are:

- Psycho-pedagogical skills, through the development, management, and assessment of the instructional process, as well as through knowing, counselling and assisting the development of pupils' personalities;
- Social skills, through social interactions with pupils and school groups;
- Leading skills, through the organization and management of the class by pupils.

The general goals of studying pedagogical and psychological disciplines at the pedagogical specialization were structured in two categories: that of abilities or skills and that of values and attitudes. When defining the objectives, the following levels of complexity of the things gained by the future teacher through learning:

- Knowledge and understanding abilities – knowing and adequately using the notions specific to psychological and pedagogical disciplines;
- Explanatory and interpretative abilities – explaining and interpreting some educational ideas, projects or processes, as well as the theoretical and practical contents of the psychological and pedagogical disciplines;
- Abilities related to critical thinking – critically examine educational ideas, processes and processes;
- Abilities related to practice – developing, running and assessing learning activities, using new methods, techniques and tools of self-knowledge and of psychological knowledge.

The general competencies that can be developed by studying psycho-pedagogical disciplines in relation to the fulfilled educational roles are as follows:

- Adequately applying concepts specific to educational sciences and to psychological disciplines (using them to identify subjective phenomena in the professional environment as a whole);
- Explaining and interpreting educational ideas, projects or processes and the expressions of the psychological life's dynamics;
- The critical, evaluative examination of educational ideas, projects and processes;
- Projecting, leading and assessing learning activities;
- Improving and innovating the educational process; integrating and using new information and communication technologies;
- Becoming aware of the problems specific to school as organization, and interpreting them;
- Using new methods, techniques and tools of psychological (self-)knowledge;
- Developing and using intra and interdisciplinary correlations, in order to optimize the educational process;
- Expressing a positive and responsible attitude towards the didactic profession;
- Connecting the things gained through the study of psychological disciplines and other domains of human knowledge and practice.

General values and attitudes developed:

- Advancing a professional environment based on democratic values and relationships in class;
- Promoting a system of cultural, moral and civic values that are in agreement with the educational ideal;
- The optimal and creative use of one's own psycho-pedagogical potential in the endeavoured practical activities;
- Advancing a securing social-affective climate in class;
- Involvement in the institutional development and in the promotion of educational innovations;
- Engaging in social-professional partnerships with the family and with other institutions with educational responsibilities;
- Participating in one's own professional development and in defining a personal style of teaching;
- Confiding in the possibility of social recovery and integration of pupils with special needs;
- Responsibility towards the need to develop the creative potential of prodigious children.

Components specific to pedagogical practice activities:

- Viewing school as a social organization, the specific character of preschool, primary, gymnasium and secondary school learning units, school papers, the organization and functioning structures;
- Operating with discipline-specific information and integrating it in the analysis and interpretation of educational situations, according to the level of education at which one teaches;
- Developing, running and assessing didactic activities performed in class;
- Critical-constructive analysis and self-assessment relating to the quality of educational projects and of the educational activities performed;
- Applying new and adequate methods, techniques or tools for knowing students and groups of students, in order to treat them differently;
- Participation in the activities of institutional development and in the methodical-scientific activities run in school;
- Collaborating with the members of the school community and with the pupils' families.

Activities related to pedagogical practice:

- Generally knowing the school institution; participating in the activities of institutional development;
- Observing the didactic activities run in school;
- Observing the behaviour of pupils by using specific tools;
- Developing, running and assessing didactic activities;
- Developing evaluation exams;
- Filling in school papers: the notebook, the roll and the registration catalogue.

Tasks in the pedagogical practice:

- Realizing a portfolio of pedagogical practice that shall enclose the referential elements listed in the structure of the basic material:



- Writing the final practice report.

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