



MINISTERUL MUNCII,
FAMILIEI, PROTECȚIEI SOCIALE
ȘI PERSOANELOR VÂRSTNICE

Nesecret

**NATIONAL REPORT
FOR THE THIRD REVIEW AND APPRAISAL CYCLE
OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MIPAA/RIS
ROMANIA (2012-2016)**

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Part I

Executive summary

The third Romanian Report on following up the implementation of MIPA/RIS commitments is mainly based on quantitative data provided by National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly (MoLFSPE), National Institute on Demographics and qualitative assessments done by the World Bank's background reports for two major national strategies regarding poverty reduction and active ageing. Analysing the current legal framework and programmes in different domains (economic, social protection, education, health, etc) we must recognise that, during the last five years, there been registered few steps forward in mainstreaming ageing in all national policies. The most important progress in relation to the commitments of MIPA/RIS could be considered the adoption of a set of public policies and strategic documents, initiated by the Romanian Government in 2015-2016 period, such as:

The National Strategy on Active Ageing Promotion and Protection of Elderly and the Plan of Actions 2015 - 2020, adopted by the Government Decision (GD) no. 566/2015. The strategy recommends a range of measures and policies to be developed in order to support a better integration of older workers on labour market, to improve labour places' conditions by adapting them to the needs of the workers, to strengthen professional abilities through proper vocational training programs, to prevent the risk of abuse and neglect, to set up an unified long term care (LTC) system, to provide the necessary financial resources for social, health and LTC services, to promote elderly participation and to improve their involvement in voluntary movement.

National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2015-2020 and its corresponding Strategic Action Plan, approved by GD no.383/2015. The Strategy proposes a set of flagship initiatives/ key interventions in various policy fields, among which: Employment and Life Long Learning (LLL), Social Enterprises, Social services and Social Assistance, Education and Child Care, Public Health System, Housing. Each chapter has in view the risk of poverty for elderly persons and provides recommendations in order to combat the possible negative consequences of demographic ageing by using the economic and social value of older people in the future. The main goal of strategy is to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty by 580,000 till 2020. **The Government Decision was amended by GD no. 861/2016.**

To achieve the main goals assumed by Romania in relation to Europe 2020 Strategy (to attend an employment rate of 70% for 20-64 age group, to increase the participation rate of adults 25-64 years of age in life long learning (LLL) to 10 percent) it will be crucial for the Government to implement the measures stipulated by the **National Strategy on Employment and Plan of Actions 2015-2020, approved by GD no. 1071/2013 and Life Long Learning Strategy, approved by Government Decision no. 418/2015.**

The present report cover all the goals of Vienna Declaration, giving special attention to the most problematic issues for Romania: employment of older workers, pension system, social assistance schemes and poverty prevention, health and long term care (LTC) services and social participation of elderly persons.

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General Information

Country name: ROMANIA

Population: 19,947,311 inhabitants, on January 1, 2014 (usual resident population);

Capital: Bucharest Municipality (2,110,752 inhabitants, permanent resident population on July 1, 2014), divided into six administrative sectors;

Official language: Romanian;

Government for in Romania: Republic, according to the Constitution adopted in 1991, amended and republished in 2003 (Official Journal No 767/October 31, 2003);

Legislative power: a two-chamber Parliament (the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate);

Executive power: Government led by a Prime Minister appointed by the country's President;

National currency : RON: leu, with "ban" as subdivision; the reference currency is the euro.

In September 2016, the average exchange rate Ron / Eur was 4.4978.

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Name, references, and date of adoption or status of preparation of national strategy, action plan or similar policy document on ageing:

1. The National Strategy on Active Ageing Promotion and Protection of Elderly and the Plan of Actions 2015 - 2020, adopted by Government Decision no. 566/2015

2. The National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2015-2020 and its corresponding Strategic Action Plan, approved by Government Decision no. 383/2015

In addition:

- World Bank Background Study for National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction /2015 (in Annexes)
- "Living Long, Staying Active and Strong - Promotion of Active Ageing in Romania" - World Bank report, June 2014

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1. National Ageing Situation

Demographic data: The rapid process of ageing in Romania represents the consequence of multiple factors: low fertility rate, growth of life expectancy and intensive external migration (according to the data provided by EU COM, an approximate number of 2.1 million Romanians are working abroad, in the EU MS).

	2011	2015
Usual resident population - number	20,148 thousands	19,819 thousands
Population aged 65 years and over - number	3,146 thousands	3,407 thousands
Population aged 65 years and over - proportion	15.6%	17.2%
Old dependency ratio- proportion	25.8%	27.8%
Crude birth rate- p.1000 population	8.9	9.3
Total fertility rate-proportion of life births per woman	1.3	1.4
Crude death rate- p.1000 population	12.4	13.2
Infant mortality rate - p.1000 live births	9.4	8.1
Life expectancy at birth- years	F:78.0 M:70.9	F:78.5 M:71.4
Life expectancy at age 65-years	F:17.6 M:14.4	F:17.8 M:14.5
Healthy life expectancy at birth - years	F:57 M:57.4	F:59 M:59.0
Healthy life expectancy at age 65 years-years	F: 4.7 M:5.4	F: 5.7 M: 5.9

Source: National Institute on Demographics of Romanian Academy "Vladimir Trebici"

Economic and social data: During 2011 - 2016, Romania's macroeconomic performance significantly improved, thus allowing the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to experience an average annual growth rhythm: from 710.267 billion RoI in 2012, to 596.7 billion RoI and in 2015; in the first semester of 2016 GDP continues to increase.

Since 2011 recovering from the severe shock of the global financial crisis, Romania continues to place a high priority on restoring fiscal sustainability and improving competitiveness by using and rationalizing the regulatory burden. The Government has made progress in reducing public debt and public deficit. Both personal income and corporate tax rates are flat 16 percentage.

Vat decreased from 24% in 2011 to 20% beginning with January 2016 (9% for foods and 5% in tourism). Inflation rate was 5,8% in 2011 and decreased till -1.1% in 2016 (the estimated inflation rate was 2.5%).

The main source of total household income formation was the money income, which increased from 81.7% in 2011 to 84.1% in 2014. In 2016, salaries and other similar income represent the most important income category, with the highest share in the money income of households (over 60%). A major share in the money income of households is that of social benefits (aprox. 28%).

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National minimum gross guaranteed wage increased from **670 Ron in 2011** to **1250 Ron starting with May 2016**.

Romanian labour market experienced significant changes in terms of the volume and structure of the main labour force indicators, this process being characterised by the reduction of the economically active population and employment, with a relatively steady level of the unemployment rate. Romania's working age population (20-64 years) is projected to decline by 30% until 2060 and the old age dependency ratio is projected to double by 2060 according to Eurostat. The active population of Romania in 2015 counted 9,159 thousands persons, out of which 4,571.4 thousands have been registered as employees in economy.

In 2015, the employment rate for population aged 20-64 years was 66%, at a distance of 4% of Romania's target of 70% established in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The highest number of registered unemployed belong to the age group 40-49 years of age and aprox.84% of the registered unemployed have no studies or only primary, secondary school or professional and technical education.

Administrative data on employment and pensions show that a large number of persons are already pensioners, most of them through the invalidity program (17-20% aged 50-54 years). In the group age 55-59 years, there are 2.5 women pensioners per employed woman and in the group age 60-64 years, there are 4.5 male pensioners per employed man.

	2012 Annual average	2015 Annual average	August 2016 Annual average
Total number of unemployed, out of which:	572,974	455,830	418,951
45 years of age and over	287,151	256,548	248,113
55 years and over	65,876	70,922	67,992
Rate of unemployment %	5.59%	4.9%	4.8%
Total number of pensioners, out of which	5,286,900	5,129,800	4,677,100
Average pension amount	787 Ron	886 Ron	886 Ron
Age limit pension amount	899 Ron	1018 Ron	1066 Ron

2. Method

The most important issue related to older population being the pension system' sustainability, the National House of Public Pension, coordinated by MoLFSPE, remains the central body of the public administration. Unfortunately, Romania now has no unit/department specialized in elaboration and monitoring of comprehensive policies for elderly, including the accomplishment of MIPA/RIS' commitments. In 2016, according to the provisions of the National Ageing Strategy's Action Plan, the Government has decided to set up, within MoLFSPE, a team of experts entitled to monitor the public policies for elderly, to collect informations and to prepare national reports based on standardized methods and indicators such as Active Ageing Index. MoLFSPE is also

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considering financing solutions to develop a complex e-social assistance system to ensure the effective planning and monitoring&evaluation of social protection benefits and services, because the current database (national register) of social services providers is limited and is not fully operational for a range of functions that would support data collection and the documentation of public policies, including those for elderly.

Therefore, it was difficult to make adequate assessments of the progress registered after the implementation of national policies and programs addressing to the needs of elderly persons. By consequence, for the present report, there were used the comprehensive assessments' reports prepared by the World Bank, in order to support the elaboration of the national strategies regarding active ageing and poverty reduction. Quantitative and qualitative data have been collected also from the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) and MoLFSPE, National Council of Elderly Persons, National Institute on Demographics and NGO' s.

Part II

Goal 1: Longer working life is encouraged and ability to work is maintained

Employment:

Romania's changing demographics between 2014 and 2020 could dramatically alter the labor market. By 2020, the number of individuals of working age is predicted to have declined by 4.5 percent, while the elderly are likely to have increased by 13 percent. Romania will have to mobilize all of its potential workers and to invest in their education and skills to make them more productive. One of the key priorities of the government is to increase access to jobs for all job seekers, using also activation and graduation policies for poorest persons as necessary complements to the successful implementation of social assistance programs.

Unemployment in Romania is relatively low: 6.0 percent in August 2016, but informal employment is widespread and it is concentrated in rural areas. About 70 percent of those who are employed are self-employed, the large majority in subsistence or small-scale agriculture. Self-employed farmers face a high poverty risk because of low productivity, low enterprise density, the absence of local markets, and limited income support. Their higher risk is also related to the fact that many do not contribute to the health insurance system or to the social insurance system to secure a pension. Despite Romania's relatively low unemployment rate, the country has a high rate of poverty for in-work people which affects one in two adults in Romania, being concentrated in rural areas, mainly in the agriculture sector.

The older population is an underused resource of Romania's economy. The employment rate of population aged between 25 and 54 is only 2 percent below the EU average, while that rate for the population aged 55 to 64 is 9 percent below. In urban areas, almost half of all people aged 18 to 64 not in school, training or with the labor contract are in the 55 to 64 age range. A marked reduction in the number of formally employed people begins as early as ages 50 - 54. Between those ages, 20 percent of women and 17 percent of men are already retired, mostly through the invalidity program, typically assuming a permanent full-time pensioner status. Despite the well-intentioned last reforms which tightened old age pension eligibility conditions, early retirement through the old age program also remains strong. Between the ages of 55 and 59, up to five years before statutory retirement age, there are already 2.5 women pensioners for every employed woman. Similarly, between the ages of 60 and 64, up to five years before statutory male retirement age, there are 4.5 male pensioners for every employed man. (World Bank Study on Poverty Reduction 2015).

In the same time, presently, a very low percentage of people with disabilities are active in the labor market - only 7.25 percent of people with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 64. Thus, the disability indemnity and the complementary budget are the main sources of income for this vulnerable group. Based on the legal rules, people with disabilities can enter the open (and highly competitive) labor market. Romanian law specifies that companies with more than 50 employees must ensure that at least 4 percent of their staff are comprised of people with

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disabilities. If not, they need to pay an amount equivalent to half of the minimum income for all positions that are not occupied by people with disabilities or to buy products from the sheltered units. In practice, the majority of enterprises prefer to pay the penalties, instead to hire persons with disabilities and to benefit by the incentives and facilities established by law.

The Law no.76/2002 on unemployment insurance system and employment stimulation has suffered many amendments during the last five years, having in view the necessity to diversify the entire range of passive and active measures addressed to strengthen the people' employability: (i) loans granted under the best terms for new jobs' creation, (ii) measures to stimulate labour mobility (improved and diversified, according to the Government Emergency Decision no. 60/2016), (iii) active measures (professional information and counseling, delivered free of charge to the job-seekers, labour mediation services which can be done as well through the Electronic labour mediation system - SEMM, available on the Internet, consultancy and assistance for setting up a business or starting an independent activity), (iv) vocational training organised according to the National Plan for Vocational Training, annually elaborated by National Agency for Employment.

Having in view the national context, Romania adopted National Employment Strategy 2014-2020 (NES) and a corresponding action plan approved by the Government's Decision no. 1071 from 11th December 2013. NES proposes, on short term, a set of objectives such as: improving the legislation in force regarding employment and social dialogue, combating black market, developing and diversifying active measures for the employees, rising financial support and fiscal incentives for employers, consolidating professional competences of the workers, improving the employment rate in rural area, rising the competitiveness on labour market and strengthening the performance of public agencies for employment.

One of the specific objectives of the NES consists in "Increasing youth employment and prolonging elderly' active life", with the following measures to be implemented: (i) Decreasing youth unemployment rate and the number of NEETs, (ii) Increasing elderly's labour market participation by implementing elderly employment schemes, (iii) Developing knowledge and know-how transfer initiatives (from elderly to young employees, such as mentorship and coaching programs etc), (iv) Developing flexible work forms (by amending the Labour Code), (v) Encouraging active life including through fiscal measures, (vi) Reducing subsistence agriculture employment and (vii) Enhancing human capital relocation to non-agricultural activities. A special attention has to be focussed on improving of LLL programs and implementing of healthy and age-friendly work environments.

Public pensions system

In Romania, the pension system plays the most important role in protecting against old age poverty. The income transfers from the pension system lifted 61.9 percent of the elderly population out of poverty. Other social transfers further reduced the poverty incidence rate by 2.6 percentage points.

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The analysis made by World Bank strongly suggests that substantial reductions in replacement rates and/or declines in pension system coverage could significantly increase the old age poverty incidence rate in Romania. No significant increase of the PAYG pension system's deficit is expected in the future because pension coverage is shrinking, especially in rural areas where the farmer's pension scheme has been closed to new entrants.

The most recent law (Law no.263/2010) regulating the Romanian unitary system of public pensions, which already suffered some amendments, set up the system on three pillars: public pension system (PAYG scheme, based on intergenerational solidarity, privately administered pension funds (mandatory defined contribution scheme, part of the individual contribution from the public pension system being accumulated in individual accounts) and voluntary private pensions (defined contribution scheme, voluntary participation, individual accounts). Till 2005, Romania has had the PAYG scheme only.

According to the present law, the old-age pension shall be granted to the persons who, on the date of retirement, cumulatively meet the conditions for the standard retirement age and the minimum contribution period. Standard retirement age are 65 for men and 63 year for women. The minimum contribution period shall be of 15 years, both for women and for men. The full contribution period shall be of 35 years, both for women and for men. In case of active military personnel, policemen, civil servants in the penitentiary system or those from national defense sector, public order and national security, the standard retirement age is 60, both for men and women. Older workers can also applies for anticipated pension or partially anticipated pension, granted 5 years before reaching the standard retirement age.

The persons who have completed a contribution period suffering from a disability, prior to the insured status, shall benefit from the decrease of the standard retirement ages (between 10 and 15 years), depending on the degree of disability.

The invalidity pension (classified on 3 degrees) shall be granted to persons who have lost all or at least half of their work capacity due to accidents at work, chronically and occupational diseases. The assessment of the work capacity, in order to determine the degree of invalidity, shall be carried out, on request, by the physician specialized in the medical expertise of the work capacity within the National House of Public Pensions (NHPP).

For the next period of time, the Government has to make efforts in order to ensure the pension system's sustainability and, in the same time, an adequate level of income for elderly persons who have no rights to a contributory pension. It will be necessary to introduce also more flexibility during the transition period to full-time retirement, knowing that, in Romania, this process is very abrupt, without significant pathways through partial retirement (lesser responsibilities, less strenuous work, fewer work hours, and volunteering work could be combined with the first draws on retirement income). Supplementing pension income through work should also be encouraged. In 2014, the Government decided that pensioners can cumulate their pension with wages earned as persons employed on labour market.

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Older persons are entitled also to receive a range of social protection measures addressed to some specific categories of elders, such as: monthly allowance for the survivor spouse, indemnities for war veterans and invalids and for their widows, financial and in kind benefits for those who have suffered after the second war. One of the most important antipoverty programme, introduced in 2009, represents the social indemnity for pensioners: a social aid provided in addition to the individual pension till a defined level of income. In 2016, there were registered 509,880 pensioners entitled to receive social indemnity. The level of minimum pension has been increased up to 400 Ron from 350 Ron in 2012.

	2012	2015	August 2016
Total number of state insurance and farmers pensioners, out of which:	5,286,900	683,000	5,089,600
Farmers	618,200	463,600	412,500
Average level of pension	778 Ron	886 Ron	930 Ron

Goal 2: Participation, non discrimination and social inclusion of older persons are promoted

Reducing the risk of poverty and social exclusion among elderly

In Romania now, one in five Romanians lives in relative poverty, according to the European Union's methodology. A large share of income poverty is persistent, meaning that over three-quarters of the poor were poor in the reference year as well as in at least the previous two or three years. About 5 percent of the population cannot afford to purchase a minimum consumption level of products and services and aprox. one-third is severely deprived materially.

In 2016, due to the social protection measures provided for elderly during the last decade, the poverty rate (13.2% in 2015) among persons 65 years of age and over remains lower than the poverty rate of other categories of age (26.8% for children 0-15 years of age, 22.3 for young persons of 16-24 years of age or 16.8% for persons 25-49 years of age).

But, a consistent share of the elderly people living in Romania are exposed to the risk of poverty and social exclusion, because of the high living' costs. For example, even the majority of elderly are the owners of their dwellings, many of them, living in urban area, cannot afford to pay the high cost of utilities and migrate to rural localities or live together with their adult children. Part of those who lost their houses are living now in home care facilities. In the same time, the presence of elderly members decreases household poverty incidence. In 2012, the poverty incidence among households with one elderly member (21.2 percent) was 1.6 percentage points lower than the incidence of poverty in households with no elderly members.

World Bank study on poverty and social inclusion highlightes that, although the relative welfare of the elderly has improved over the years, there is a large gender gap within that age group. The difference in poverty between men and women aged 65 and over is 10 percentage points

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(19.3 percent for women against 9.2 percent for men). The difference is even larger for people aged 80 and over. Single older women are also affected by a higher rate of poverty, registering 28 percent of the poor aged 65 and over. This situation is the result of the difference in pension incomes as women on average have worked fewer years than men. More importantly, urban versus rural residence is an important predictor of poverty for the elderly. Single elderly women in rural areas have the highest poverty rate within their age group. Presently, for elderly people, the pensions keep them out of poverty but, for the future, it is expecting that the poverty rate among older persons will increase due to the difference between the levels of pensions and the levels of wages.

For the poorest population, including elderly, the social assistance safe net is crucial. Recently, the Parliament has adopted a new social assistance program for the poor, the Law no.196/Oct.2016 on Minimum Inclusion Income (MII) program, with the goal of providing assistance to those in the bottom quintile of the Romanian population while improving work incentives for workable adults. To achieve this goal, the new program will merge three existing means-tested programs into a single one: minimum income guaranteed, family support allowance and heating aid provided during the winter time.

The MII is granted from the state budget, as a difference between the level of benefits regulated by the law and the net income of the family or single person. The purpose of the program is to guarantee a minimum level of income to every person in Romania, supporting also families to rise and educate their children and covering part of the costs of dwellings (high cost of heating during the cold season). The MII program is designed to reduce the implicit marginal tax rate (MTR) on earnings to enable program beneficiaries to combine receiving social assistance with working, and will increase the availability and relevance of the labour active measures for this target group. Importantly, the MII program will also serve as a tool for identifying the poor population. The law stipulates some facilities for single old person in relation with the level of the net income based on which the amount of the benefit is established.

According to the legislation in force, the elderly persons can benefit of: (i) free access to public urban transport and 50% discount for inter-urban travels tickets (6 travels by train/year), (ii) discount for radio/tv payments and cable subscription, (iii) subsidized price for 12-18 days of balneal therapy treatment, (iv) financial aids for pensioners' funerals supported from the social insurance fund or from local budgets if the persons are not insured.

The poorest elderly persons are benefiting by other financial or in kind aids: food and clothing delivered by town halls, free access to social canteens, emergency aids for medical treatment or medicines provided from state or local budgets.

Ensuring Lifelong Learning

Knowing that lifelong learning is an essential goalpost in order to achieve longer working lives, the main objective to be achieved by Romania is to increase the participation rate of adults (ages 25-64) to 10 percent by 2020.

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During last five years, Romania did not make significant gains in this area (participation has only increased from 1.3 percent in 2007 to 1.8 percent in 2013). The higher unemployment rate is registered among the lowest skill population 50 - 55 years of age. This phenomenon is not likely to change for at least another decade unless middle aged and older workers and their employers are convinced of the benefits of lifelong learning.

Romania already has a well-defined legal framework which supports lifelong learning. That regulatory framework consists of laws on education, apprenticeships, internships, volunteering and adult vocational training and this is a very valuable point that can serve as a basis for further development of the system of lifelong learning.

The job-seekers are benefiting free of charge of vocational training services and also have the right to receive: (i) theoretical and practical training for the entire duration of the course, (ii) school supplies and instruction materials and to receive school books for personal use, (iii) protection equipment during the practical training, (iv) free travels or discount for tickets on the route from the domicile to the training units, (v) medical consultations, medical analyses and tests necessary in order to attend the course.

One of the most important strategic document adopted by the Government is the Lifelong Learning Strategy (LLL Strategy), based on the regulations of National Education Law. The LLL Strategy, approved by GD no. 418/2015, has in view actions and measures to be implemented, following three major pillars: (i) access and incentives for participation; (ii) quality and relevance; (iii) partnerships for better information. One of the objectives of the strategy starts from the idea that learning should be promoted among older people, so that they could see the value of learning continuously, including for everyday life and become motivated to take part in learning activities. The LLL Strategy includes big investments in community learning centres which should cover employment aspects, such as reskilling (for older workers), as well as aspects related to everyday life, such as health, elder care, financial and legal planning for retirement and inheritance management, and benefits of technology to enhance social connectedness.

Elderly participation

The Romanian Active Ageing Strategy 2015 - 2020 has a distinct chapter regarding the social participation of elderly. In coming years, there will be a larger number of older persons, most of whom will likely no longer be employed. Further improvements in life expectancy, and especially in healthy life expectancy, in social participation, in lifelong learning will lead to a longer post-employment interval with greater amounts of available discretionary time.

Formal participation of older persons in social, economic and political issues is encouraged also by the Romanian Government. The National Council of Elderly Persons (NCEP), set up by the Law no.16/ 2000, as an autonomous and consultative organism, represents the rights of this category of population and play an active role as a partner of dialogue with public authorities. The NCEP unifies the representative organizations of elderly persons at national level.

The administrative costs and the wages of the NCEP personel are financially sustained, from the state budget, by the MoLFSPE which also annually provides funds for the celebration of the International Day of Elderly Persons.

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At county level and in Bucharest Municipality, according to the Government Decision no 499/2004, there are organized Consultative Committees for Civil Dialogue, led by the Prefect. These committees of elderly persons have monthly meetings with representatives of local authorities and public institutions, trying to identify and solve the specific problems of older people at community level. Their reports, sent to MoLFSPE, represent an important source of information for policy makers involved in designing of national programs addressed to elderly problems.

The majority of Romanian elderly persons are mostly involved in traditionally care of children and disabled relatives. Romania now has very few performances related to voluntary activities, especially among older persons. The main obstacles could be the lack of culture on volunteering and the financial impoverishment of elderly. If persons spend a considerable portion of their day seeking the least expensive price of food and other necessities, there will be little energy left to participate in voluntary and other social activities. Presently, the majority of voluntary activities are organized by NGOs.

In order to improve the legal framework on volunteering (first Law no.95/2001), it was adopted a new legislation (Law no.78/2014) which better defines the contracts of volunteers and the host organizations' tasks. Many NGOs are active in voluntary field and develop successful projects involving both young and elderly volunteers.

Taking into consideration that the Romanian older persons face significant political, cultural and socio-demographic barriers to more extensive social participation, the Government has to adopt a proactive role in encouraging the voluntary movement throughout the system of state authorities, at central and local level. Mass media also must be much more mobilized to disseminate information about the value of older people participation (World Bank study on active ageing, 2014).

Goal 3: Dignity, health and independence in older age are promoted and safeguarded

Social services and long term care policies and legal framework

According to the Strategy for Social Services 2006-2013, approved through GD 1826/2005, Government's goal is: "to ensure the development of a national network of social services of good quality, adequately distributed in the territory and accessible to all potential beneficiaries at national level".

The background study conducted by World Bank for the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2015-2020 in 2014 highlights the need to improve the present social services system. Although almost half of the population lives in rural areas, only 24 percent of the social services are located there and only 6 percent of the subsidies from the state budget for NGO's goes to social services in rural localities. The ageing of the population in rural areas together with the optional pension insurance for farmers (2010) as well as youth and adult migration for labor abroad, are expected to result into an increase in demand of social services for older persons. Over the next few years, external migration of women is likely to have an even greater impact on the need for and supply of social care services.

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The role played by private providers in delivering and developing of social services needs to be increased at both the national and local levels. In this context, during 2015, the Government made steps to eliminate the restriction applied to the economic providers of social services to provide social services.

Therefore, MoLFSPE can finance national programs, such as the 2011-2015 program to transform the inefficient medical units in hostels for old aged persons. In 2016, it was approved and implemented a national program for increasing the quality of life of elderly who are in residential centers.

Additionally, the Ministry finances yearly, on a competitive process bases, a program of subsidies for NGO's. The program, regulated by the Law no 34/1998 is implemented constantly since 1998 and almost 45% from the total annualy funds are spent for elderly care services. In 2016, the total budget approved for subsidies was about 18,301,990 Ron, out of which 11,438,357 Ron cover the requests of 83 NGO's specialized in care services for elderly, for 125 units (residential facilities, day care centres and domiciliary care) having 6,381 beneficiaries. In 2016, the financing program of subsidies was improved and simplified by approval of the Gov. Decision no. 725/2016.

MoLFSPE provides also funds for construction' works and rehabilitation of buildings for residential and day care facilities, based on the provisions of GD no.973/2012. In 2015 it was approved a budget of 28,441,162 Ron for 31 public and private social units for elderly (26 hostels care and 5 day centres).

Law no. 17/2000 on social assistance of elderly persons, republished is the first legislative act regulating social services for older persons in Romania (in 2016, it was amended by Emergency Ordinance no.34/2016).

The Social Assistance Law no.292/2011 has improved the regulations in social services field and contains also a special chapter addressed to elderly persons. This law establishes the protective measures that can be taken (e.g., temporary or permanent care at home, in residential centers, or in day centers) as well as other required services (e.g. legal and administrative counseling, household adaptations to meet the needs of older persons, etc). For the first time in Romanian legal framework, it was defined the concept of long term care. Depending on their personal social-economic, physiological and health situation, elderly persons have the right to social services in order to prevent, to limit and to remove the temporary or permanent consequences of any situation that could affect their life or could generate social exclusion risk. Dependent older people are entitled to receive personal care services provided in accordance with the degree of dependence and depending on family status and income available.

Assessment of functional autonomy of dependent persons is made based on standard criteria, established by GDno.886/2000.

Local public authorities, through their specialized public social assistance services, are required to identify and assess elderly needs, to provide care services in rezidential institutions, to assure financing and co-financing of social services. Care services for elderly are financed from their contributions and local budgets.

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The law stipulates that older people who have their own income are required to pay a monthly contribution to receive personal care services at home or assistance in residential care centres, but not more than 60% of their pension amount. If the elderly person has no income or cannot pay the full monthly contribution, the difference up to the full amount of the contribution is provided by legal supporters of the elderly, according to a certain income established by law. For those with no family and any income, care services are financially supported from local budgets, based on the standard cost of services, **approved by GD no.978/2015 (which modifies GD no.23/2010)**. By this piece of legislation was approved, from the first time, the minimum cost standards for the home care services.

In order to ensure the sustainability of public residential care facilities, in 2016, the Government decided to provide funds from the state budget, in addition to all the other financial sources, up to 10% from the standard cost of service/beneficiary by **Emergency Ordinance no 34/2016**. Public and private providers of social services have to comply with quality standards, approved by law 197/2012.

Long-term and health care for dependent elderly

Decreased dependence of the elderly and improving long-term care (LTC) as part of Active Ageing concept is a strategic objective assumed by the Romanian Government in the National Strategy for promotion of Active Ageing and Elder Protection 2015-2020. A detailed technical analysis of the context of the current situation and policy challenges in this area can be found in the World Bank report "*Living Long, Staying Active and Strong: Promotion of Active Ageing in Romania*" (2014).

According to this report, the long-term care (LTC) system in Romania is characterized by relatively less developed policies and practices, given the level of funding, the extent and quality of facilities and services as well as coverage and the regulatory framework. The level of formal supply of LTC services is low, and the system is fragmented across the health/social service divide, distinctions between disabled and older persons, as well as across jurisdictions with uneven access to services. A heavy burden of care provision is therefore falling on family members without any major support structure. Historic cultural norms of care provision by the family have more recently been stressed by strong emigration flows.

The current infrastructure for the formal provision of long-term care consists of nursing and residential care homes, day care centers, and formal care services at home. While this infrastructure is often described as insufficient, services of professional caregivers are in high demand, but not sufficiently funded and staffed. In 2016, there are registered **312 care homes** for elderly with a total number of **15,471 beds**, out of which 118 public institutions with 7,693 beds and 194 private with 7,778 beds; waiting list is counting **2,797** admission' requests, (1,407 for public facilities and 1,390 for the private ones). In 2011, there were **203** hostels (108 public and 95 private) with a total number of **11,584** beds and **2,609** request on waiting lists. Day care centres counted 84 in 2016 and 81 in 2012. We can see that, during the last five years, the number of care homes for elderly has been doubled for private sector only, while the number of day care facilities have not registered a significant increasement.

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Unfortunately, there are no certain data related to the real number of home care providers and beneficiaries (in 2012, it was estimated a number of 300 public and private providers). National House of Health Insurance (NHHI) provides financial support for home health care services for maximum 90 days of care each year.

In 2015, the total amount of funds spent for home care program was about 54,399,000 Ron, for 447 care providers and 45,568 patients. In a similar way, providers of palliative services are entitled to receive funds from NHHI, but the number of organizations which applies under this program is still insignificant: in 2015, only 6 organizations with 175 patients have received funds for palliative care services.

Geriatric facilities are not enough developed, despite of the Romanian tradition in geriatric care, National Institute of Geriatrics and Gerontology "Ana Aslan" being one of the first hospitals in the world. Presently, there are 5 university clinics specialized in geriatrics and gerontology, 22 units in general hospitals with 933 beds and an average number of 2,204 patients. From the total number of 163 physicians specialized in geriatric medicine, 133 are working in public system and 33 in private offices or in hospitals.

Elderly persons, evaluated and certificated as persons with handicap, are entitled to receive social benefits granted according to the degree of handicap (medium, advanced and high) and care services. Persons with the highest level of handicap can choose between a monthly care indemnity or the services of a personal assistant, usually recruited from the family members of the beneficiary and employed by local authorities. The 'personal assistant' model that has been employed in Romania is fully funded from public funds but further analysis is needed to form stronger conclusions about its efficiency.

According to statistical figures provided by the National Authority for Protection of Persons with Disabilities: in 2012 there were 679,765 persons with disabilities, out of which 236,500 persons 65 aged and over; in 2015 there were registered 766,153 disabled, out of which 288,332 persons 65 aged and over, while at August 2016 there were reported 775,309 persons with disabilities, out of which 296,889 persons 65 aged and over. In the same time, the number of disabled persons cared in residential facilities is very low- 2,4% from the total number of persons with disabilities-, but the majority of the institutionalised disabled have a high degree of handicap and the total number of persons in this situation is around of 279,415. The majority of the children and adults with disabilities (88,89%) are in the care of their families and/or are living an independent life.

Present legal framework stipulates a range of health care facilities, such as: free accessibility to health care services for retired persons with an average pension under 872 Ron (aprox.200 Eur); free access to the health system for the elderly with low income, war veterans or war invalids, who suffered due to political or ethnical reasons, disabled elderly persons - the contribution for health insurance is supported from the state budget and social insurance system; access to subsidised medicine - the costs of medicine drugs are covered from the health insurance fund in different percentages: 90% or 100% and the list of medicine with subsidised costs is annually approved by the minister of health.

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Integrating people with care needs into community life and creating an enabling environment so that they can live at home as long as possible remains the main challenge and a goal of the LTC system. There is also a need for better coordination in the provision of long-term care services in Romania between the MoLFSPE and the Ministry of Public Health, county and local councils, NGO's, private care providers, hospitals, GPs, pharmacists, informal caregivers and persons in need of care. Going forward, decisions will have to be made on how to adjust the current funding mix, how to raise additional resources, and how to make the funding model sustainable.

Goal 4 Intergenerational solidarity is maintained and enhanced

Intergenerational solidarity

According to the last researches, for a better understanding of the demographic change impact on intergenerational solidarity, it is important to translate the attention to the changes in family members' support across generations.

The individual characteristics, family structure and country culture influence especially partnering, childbearing and parenting. The increasing of longevity which led to the phenomenon of the "sandwich generation" or "women in the middle" could have an important impact on intergenerational solidarity as well. It is expected that in four-generation families, women would have to combine care for young children or grandchildren with care for parents and grandparents. This would imply an increase of caring burden resulting in a negative influence on intergenerational solidarity and on economic resources also, due to the needs of more formal care at home or in residential facilities.

The contemporary Romanian demographic context of families put in evidence the increase of the number of successive generations together with the reduction of the number of children for each generation. Migration, another demographic phenomenon which affect Romania after 1990, will influence intergenerational solidarity in a negative way, but it could positive consequences in the same time. According to the World Bank (2016) Romania was, in 2015, the third remittance receipient country in Europe. The remittances sent by Romanian migrants are used primarily for daily expenses and than for healthcare, work home improvement, children s education, payments of debts or loans. Thus, the importance financial aid offered by adult children who work abroad is considerable.

Traditionally, in Romania older persons are taking care of their grandchildren during the work program of the parents and women of the family play the role of informal caregiver for their old relatives. But, in our days, Romania is an exporting country of informal caregivers to western EU states. Knowing that human resources account for up to 60-80% of total recurrent expenditure in health system and based on the estimation of European Commission about the needs of jobs in health care (two million new jobs in health and long term care will be created in the EU alone between 2010 and 2020), we can presume that many Romanian physicians and caregivers might be tempted to work in richer EU member states. Therefore, the Government has to identify appropriate measures in order to create better work conditions and to motivate proffesionals in any way possible. In 2016, the Romanian Government approved an important growth of medical staff 'wages up to 25%, but the salaries of employees in social care facilities still remains very low.

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According to the census done in 2011, of all Romanians aged 65 years and over, fewer than 1% live in institutions while the majority live in their households. More than 26% live alone, 28 % live in households with other elderly people (pensioners couple) and 45% live in extended families. People aged 65 to 74 years represent 55% of the total number of elderly persons and women represent almost 60%. Many old persons (55%) are living in rural areas. 14% of these elderly reported as being limited in their daily activities due to one or more health impairment related to vision, hearing, walking and climbing stairs, memory and orientation or communication. Over 242,000 elderly people reported having serious limitations, of whom only 5,000 are living in residential facilities. In addition, more than 62,000 elderly reported having complete limitations, of whom 4,000 are cared in institutions. Nearly 6.5% of all population aged 65 and over need permanent support for carrying out daily activities (Elder abuse Study).

Based on the data regarding the dependent elderly persons' situation and the available financial and human resources, one of the key problem is how the Government will find the best solutions to ensure adequate care services for all persons in need. One of the recent measures initiated by the Ministry of Health is consisting in adoption of the new legal framework regarding the community health assistance. Community nurses will work in rural localities without family doctors offices. In 2016, the Government has adopted a package of integrated measures trying to reduce poverty and to raise social inclusion of all categories of vulnerable persons. Following the measures proposed by this document, MoLFSPE has launched a project, financed from structural funds, aimed to support the development of integrated services' centres located in the poorest rural areas of the country and to train social workers as case managers.

The 2016 survey "Safer and healthier work at any age: Country Inventory Romania" done by the European Agency for Safety and Health Work, questioned about useful things the government could do to help people who care for elderly family members and the responses were: receiving financial remuneration, pension credits, being allowed to work part time, flexible hours or carers' leave. Present legislation provides only that family members can be employed (with a part time contract) by local authorities as caregivers of their old relatives. Obviously, in short time, new regulations regarding diverse types of support for informal cares has to be adopted.

One of the general objectives of the National Ageing Strategy has in view: "Raising Social Profile of Older Population and Promoting Social Participation", with the following priority actions: (i) Establish a department of Active Ageing within MoLFSPE; (ii) Develop a curriculum for group counseling and a plan for identifying and reaching out to the groups of older adults at the greatest risk of loneliness, social exclusion and depression; (iii) Promote participation of older persons in social and physical activities through dedicated events; (iv) Encourage volunteering among older persons as well as young ones; (v) Influence mass media to improve attitudes towards older people and their role in the society; (vi) Strive for greater access by the older population to public health programs and healthcare through public information campaigns; (vii) Establish periodic surveys to monitor social, behavioral and biomedical aspects of ageing.

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Combating elder abuse and discrimination

Based on a Study undertaken by the National Council for Older Persons, the "negative" image of older persons is mainly determined by some dominant characteristics of the society : elderly's dependency of an external support, general attitude about the useless of elderly from social perspective, gaps in communication with younger generations. Even without a bad intention, older persons in Romania are not appreciated by the general population at their real value, they are usually rejected from any economic, social or political actions of the community, they remain in a position of inferiority as assisted persons, their wisdom and experience are wasted. Mass media is interested in presenting much more the cases of elderly in difficult situations, than examples of active older persons involved in different aspects of society. Therefore, many elderly suffering by social isolation, experience anxiety and illness predisposition.

In Romania, at official level, the types of abuse recognized are correlated with those defined by WHO. However, the traditional perception of population on elderly abuse is related much more to violence, neglect and financial/material exploitation.

Physical abuse is recognized because it is the subject to legislation under prevention and combating violence by family members. Financial abuse is more likely to be detected and reported, as frauds are subject to public awareness campaigns organized by police force or have more visibility in media. The other forms of abuse are less tackled, as elderly abuse is not a subject of national debates and general population and even professionals are not fully aware of this issue.

In Romania there is a lack of informations regarding the prevalence of elder abuse. Eurobarometer Survey Health and Long term care in EU found that Romania is the only country where the majority of population (86%) considers that poor treatment, neglect and abuse of older people is widespread at national level, taking into consideration the following topics: elderly are living in poor conditions, receive inadequate care and physical and psychological attention.

Romania has no official statistics regarding the phenomenon of elder mistreatment, abuse and neglect.

Older persons with physical and cognitive impairment, dependent of daily support and care, were identified as being particularly vulnerable to elder abuse. By consequence, preventing the risk of mistreatment, abuse and neglect within care homes represents the main issue for the state authorities. The vast majority of older persons resident in nursing homes are cared for in safe and supportive settings. In order to prevent and combat the potential cases of elderly abuse, the legal framework regarding social services and quality standards stipulates the rights of beneficiaries, regulates methods of abuse referrals and establishes civil or penal responsibilities. Social inspection, set up by Emergency Government Ordinance no.113/2011 realises its mission based on an annually thematic plan of inspections and operates in emergency situations noted by any citizen or institution. In 2013, Ministry of Health created a joint task force with the police corps responsible for crimes against public health safety in order to stenghten the inspections in residential health care facilities. In 12 months, over 1000 inspections were carried out and 174 penal crimes have been identified.

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In the context of present demographic trend, it is important to prevent any possible form of ageism because "the process of systematic stereotyping and discrimination against persons because they are old" (def.of ageism by Biggs and Lowenstein) is acting as a factor that's permits elder abuse to happen and could create a context of social space that makes possible the lack of empathy and a reduced capacity to bridge healthy social relationships between generations.

For Romania it will be important to understand what elder abuse really means and to move the official attention beyond health and social care system only. National policies based on concrete data and the realities evidenced by research are needed in order to rise positive interactions between age cohorts and to reduce causal factors associated with elder abuse.

The Plan of actions of National Active Ageing Strategy stipulates specific measures in order to improve legislation on prevention of elder abuse and neglect and to develop curriculum on prevention, detection and resolution of identified elder abuse cases. The National Agency for Equal Rights between Women and Men has in view to implement a 24-hour social emergency helpline for provision of counselling, referrals and psychological help, older persons being a priority target group. Since 2015, Princess Margaret of Romania Foundation has initiated the Elderly' Phone Project, successfully implemented by volunteers. Unfortunately, the present legislation has very few provisions related to the prevention of the risk of abuse or neglect among older persons. The Law no.17/2000 stipulates some rules to protect elderly from a potential financial or material abuse, if they intend to sell their houses under the condition of receiving care from the new owners of the dwellings.

CONCLUSIONS

Present picture of Romania in relation to economic and social situation of older persons could reveal the following major aspects: poverty rate of elderly persons remains lower than other categories of age, due to the fact that the majority of elderly persons are benefiting of pension, more than 90 % of olders are the owners of the dwellings, more than 1,472,186 pensioners receive health care without any contribution to health insurance fund and 3,067,624 pensioners are not paying income taxes.

In the same time, the income of older people is low (in august 2016, from the total number of 4,677,100 pensioners, there were registered 3,629,387 with a pension up to 1250 Ron - equivalent of the minimum gross wage on the economy), health and LTC services are insufficient, the unemployment rate amongst elderly is still high, the access to labor market after retirement is not encouraged by the present legal framework, older persons continue to be considered as assisted persons, their active participation being reduced to the role of grandchildren' caregivers. There are also major inequalities between urban and rural areas related to education, health, employment and socio-economic status of all population, affecting elderly also.

The accelerated process of ageing will determine the decline in the share of the population contributing to the economic output, followed by a lower growth in income per capita. While most of older persons currently are recipients of pension, it is expected that pension system coverage will decline among middle age cohorts especially and pensions' income will decrease in relation to wages. National low average of fertility, the growth of life expectancy and outmigration of active population will add a major pressure on labour market, pension, health and social assistance systems.

In order to increase the economic growth and to ensure a sustainable development, Romania has to promote adequate social inclusion's public policies for all, giving also more attention to older generation as a valuable resource for entire society. Any policy focused on active ageing must take into consideration the real disponibility of older persons to understand the concept and to accept their active involvement in all aspects of society.

The Special Eurobarometer survey on Active Ageing reveals divergence between Romania and the rest of EU27 in perceptions of age and older people. For example, almost twice as many respondents in Romania indicated a negative perception towards people aged 55 and over as compared to the EU27 average. In Romania, a person is considered "old" at 61.3 years of age compared to an average of 64 years in EU27. Romanian respondents also believe that they would need to retire on average 4 years before the EU27 respondents (Romania: 57.7%, EU27 average: 61.7). According to the survey results, 27% of respondents in Romania would like to continue working after reaching the pension age, while 69% totally disagree with the increase of the retirement age by the year 2030.

Having in view the demographic trends, Romania is fully aware of the fact that, on medium term, without the participation/integration of elderly on the labour market, there will be a lack

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of human and professional resources and moreover a huge pressure on the social insurance and social assistance benefits' budgets.

Romania has now a set of national strategies with concrete action plans till 2020 targeted on the following issues and it will be crucial to put in practice the commitments assumed: :

- Combating the negative consequences of demographic ageing through policies and programs addressed to young persons and families, in order to rise the natality ratio and to improve the quality of life: generous family allowances and parental leaves, accessible crèches and kindergardens, after school services, free access to education and health services;
- Improving labour market participation, having in view the most challenging aspects such as: the large share of population employed/ self-employed in agriculture and land-owners, the low level of women's participation on the labour market, the high rate of poverty and social exclusion, especially in-work poverty, high rate of youth unemployment, large share of long term unemployment in total unemployment rate, the existence of legal provisions against the employment of retired persons;
- Increasing work force's competences and their participation in LLL: by implementing more active measures, raising of ICT use and digital alphabetisation, increasing the quality of LLL programs, providing sufficient funds and fiscal stimulation measures for both employers and employees regarding continuous professional training and LLL, ensuring an efficient system of monitoring of the active measures' impact;
- Developing social economic sector as a way to provide more employment opportunities for people belonging to vulnerable groups; Romania recently adopted the Law no. 219/2015 on social economy which regulates the legal framework for social enterprises' development, including those which offer jobs for elderly persons;
- Raising the number of social houses: by moving financial resources from the acquisition of private dwelling to social housing programs;
- Ensuring the sustainability of pension system, knowing that the social insurance fund is presently sustained with important funds from the state budget;
- Developing social services system for all categories of vulnerable groups by: implementing integrated services, involving social protection, employment, education, healthcare, and other public services need to be implemented in the poorest areas of the country;
- Increasing the social responsibility in social services; improving needs assessment and information management systems and ensuring their alignment with local decision-making policies and practices; improving financing for social services;
- Improving the accessibility of older persons to adequate health and LTC services, developing a network of home care services at national level;
- Promoting participation of older persons in social, cultural, and political activities through dedicated events and volunteering;
- Providing public awareness campaign in order to improve attitudes towards older people and their role in the society.

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For the next five years, poverty reduction, pension system sustainability, employability increase, health and social care development and a better access to education remains the main priorities of Romania in social sector. Having in view the major demographic trends that Romania will face in the coming years, more attention should be done and higher budgets allocated to risks and needs associated with old age.

And, last, but not least, in every way possible Romania should take a hard look at images of ageing, at respect accorded to the aged and at the nature of relations between generations.

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2. *"Romania in figures 2015" published by National Institute of Statistics;*
3. *"Labour force in Romania " Amigo Survey of National Institute of Statistics -2015;*
4. *Statistic data-2015, by Prof. Dr. Vasile Ghetau/ National Institute of Demographics" Vladimir Trebici"*
5. *"Background study for the National Strategy and Poverty Reduction, published by WORLD Bank 2015;*
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7. *"Elderly Parents, Adult children and the Romanian Transnational Family"- an intergenerational solidarity approach Study -2015, of Ionuț FÖLDES / Babeș Bolyai University;*
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10. *"EU comparative report on situation, policies and practices for an aged workforce in the EU"- The European Social Observatory 2016;*
11. *2013 Report of the Thematic Advisory Committee Employment, Social Inclusion and Social Services, Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Protection, the Technical Working Group Social Entrepreneurship and Economy: Socio-Economic Analysis for the Programming of European Funds 2014-2020;*

Legal framework:

Employment:

- *Labour Code (Law no.53/2003, with subsequent amendments),*
- *Law no.76/2002 on unemployment insurance system and employment stimulation, with subsequent amendments,*
- *Law no.202/2006 on the organisation and functioning of National Agency of Employment, as well as for implementing institutional reorganisation measures, republished,*
- *GEO no.36/2013 on implementing between 2013 and 2018 a series of social protection measures for laid off persons by collective layoffs based on lay off plans, with subsequent amendments,*
- *GD no.1071 /2013 on approving the National Strategy for Employment 2014 - 2020 and the Action plan for 2014 - 2020 for the implementation of the National Strategy,*

Professional training:

- *Government's Ordinance no.129/2000 on adults professional training, republished,*
- *Law no.279 / 2005 on apprenticeship at work place, republished,*

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Social Protection: Pension, Social assistance and social services:

- *Law no. 17/2000 regarding the social assistance for the elderly, as amended and supplemented (2008; 2010; 2015; 2016) - makes specific provisions on the organization, provision and funding of social services for the elderly, amended and supplemented by Emergency Ordinance no.34/2016;*
- *Law no. 263/2010 on the unitary system of public pensions;*
- *GD 886/2000 regarding the approval of national grid needs assessment of older people;*
- *Ordinance no. 68/2003 regarding the social services, with subsequent amendments;*
- *Law no. 466/2004 on the Statute of social worker;*
- *GD 1826/2005 approving Social Services Strategy 2006-2013;*
- *Social assistance law 292/2011 with subsequent amendments;*
- *Law 197/2012 regarding the quality assurance in social services area;*
- *Gov. Decision no.118/2014 approving metodological regulations for applying the regulations of the law no. 197/2012 regarding the provision of quality in social services, amended and supplemented by Gov. Decision no.584/2016;*
- *MoLFSPE Order no. 2126/2014 approving the minimum quality standards for the accreditation of social services for the elderly, the homeless, young people who leave the child protection and other categories of adults in difficulty and social services provided in the community, social services provided in an integrated system and social canteens;*
- *GD 978/2015 approving the minimum standards of cost for social services and the level of monthly income per family member based on which is determined monthly maintenance contribution payable by legal supporters of older people in residential centers;*
- *GD 867/2015 approving the list of social services and the framework regulations on organization and functioning of social services;*
- *Law no.219/2015 on social economy;*
- *GD no.383/2015 on approving the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2015-2020 and the corresponding Strategic Action Plan approved by GD 829/2002;*
- *GD no.566/2015 on approving the National Strategy on Promoting Active Aging and Elderly's Protection for the period 2015-2020 and the corresponding Strategic Action Plan, the Operational Action Plan for the period 2016 - 2020, as well as their mechanism for monitoring and integrated assessment, as amended and supplemented by Gov. Decision no. 861/2016;*

Strengthening the international solidarity through volunteering - examples of projects implemented by NGO's

The Princess Margaret of Romania Foundation implemented more projects focused on promoting volunteerism such as: "Never Alone Project", based on the voluntary activity performed at the older persons domicile, as well as at nursing homes. Young and elderly volunteers provide support for dependent elderly in need and organise home visits for combating the risk of isolation and social exclusion (120 volunteers were involved in the project and 135 lonely persons have received personal support); "Generations community center"- located in Bucharest, has as main objective, to support children, youngsters and old persons in vulnerable situations, based on an intergenerational approach and volunteering (40 permanent volunteers are working in this project); this center offers a space for people of all ages where they can learn, help each other or receive support through a range of diverse activities such as: free access to social canteens, free after school services, free hair dresser, reading club, photography, foreign languages, painting and guitar courses, sports and drama club.

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Caritas Confederation has developed an entire network of home care services, all over the country, but it has also many programmes which tries to empower the elderly voices and to promote their active participation: In 2012, it was organised a national campaign to inform and motivate target group of issue of active ageing and solidarity between generations. Caritas Associations employ 1200 staff and 1100 volunteers and offer support for 15,500 seniors. "Seniors Coffee Shop Project", organized in 2014 by Caritas Bucharest Association in 4 municipalities has had in view to promote the relationships intra and intergenerations;

"Active citizens at the third age" Project, presently implemented, is focused on raising the capacity of elderly to participate and influence the decisions of policy makers, to develop the abilities of older people in advocacy and lobby, through a "Parliament of Seniors".

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4 Change Romania Association implements projects in partnership with *Caritas Alba Iulia Association* in order to facilitate the access of elderly to social services: through the "Development of inter-regional network - Project" there will be provided training courses for care givers of elderly affected by Alzheimer disease.

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White Yellow Cross Foundation, specialized in home health care services implements two projects of teleassistance for dependent elderly persons from two municipalities of the country, in partnership with the social assistance departments of the townhalls. Ministry of Health is involved in supporting such initiatives through national programmes financed from structural funds.

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Pro Vobis Association- Centre of Resources for Volunteerism coordinates an interesting project "Employee looking for volunteering" having as main purpose to create and develop a viable and multiable model of employer support for their employees acting as volunteers: 10 teams of 50 employees have been trained and, with the support of their companies; the new volunteers will be involved in different programmes of their communities;

A five years project: "The initiative Shelf-to promote volunteerism in Romania"- has had as main objective: to diversify the opportunities of involvement through volunteering in public libraries. 15 pilot projects and events have been organized in the spaces of education and culture offered by libraries which also played the role of information points for volunteering activities.

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Habilitas Association created the online platform of elderly volunteers, through the project "Seniors- resources in community Volunteering at the third age" , in partnership with CBNRM Norway (2009-2014); the association also develop a projects named "Enhancing labour market integration of elderly family carers through skills improving" , focused on a the development of diverse LLL activities : online traning courses for informal caregivers of older persons, online platform of ressources, handbook for the Romanian carers, concept paper for a strategy of integration on the labour market of former informal carers.

habilitas@yahoo.com; www.habilitas.ro

National Federation" Omenia" of Pensioners Mutual Help House Associations in Romania: represents *Credit Unions for pensioners* - (CARP): non lucrative organizations that, mainly through the members' contribution, provides small loans to elderly persons for their personal necessities. The associations are involved in organising of additional social, cultural, touristic activities: day care centres and units of domiciliary care, medical and health rehabilitation services, personal hygiene serrvices, food stores with subsidized prices, distyribution of material aids, activities of social economy (manufacturing activities) involving older workers.

www.carp-omenia.ro; carp.omenia@yahoo.com

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Annex 2

Statistics

Evolution of birth rate, death rate and natural increase, in 2012 and 2014
(Rates /1000 inhabitants)

Indicators	2012	2014
Live births	9.0	9.2
Deaths	11.6	12.7
Infants deaths	10.0	8.8
Natural increase	-3.6	-3.5
Marriages	4.8	1.2
Divorces	1.6	1.2
Average life expectation : years	Women 77.9 Men 70.7	Women 78.3 Men 71.2

Main labour market indicators 2015

Indicators	Total	Men	Women		
Employment rate of population aged 20-64 years	66.0	74.7	57.2		
Unemployment rate	6.8	7.5	5.8		
Long-term unemployment rate	3.0	3.3	2.6		
Long-term unemployment incidence	43.9	43.8	44.1		
Underemployed persons-% in active pop.	2.9	3.4	2.3		
Potential additional labour force-% in active pop.	3.9	3.1	5.1		
Early school leavers for young 18-24 yrs.	19.1	19.5	18.5		
Weight of persons aged 30-34 yrs. With superior level of education	25.6	24.2	27.2		
Young people aged 20-24 having at least medium level of education	79.7	79.3	80.2		
Life long learning	1.3	1.3	1.3		
Rate of young people (15-24 yrs.) neither in employment nor in education/training	18.1	15.0	21.4		

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Population by labour status in 2012 and 2015

Indicators	2012	2015
Economically active persons -thou	9,232	9,159
Employed -(thousands)	8,605	8,535
Unemployed-(thousands)	627	624
Economically inactive persons -thou	10,846	10,700
Activity rate-%	54.9	54.5
Employment rate -%	50.9	50.8
Unemployment rate -%	6.8	6.8
Participation in educational/training (persons 25-65 years aged) -%	1.3	1.5

Activity rate: Share of economically active population aged 15 years and over in total population aged 15 years and over.

Employment rate: Share of employment aged 15 years and over in total population aged 15 years and over.

Unemployment rate: Share of unemployed in economically active population.

Employment rate of population aged 15 years and over by groups of age, in 2012 and 2015 -%

Groups of age	2012	2015
Rate of total population aged 15 years and over	50.9	50.8
15-24 years	23.7	24.5
25-34 years	74.4	74.9
35-44 years	80.4	81.1
45-54 years	73.9	75.7
55-64 years	41.6	41.1
65 years and over	11.3	8.9

Unemployment rate of population by groups of age, in 2012 and 2015 -%

Groups of age	2012	2015
Total rate	7.4	7.5
15-24 years	22.6	21.7
25-34 years	8.0	8.1
35-44 years	5.4	5.3
45-54 years	4.6	5.2
55 years and over	2.6	3.0

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Population by labour status and groups of age - 2015

Economically active persons	Total	Employed	Unemployed	Employment rate	Unemployment rate
45-49 years	1,292,557	1,224,708	67,849	78.5%	5.2%
50-54 years	837,331	794,966	42,366	71.7%	5.1%
55-59 years	780,604	745,907	34,697	54.2%	4.4%
60-64 years	376,039	367,505	8,534	17.6%	2.3%
65 years and over	301,119	300,583		8.9%	0.2%

	2012	2015	August 2016
Number of persons 45 aged and over, employed due to active measures received	87,225	107,904	62,129
Number of unemployed 45 aged and over, benefiting by vocational training	7,176	9,288	4,478
Payments for subsidies provided to employers to support the employment of persons 45 aged and over	82,918,516 Ron	85,786,827 Ron	62,735,700 Ron

Evolution of the minimum gross guaranteed wage and of the gross salary earnings

	2012 Ron	2015 Ron	2016 Ron
National minimum gross guaranteed wage	700	975 first semester 1050 second semester	1250 beginning with 1th May
National gross average salary earnings	2,063	2,930	2,874 first semester