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6. ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Overview of methodology for IE SOPHRD

Key Activities and Associated Methodologies	● major source		- minor source			
	Official Docs. & Sources	Other literature	Data – project, financial etc.	Key stakeh/er interview	Group Work	Survey
COMPONENT I						
Relevance						
Activity I.1.1	●	●		●		
Activity I.1.2	●			●		
Activity I.1.3	●			●	●	
Activity I.1.4	●	●		●		
Activity I.1.5	●			-	-	
Efficiency						
Activity I.2.1	●		●	●		
Effectiveness						
Activity I.3.1	●	●		-	●	●
Activity I.3.2	●		●	●	●	
Activity I.3.3	●	-	●	●	●	●
Activity I.3.4	●		●	-	-	●
Activity I.3.5	●	●		●		



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Annex 2 - Questions for the online survey of contracted project promoters

Section 1 - Basic Details

In this section we request basic descriptive details regarding the evolution of your project and certain of its basic characteristics.

0 Please provide us with the following:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 0a Project title | Self-defined text |
| 0b ActionWeb ID | numerical (long integer) |
| 0c Contract number | Self-defined text |
| 0d Project manager name | family name / first name |
| 0e e-mail address of project manager | Self-defined text |

1 Please provide the date on which:

- | | |
|---|------------|
| a your ultimately successful application for funding was submitted | dd.mm.yyyy |
| b your project was approved | dd.mm.yyyy |
| c the contract for your project signed | dd.mm.yyyy |
| d pre-financing was requested | dd.mm.yyyy |
| e pre-financing was received | dd.mm.yyyy |
| f project implementation activity actually started | dd.mm.yyyy |

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 2a Did you apply for a reimbursement at any time prior to end-June 2010? | Yes / No |
|---|----------|

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 2b If you answered 'Yes' to 2a, on what date did you make your application? | dd.mm.yyyy |
|--|------------|

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 2c If you answered 'Yes' to 2a and you have received a reimbursement, on what date was that reimbursement approved? | dd.mm.yyyy |
|--|------------|

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 3 What is the anticipated duration of your project (months) | No. months |
|--|------------|



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- 4a** What 'type' of project are you implementing? Strategic / Grant
- 4b** If you implementing a strategic project, what characteristic best defines it as 'strategic' in terms of human resource development in Romania
Financial volume of funding / Run-time of the project / Implementation in more than 2 regions / Other (please elaborate)
- 5** What is the Key Area of Intervention under which your project is approved? KAI numbers
- 6a** What is the territorial coverage of your project? National / Multi-regional / Single Region
- 6b** Is your project primarily implemented in an urban area, a rural area or in both types of location? Urban / Rural / Both
- 6c** If your project is implemented in a single region, please identify that region Name 8 regions
- 7a** What type or category of activity best characterises the activity engaged in through your project?
Training / Education / Counselling or Guidance / Active Labour Market Programme (e.g. employment scheme) / Job Rotation / Job Sharing / Job Creation / Business start-up / Other (please name the activity)
- 7b** What type of expenditure best characterises your project?
- i** Transfers to individuals: public expenditure transferred directly to individuals and paid in cash or through a reduction in obligatory levies. tick / select as appropriate
- ii** Transfers to employers: public expenditure transferred directly to employers and paid in cash or through a reduction in obligatory tick / select as appropriate



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levies.

- iii** Transfers to service providers: public expenditure transferred directly to producers of goods and services that are transferred to individuals or employers as benefit in kind.

tick / select as appropriate

- 8** Please name the key target group for your project

Young people / Early School Leavers / Graduates / Unemployed / Employed / People with a disability / Members of an minority ethnic group / Entrepreneurs / Other (please specify)

- 9** In September and October 2010 we will undertake a limited number of Case Studies of contracted projects under SOPHRD. These will serve as working examples to illustrate issues and challenges in the project life-cycle. Would you be willing to have your project included on a list for possible selection as a Case Study?

Yes / No

Section 2 – Relevance

In this section we request information regarding the Relevance criterion as set out in the terms of reference for the Interim Evaluation SOPHRD

- 10a** Did the list of **indicative operations** as set out in the programming documentation (the SOPHRD, the SOPHRD FDI, Applicant Guidelines) provide you with a useful guide when writing your project application?

Yes / No

- 10b** Was the list of **indicative operations** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you planned to do to contribute towards meeting the objectives for the KAI under which you made your application?

Yes / No



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- 10c** Was the list of **indicative operations** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you planned to do to meet the objectives of your project as you originally envisaged it? Yes / No
- 10d** If you answered 'No' to 9b and/or 9c, please elaborate / provide detail. Self-defined text
- 11a** Did the list of **eligible activities** as set out in the programming documentation provide you with a useful guide when writing your project application? Yes / No
- 11b** Was the list of **eligible activities** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you wanted to do under the indicative operations relevant to your project? Yes / No
- 11c** Did the list of **eligible activities** in any way restrict you in the types of activities you would ideally have liked to have engaged in with a view to achieving the aims of your project? Yes / No
- 11d** If you answered 'Yes' to 11c, please elaborate / provide detail. Self-defined text
- 12a** In your view, are all of the priorities as set out in SOPHRD as relevant in the current socio-economic context as they were when the programme was approved in November 2007? Yes / No
- 12b** If you answered 'No' to 12a, please name the priorities that you consider to be less relevant in the current socio-economic context Self-defined text
- 12c** Why do you believe these to be less relevant in the current socio-economic context? Self-defined text



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- 13a** Are you aware of new or emerging priorities that are not reflected in the SOPHRD but are important in terms of the development of human resources in Romania? Yes / No
- 13b** If you answered 'Yes' to 13a, please name the new or emerging priorities Self-defined text
- 13c** Why do you believe these to be priorities in the current socio-economic context? Self-defined text

Section 3 – Efficiency

In this section we request information regarding the Efficiency criterion as set out in the terms of reference for the Interim Evaluation SOPHRD including the efficiency of the appraisal / selection / approval / contracting and monitoring aspects of the system

- 10a** Did the list of **indicative operations** as set out in the programming documentation (the SOPHRD, the SOPHRD FDI, Applicant Guidelines) provide you with a useful guide when writing your project application? Yes / No
- 10b** Was the list of **indicative operations** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you planned to do to contribute towards meeting the objectives for the KAI under which you made your application? Yes / No
- 10c** Was the list of **indicative operations** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you planned to do to meet the objectives of your project as you originally envisaged it? Yes / No
- 10d** If you answered 'No' to 9b and/or 9c, please elaborate / provide detail. Self-defined text



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- 11a** Did the list of **eligible activities** as set out in the programming documentation provide you with a useful guide when writing your project application? Yes / No
- 11b** Was the list of **eligible activities** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you wanted to do under the indicative operations relevant to your project? Yes / No
- 11c** Did the list of **eligible activities** in any way restrict you in the types of activities you would ideally have liked to have engaged in with a view to achieving the aims of your project? Yes / No
- 11d** If you answered 'Yes' to 11c, please elaborate / provide detail. Self-defined text
- 12a** In your view, are all of the priorities as set out in SOPHRD as relevant in the current socio-economic context as they were when the programme was approved in November 2007? Yes / No
- 12b** If you answered 'No' to 12a, please name the priorities that you consider to be less relevant in the current socio-economic context Self-defined text
- 12c** Why do you believe these to be less relevant in the current socio-economic context? Self-defined text
- 13a** Are you aware of new or emerging priorities that are not reflected in the SOPHRD but are important in terms of the development of human resources in Romania? Yes / No
- 13b** If you answered 'Yes' to 13a, please name the new or emerging priorities Self-defined text



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- 13c** Why do you believe these to be priorities in the current socio-economic context? Self-defined text

Section 4 - Effectiveness

In this section we request information regarding the Effectiveness criterion as set out in the terms of reference for the Interim Evaluation SOPHRD.

- 22** How did you become aware of the availability of funding under SOPHRD? advertisement in newspaper / attendance at information seminar / ESF website / word of mouth / Other (please specify)
- 23** **How satisfied were you with the following supports provided under SOPHRD?**
- a** Information and publicity very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
 - b** Help-desk services very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
 - c** Applicant guidelines very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
 - d** Application form very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
- 24** What do you consider to have been the most useful type of support provided to you in making your application for funding under SOPHRD? General information and publicity / information seminars / help-desk advice / applicant guidelines / other (please specify)



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25 Please list any suggested improvements you might have in relation to:

- | | | |
|----------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| a | information and publicity | self-defined text |
| b | help-desk services | self-defined text |
| c | applicant guidelines | self-defined text |

26a How satisfied are you that all information and publicity events and support and application materials are accessible to people with disabilities?
very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied

26b If you are less than satisfied, please specify the issues or challenges you are aware of from a disability access perspective
Self-defined text

26c Please list the supports to would-be applicants that could usefully be provided in the future?
self-defined text

27a How well do you understand the indicator system for the KAI under which you made a successful application for funding?
very well / adequately / not very well

27b Does your project's monitoring system generate data that adequately responds to the relevant programme or KAI level indicators?
Yes / No

27c Did you define your own, non-programme level indicators as part of the application process?
Yes / No

27d If you answered 'Yes' to 27c, does your project's monitoring system generate data that adequately responds to indicators you defined yourself as part of the application process?
Yes / No



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- 27e** In your view, what are the most important type of indicators? Programme Level (which were defined in the Action web) / Self-defined / Neither
- 27f** If you consider that the self-defined indicators are the most important, please briefly explain your answer Self-defined text
- 27g** Please briefly explain the challenges, if any, involved in responding to the programme level indicators associated with the KAI under which you made a successful application for funding. Self-defined text
- 28a** How well did your project proposal reflect the horizontal themes and objectives of SOPHRD very well / adequately / not very well
- 28b** How well are the SOPHRD horizontal themes and objectives reflected in your project during implementation? very well / adequately / not very well
- 28c** Does your project focus on particular horizontal themes and objectives? Yes / No
- 28d** If your project focuses on particular horizontal themes and objectives, please specify: List of horizontal themes and objectives
- 28e** Please briefly explain how the SOPHRD horizontal themes and objectives are reflected in the implementation of your project? self-defined text
- 28f** Please briefly explain how the SOPHRD horizontal themes and objectives are captured through your project's monitoring system? self-defined text



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Annex 3 - Questions for the online survey of unsuccessful applicants

Section 1 - Basic Details

In this section we request basic descriptive details regarding your attempts to participate in /to benefit from the SOP HRD implementation.

- | | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| 0a | Contact person name | family name / first name |
| 0b | e-mail address of Contact person | Self-defined text |
| 0c | number of applications submitted before 31st December 2009 | |
| 0e | number of applications submitted since 1st January 2010 | |
| 1a | According to our records you have not yet been successful with any application for funding submitted under SOPHRD prior to end 2009 - in order to confirm our records please confirm if all your applications have been rejected; if you have applications pending approval or rejection; or if you have an approved application | all applications rejected / application pending approval or rejection / application approved |
| 1b | If you have applications submitted up to 31st December 2009 that are still pending a decision on either their rejection or approval, how many such applications are in question. | number |
| 1c | If you have applications submitted before 31st December 2009 that have yet to be decided on, please provide us the relevant project ID numbers | comma separated list |
| 1d | If you have applications submitted up to 31st December 2009 that were approved, how many such applications are in question? | number |
| 1e | If you have applications submitted before 31st December 2009 that have been approved, please provide us the relevant project ID numbers | comma separated list |



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- 1f** Where you have had an application or applications for funding rejected, how happy were you with the quality of the feedback provided on the reasons for rejection? very happy, happy, neutral, unhappy, very unhappy
- 1g** If you were 'unhappy' or 'very unhappy' with the quality of feedback you received, please explain. self-defined text

**If you answered YES to question 1a and filled in the answers to 1b to 1g you can now skip the rest of the questionnaire!
Thank you very much for your support!**

- 2a** What 'types' of project have you applied for? Strategic / Grant /State Aid/*de minimis*
- 2b** Did your organisation use professional external support in writing applications for funding? Always /often / in some cases / rarely / never
- 3** If you made an application for funding to support a Strategic type project, what best characterised the project in question as strategic? Financial volume of funding / Run-time of the project / Implementation in more than 2 regions / Other (please elaborate)
- 4** In the list across, please tick the KAIs under which you have made an application for funding under SOPHRD
- 5a** Are the activities of your organisation focused on a particular region or regions? yes/no
- 5b** If Yes, please tick the relevant regions Name of 8 regions
- 5c** Are the activities of your organisation even more closely focused on a particular county? yes / no
- 5d** If yes, please indicate the county in question self-defined text
- 5e** Does your organisation tend to focus on issues in urban or rural areas? urban, rural, both, neither



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6a Does your organisation work with a specific target group? yes/no

6b If yes, please select from the list across: Young people / Early School Leavers / Graduates / Unemployed / Employed / People with a disability / Members of a minority ethnic group / Entrepreneurs / Other (please specify)

Section 2 - Relevance

In this section we request information regarding the Relevance criterion as set out in the terms of reference for the Interim Evaluation SOPHRD.

7a Did the list of **indicative operations** as set out in the programming documentation (the SOPHRD, the SOPHRD FDI, Applicant Guidelines) provide you with a useful guide when writing your project application? Yes / No

7b Was the list of **indicative operations** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you planned to do to contribute towards meeting the objectives for the KAI under which you made your application? Yes / No

7c Was the list of **indicative operations** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you planned to do to meet the objectives of your project as you originally envisaged it? Yes / No

7d If you answered 'No' to 9b and/or 9c, please elaborate / provide detail. Self-defined text

8a Did the list of **eligible activities** as set out in the programming documentation provide you with a useful guide when writing your project application? Yes / No



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- 8b** Was the list of **eligible activities** comprehensive enough to allow you to fully describe what you wanted to do under the indicative operations relevant to your project? Yes / No
- 8c** Did the list of **eligible activities** in any way restrict you in the types of activities you would ideally have liked to have engaged in with a view to achieving the aims of your project? Yes / No
- 8d** If you answered 'Yes' to 11c, please elaborate / provide detail. Self-defined text
- 9a** In your view, are all of the priorities as set out in SOPHRD as relevant in the current socio-economic context as they were when the programme was approved in November 2007? Yes / No
- 9b** If you answered 'No' to 9a, please name the priorities that you consider to be less relevant in the current socio-economic context Self-defined text
- 9c** If you answered 'No' o 9a, please explain why you believe these priorities to be less relevant in the current socio-economic context? Self-defined text
- 10a** Are you aware of new or emerging priorities that are not reflected in the SOPHRD but are important in terms of the development of human resources in Romania? Yes / No
- 10b** If you answered 'Yes' to 10a, please name the new or emerging priorities Self-defined text
- 10c** Why do you believe these to be priorities in the current socio-economic context? Self-defined text

Section 3 - Efficiency



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In this section we request information regarding the Efficiency criterion as set out in the terms of reference for the Interim Evaluation SOPHRD including the efficiency of the appraisal / selection / approval / contracting and monitoring aspects of the system.

- 11** How many months, on average, did it take between making your application for funding under SOPHRD and receiving an official decision on the outcome of the selection process?
- 12a** In your view was the application process both open and transparent Yes / No
- 12b** If 'No', please elaborate / provide detail Self-defined text
- 13a** In your view was the appraisal of applications conducted in a fair and balanced manner? Yes / No
- 13b** If 'No', please elaborate / provide detail Self-defined text
- 14a** Given the fact that you were unsuccessful in applying for funding from SOP HRD, will that stop you from making further applications under that OP in the future? yes /no
- 14b** If 'No', please explain why you think it is worthwhile to try again: we have learned how to develop a better application / we will hire professional support next time to develop our proposal / there are no alternatives to public funding in our field of activity / we believe the system will be more flexible next time / Other (please specify)
- 14c** If 'YES', will you apply for funding under other programmes instead? Yes / No
- 14d** If you answered 'Yes' to 14a and you intend to apply for funding under other programmes, please name those programmes. List programmes to include rural development programme



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15 In your view, could improvements be made to:

- a** the application process / system Yes / No
- b** the appraisal process / system Yes / No
- c** If you answered 'Yes' to either of the above, please elaborate providing specific suggestions as appropriate Self-defined text

16 Apart from SOPHRD, did you also apply to any other of the Operational Programmes supported by the Structural Funds or to the NRDP? yes /no

17 If you applied for such funding:

- a** please indicate which programmes you applied under Tick boxes for List of OPs and NRDP
- b** how would you rate your experience of the application and selection process under SOPHRD compared to those other programmes in terms of efficiency of management and implementation much better /better /fairly equal /not as good /much worse
- c** Which of those programmes would you rate as best in terms of efficiency of management and implementation List of OPs and NRDP
- d** please briefly describe what makes the programme identified under 17c the best in terms of efficiency of management and implementation Self-defined text

Section 4 – Effectiveness

In this section we request information regarding the Effectiveness criterion as set out in the terms of reference for the Interim Evaluation SOPHRD.



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- 18** How did you first become aware of the availability of funding under SOPHRD? advertisement in newspaper / attendance at information seminar / ESF website / word of mouth / Other (please specify)
- 19** How satisfied were you with the following supports provided under SOPHRD?
- a** Information and publicity very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
- b** Help-desk services very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
- c** Applicant guidelines very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
- d** Application form very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
- 20** What do you consider to have been the most useful type of support provided to you in making your application for funding under SOPHRD? General information and publicity / information seminars / help-desk advice / applicant guidelines / other (please specify)
- 21** Please list any suggested improvements you might have in relation to:
- a** information and publicity self-defined text



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- b** help-desk services self-defined text
- c** applicant guidelines self-defined text
- 22a** How satisfied are you that all information and publicity events and support and application materials are accessible to people with disabilities? very satisfied / satisfied / somewhat satisfied / dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
- 22b** If you are less than satisfied, please specify the issues or challenges you are aware of from a disability access perspective Self-defined text
- 22c** Please list the supports to would-be applicants that could usefully be provided in the future? self-defined text
- 23** How well do you understand the indicator system for the KAI under which you made **an application** for funding? very well / adequately / not very well
- 24a** How well did your project proposal reflect the horizontal themes and objectives of SOPHRD very well / adequately / not very well
- 24b** If your project proposal focused on particular horizontal themes and objectives, please specify: List of horizontal themes and objectives



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Annex 4 - Expanded list of issues associated with the current situation analysis set out in the SOPHRD

- A decrease in enrolments in schools, particularly at primary and gymnasium levels;
- Relatively lower share of qualified teaching personnel in rural areas in particular thereby inhibiting access to quality education for young people in those areas;
- Overall deficit of teachers in particular subject areas such as ICT and languages;
- Very low rate of participation in education of young people from the Roma community (c. 18% aged 7-16 were not enrolled and were not attending any form of education);
- Very low rate of participation in education for children with special educational needs;
- High rates of early school leaving (20.8% in 2005 vs. the EU-25 average of 15.2%);
- High rates of youth unemployment (23.8% in 2005);
- Decrease in the number of doctoral graduates (although an increase in the level of undergraduate intake) due to the high cost of doctoral programmes and limited support for same;
- Relatively low rate of working age population with third level education (e.g. 11.1% in 2005 vs. 16.4% in France and 15% in Germany);
- Incoherent policy and system-wide response to the pursuit of lifelong learning;
- A decreasing rate of employment amongst the working age population (57.7% in 2005);
- In rural areas a significant level of underemployment in subsistence farming;
- Significant level of engagement in undeclared work (possibly to the value of between 20% and 30% of GDP);
- Very low rate of engagement in Continuing Vocational Training (CVT) – lowest participation rate in Europe (1.6% in 2005);
- Low levels of staff training in the Public Employment Service (PES);
- High, though decreasing, levels of poverty and extreme poverty (18.8% and 5.9% respectively in 2004);
- Almost 70% of Roma living on less than \$4.3 per day (World Bank, 2000);



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- Very low employment rates and poor educational performance amongst people with disabilities.



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Annex 5 - Distribution of funding by PA and KAI

Table 56: SOPHRD by PA, KAI, IB and % of financing						
			M Euro	% within PA	% of total	Ranking of PAs by Funding Allocation
PA1: Education & training in support for development of the knowledge based economy		Implementing Body				
KAI						
1	Access to quality education & VET	Ministry for Education, Research and Innovation	171	17.24%	4.03%	
2	Quality in higher education		122	12.30%	2.87%	
3	HRD in education and training		193	19.46%	4.55%	
4	Quality in CVT		181	18.25%	4.26%	
5	Doctoral and post-doctoral programmes in support of research		325	32.76%	7.66%	
			992		23.37%	2nd



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			Meuro	% within PA	% of total	Ranking of PAs by Funding Allocation
PA2: linking lifelong learning & the labour market						
	KAI					
1	Transition from school to active life	National centre for Technical & Vocational Education Development	201	19.07%	4.74%	
2	Preventing and correcting ESL	Ministry for Education, Research and Innovation	215	20.40%	5.07%	
3	Access and participation in CVT	National centre for Technical & Vocational Education Development	638	60.53%	15.03%	
			1054		24.84%	1st
PA3: Increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises						
	KAI					
1	Promoting entrepreneurial culture	Regional IBs	180	31.09%	4.24%	
2	Training and support for enterprises and employees to promote adaptability	Regional IBs	309	53.37%	7.28%	



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			Meuro	% within PA	% of total	Ranking of PAs by Funding Allocation
3	Development of partnerships and encouraging xxx for social partners and civil society	n/a	90	15.54%	2.12%	
			579		13.64%	4 th
PA4: Modernising the public employment service						
	KAI					
1	Strengthening the PES capacity to provide employment services	National Employment Agency	152	64.41%	3.58%	
2		Trainin g of PES staff	84	35.59%	1.98%	
			236		5.56%	6 th
PA5: Promoting Active Employment Measures						
	KAI					
1	Developing and implementing active employment measures	Regional IBs	198	35.48%	4.67%	



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			Meuro	% within PA	% of total	Ranking of PAs by Funding Allocation
2	Promoting long-term sustainability of rural areas in the area of HRD and employment	n/a	360	64.52%	8.48%	
			558		13.15%	5 th
PA6: Promoting Social Inclusion						
	KAI					
1	Develop the social economy	n/a	429	64.80%	10.11%	
2	Improving access and participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market	Regional IBs	101	15.26%	2.38%	
3	Promoting equal opportunities	Regional IBs	75	11.33%	1.77%	
4	Transnational initiatives for an inclusive labour market	MA	57	8.61%	1.34%	
			662		15.60%	3 rd
PA7: Technical Assistance						
	KAI					
1	Support for SOPHR implementation, management and evaluation	MA	98	60.12%	2.31%	
2	Support for communication and promoting SOPHRD	MA	65	39.88%	1.53%	



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			Meuro	% within PA	% of total	Ranking of PAs by Funding Allocation
			163		3.84%	7 th
	TOTAL		4,244			



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Annex 6 - Detailed Responses from Employers, Trades Unions and NGO Organisations regarding the Key Challenges Arising Based on the Fieldwork carried out for the Interim Evaluation.

Trades Union Responses

Question	Summary Responses from Representatives of Trades Unions
What are the major challenges facing Romania?	<p>A need: for a coordinated strategy on HRD; to harmonize the trades/skills in the Classification of Occupations in Romania with the actual demands of the labour market for information and intelligence on future trends for economic development to facilitate planning and to allow service providers to adapt to those trends; for professional training to adapt to new equipment and new technologies; for young workers to be trained to allow them to compete on the labour market; for a more practical approach in education and for significant professional re-conversion i.e., based on a study of the needs of the labour market the education and training curricula should be adapted.</p>
What are the particular regional issues that arise?	<p>Too much political interference at executive level;</p> <p>No co-ordination between the institutions in charge - there is initiative at local level but no final results;</p> <p>No region-specific information available on future trends for economic development;</p> <p>Need for professional training centres run by trade unions and patronages;</p> <p>Need for regional Monitoring Committees to set up and manage priorities;</p>
Is there a need to rebalance the priorities of SOPHRD?	<p>Need to carry out a thorough analysis of the labour market needs and then allocate funds based on the findings;</p> <p>Concentrate funds towards encouraging projects in partnership between unions, public administration and companies;</p> <p>Need for more weight in the allocation of funds for SMEs as they create jobs;</p> <p>Support social enterprises for the reintegration of vulnerable and marginalised groups;</p> <p>Should not invest so much in supporting doctoral scholarships. Passing from one educational system to another is not beneficial for the young people concerned and it would be better to support doctoral studies for those who have a minimum of five years experience at work;</p> <p>There is no real difference in substance between Strategic and Grant-type projects and, as such, the artificial distinction should be dropped;</p> <p>The promotion of e-learning training is a “black hole” – such training is not efficient despite the fact that a lot of money is spent on it.</p> <p>Unemployment needs to be tackled and there is need to see real, employment related results from education and training supported under the programme.</p>



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Employer Responses

Question	Summary Responses from Representatives of Employers
<p>What are the major challenges facing Romania?</p>	<p>Lack of qualified labour force;</p> <p>Trying to cope with the law – Romanian legislation does not reflect reality and the existing legislation can be a significant hindrance to employers;</p> <p>High levels of bureaucracy impede progress;</p> <p>Need for training in management and marketing for the middle management of SMEs in order to be able to build their businesses and create employment</p> <p>Need for information on future trends for economic development;</p> <p>Need to enhance the professional quality of the available human capital - young graduates are not well prepared for the world of work;</p> <p>Need to ensure the availability of quality vocational education - higher education is not necessary or appropriate for everyone;</p> <p>Need to create structures (social, economic, academic, administrative partnerships) to help economic development;</p> <p>Need to use the EU funds to compensate for lack of domestic funds to support the necessary services to develop the human resources and the reintegration of the unemployed to be reintegrated on the labour market;</p> <p>EU funds could be used to support staff training as budgets for this type of activity have been cut severely.</p>
<p>What are the particular regional issues that arise?</p>	<p>Need for regional information and intelligence regarding future trends for economic development - need for regional strategies to be established and for regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat to be identified;</p> <p>Rural unemployment and under-employment needs to be addressed – need to find solutions in non-agricultural (but related) fields such as services, tourism, forest management, waste disposal and collection;</p> <p>Need for an integrated national plan for rural areas that is not the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture but of the Government as a whole, taking into account all relevant issues such as developing the mountain regions, enhancing human resources, tackling youth employment, integration of the Roma population, developing the ICT infrastructure etc;</p> <p>There is no regional approach to the programme resulting in similar projects within the same region working in parallel due to the lack of a coherent strategic framework;</p> <p>Need for regional coordination, perhaps through Permanent Secretariat of the Regional Pact noting that, at present, they have neither the resources nor the capacity to perform these functions;</p> <p>Need for coordination at institutional level in the regions to promote a coherent approach.</p>
<p>Is there a need to rebalance the priorities of SOPHRD?</p>	<p>Need to better support entrepreneurship;</p> <p>Concentrate funds on the KAI that contribute most to increasing the competitiveness of companies, job security and people's employability as well as creation of new jobs (i.e. on KAI 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, and 6.4);</p> <p>We need to facilitate learning across actors at national level based on national and international good practice – no need to reinvent the wheel;</p>



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Question	Summary Responses from Representatives of Employers
	<p>Need to allocate more funds to support the development and running of professional associations;</p> <p>Need for annual needs assessment to support qualification and reconversion plans; Focus resources on the production sector and other sectors where there is high pressure – use it to train employees to enhance productivity;</p> <p>Need to guarantee occupational standards;</p> <p>Market demands seem to indicate that companies want funds under KAI 3.1 and 3.2 but there are no more calls because the budget is absorbed – need to meet the demand.</p>

NGO Responses

Question	Summary Responses from Representatives of NGOs
<p>What are the major challenges facing Romania?</p>	<p>The economic crisis has generated big issues – collective layoffs, decrease in employment opportunities etc. – real need to link VET with labour market demands;</p> <p>Need for information on future economic and labour market needs and trends;</p> <p>Need for a long life learning strategy and to identify complex, large-scale projects with mixed target groups to promote the strategy and priorities;</p> <p>Need for new skills and competencies to meet the requirements of the knowledge economy;</p> <p>In the present context the main challenge of the programme is its implementation, taking into consideration we are already half way the programming period.</p>
<p>What are the particular regional issues that arise?</p>	<p>At regional level the SOP HRD is functioning 60%. There is no correlation between funds available and the needs in the region, the target groups, the quality and expertise of those writing projects – there is a need for greater regional focus and coherence;</p> <p>In the social economy the indicators are irrelevant and situations will appear in which projects would not be implemented because of the indicators;</p> <p>Need to link development of social capital with real knowledge and understanding of the needs of regional labour markets and economies.</p>
<p>Is there a need to rebalance the priorities of SOPHRD?</p>	<p>PA 5 and PA 6 should have the highest priority, correlated with support measures for the employers</p> <p>It is important to concentrate the funds towards the KAI that contribute most to increasing job security and people’s employability as well as creation of new jobs and for this reason money should be concentrated on KAI 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4;</p> <p>Transfer of know-how at national and international levels is important – no need to reinvent the wheel and repeat past mistakes;</p> <p>Need to undertake local and regional needs assessments and to base the</p>



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Question	Summary Responses from Representatives of NGOs
	<p>strategies and priorities on this and then correlate this with a Regional development strategy;</p> <p>Allocation of funds should be based on identified needs;</p> <p>NGOs should be eligible to bid for projects under PA 1.</p>



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Annex 7 - SWOT Analysis

In the table below we have re-presented the components of the SWOT analysis that informed the establishment of the priorities of the SOP HRD. Each component is ranked along a scale (-2 to +2) to indicate the extent and manner in which change has impacted the situation/indicator in question. The ‘scoring’ is developed as follows:

significant improvement (+2); improved (+1); no change (0); disimprovement (-1); and, significant dis-improvement (-2).

Analysis of the SOP HRD SWOT to Identify the Extent of the Change that has occurred in the Components of the SWOT since the OP was Agreed

Strengths						Weaknesses					
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2		-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Macroeconomic Stability	√					Relatively high levels of school drop-out and ESL			√		
Completion of Privatisation of state owned economy				√		Limited capacity of various providers – particularly schools & universities to offer continuous VET		√			
EU membership			√			Inadequacy of qualifications & competences to labour market needs			√		
Continuous Increase FDI		√				Limited national competence & mechanisms to ensure quality and qualifications reach EU levels			√		
High rate of SMEs in share of total economy		√				Low quality in pre-service & in-service education and training		√			
Increasing attractiveness of Romania economy due to sustained economic growth & accession		√				Insufficient development of health & safety at work			√		
Lower cost of labour compared to EU			√			Low degree of involvement of social partners in specific HR development projects			√		



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Strengths						Weaknesses					
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2		-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Continued and sustained extension of ICT market			√			Low level of participation in CVT			√		
Highly qualified people in IT & engineering			√			Limited effective partnerships between universities with research & technological centres & enterprises			√		
County strategies for improving access to education for disadvantaged groups			√			Limited entrepreneurial culture			√		
Legal framework outlining main measures concerning social exclusion			√			Insufficient development of the PES & relatively poor quality in services provided – especially with regard to VET		√			
Active involvement of NGOs in promoting services in labour market & social inclusion of vulnerable groups			√			High participation in agriculture, particularly subsistence agriculture		√			
National programmes to support vulnerable groups			√			Relatively high number of people working in the informal economy		√			
Experience in using pre-accession funds			√			Low labour market mobility			√		
Regional and LAPs for TVET development			√			Low level of temporary employment			√		
RAPs for Employment & Social Exclusion			√			High level of youth unemployment and LTU especially in rural areas		√			
Regional and Local Pacts for Employment & Social Inclusion			√			Insufficient integration of vulnerable groups in education, training and formal employment			√		
N/a						Remote areas unconnected to education & employment			√		
N/a						Low level of inclusion in higher education, training and employment of young people over 18 leaving state institutions for child protection			√		



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Opportunities					Threats						
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2		-2	-1	0	+1	+2
New investment sources – structural funds			√			Unfavourable demographic trend			√		
Acceptance in EU of Romanian qualifications			√			Limited absorption capacity of structural funds / difficult adjustment to SF requirements		√			
Increased internal demand for services and products		√				Migration of certain industrial sectors towards lower cost economies			√		
Increased importance of knowledge-based economy			√			Emigration of skilled workers and workers with high educational attainment			√		
Restructuring the education system			√			Low economic and enterprise competitiveness vs EU averages with consequences for job creation and related diminished attraction for education and training			√		
Increased participation in post-graduate education				√		Increase in poverty levels triggered by increase in prices of products and services		√			
Setting up of institutional, legal and financial framework favourable to SME development, private initiative & attractive for investment			√			Further industrial restructuring that may result in major lay-offs			√		
Continuing process of public service decentralization			√			Unattractiveness of teaching as a career		√			
Existing co-operation & partnership between different stakeholders in education and training to ensure increased access to the labour market			√			Possible increases in inequity in education and training provision as a result of decentralisation process			√		



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Opportunities					Threats						
	-2	-1	0	+1	+2		-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Strengthening of the NGO sector			√			Low management capacity of educational and local administration authorities to promote and support reforms, better regulation and good governance			√		
Potential to mainstream experience and good practice acquired in pre-accession programmes relating to education, HRD within education, modernisation of the technical and VE training.			√			Poor health status of the population			√		



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Annex 8 - Observations on the relevance and coverage of a limited number of Indicative Operations

KAI	Operational Objective	Indicative Operations	Comment
1.4	Supporting the introduction of life cycle approach in education and training	<p>(i) Development the capacity building of institutions involved in validation of prior learning</p> <p>(ii) Elaboration of studies, analyses and research in order to provide good quality information and relevant data for supporting CVT and exchange of good practice</p> <p>(iii) Networking and partnership for promoting learning conducive work environments and “learning regions</p>	The IOs in this instance do not appear to adequately cover the “life-cycle” concept set out in the objective. Assuming the objective to be accurate, the IO could provide better definition.
1.5	Supporting the development of the university-research-business cooperation.	Supporting doctoral and post-doctoral programmes by innovating the contents, including the development of researchers managerial skills to promote the valorisation of research outputs in economic activities	In as much as this objective is defined through the IO it appears to be associated with the IO across – if so, this appears to be an inadequate IO in respect of an important objective.
2.2	Preventing early school leaving, in particular for Roma people, persons with disabilities and rural population, as well as other categories of vulnerable group	N/a	There is a number of IOs associated with this objective; however, none of them explicitly re-assert the phrase “in particular for Roma people, persons with disabilities and rural population etc.” which may lessen the specific targeting of the objective overall. The ‘mirroring’ aspect between the objectives and IO that we noted above would be useful here.



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KAI	Operational Objective	Indicative Operations	Comment
5.1	To attract and retain as many persons as possible on the labour market in order to achieve full employment, with special emphasis on the disadvantaged groups on the labour market	N/a	A number of IOs are presented that relate in one way or another to this objective; however, none of them explicitly addresses how it is intended to both attract and retain the target group.
6.2	To facilitate access to education and to (re)integrate vulnerable persons on the labour market	N/a	A series of IOs are associated with this operational objective, none of which refer to education although they do refer to 'training' and 'sheltered employment'
6.3	Rising awareness on sexual harassment at the workplace	N/a	None of the IOs in this instance specifically reference addressing 'sexual harassment' in the workplace



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Annex 9 - Eligible Activities and Indicative Operations for KAI 2.2 (Preventing and Correcting Early School Leaving)

Main Operational Objectives: (i) Preventing early school leaving, in particular for Roma people, persons with disabilities and rural population, as well as other categories of vulnerable groups & (ii) Providing basic competences and personal development skills for early school leaver

Indicative operations	Examples of Activities that match the IO	List of Eligible Activities
<p>1. Supporting and developing programs for maintaining pupils in education and preventing early school leaving</p>	<p>a), b), o), p), r), s),t)</p>	<p>a) Organisation of awareness raising campaigns aiming at preventing and reducing early school leavers;</p> <p>b) Development and provision of guidance, counselling and educational assistance services aiming at preventing early school leaving (for potential early school leavers and their families);</p> <p>c) Curriculum assimilation/development activities in pre-school education for acquiring key competences, including elaboration of teaching and learning materials and adjusting these to the pre-scholars' specific needs;</p> <p>d) Development and provision of "family kindergarten" type activities;</p>
<p>2. Developing integrated programs for increasing access and participation in primary and secondary education for persons belonging to vulnerable groups, including financial support for their families</p>	<p>e), f), g), h),q), r)</p>	<p>e) Elaboration/development/testing/implementing alternative and educational methodologies and solutions aiming at preparing school entrance;</p> <p>f) Diversification, development and provision of counselling services for parents in order to understand the importance of education and early intervening, as well as their role in children's education;</p> <p>g) Identification/analysis/remediation of health problems which can affect mental, social development and future educational and professional paths of scholar population, in particular in pre-school and primary education;</p>



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Indicative operations	Examples of Activities that match the IO	List of Eligible Activities
		<p>h) Promoting and sustaining development of school-community-parents type of partnership and elaborating integrated educational activities, in partnerships, for preventing drop out and early school leaving, in particular for pre-school and secondary-upper school.</p>
<p>3. Promoting integrated services and alternative solutions for preschool education</p>	<p>c), d), h)</p>	<p>i) Reintegration of young delinquents in education;</p> <p>j) Creation and development of networks and partnerships among schools, local institutions, employment services, Social and Health Services, etc. aiming at preventing early school leaving phenomenon and early school leavers reintegration into education;</p> <p>k) Development and provision of remedial education activities (validation of prior learning, detecting of educational gaps, remedial classes, psychological and professional guidance, tutoring etc.);</p> <p>l) Development and provision of “School after school” activities (in particular, strengthening basic literacy and numerical skills etc);</p>
<p>4. Implementing “School after school” type activities, assisted learning and remedial education</p>	<p>k), l), m)</p>	<p>m) Development of Summer/Sunday schools and kindergartens activities, in particular for persons in vulnerable groups and their families;</p> <p>n) Provision of flexible “Second chance education” programs, aiming at providing both the achievements of basic competences and personal skills development for early school leavers, including adult population;</p> <p>o) Conducting researches, studies, surveys and analyses in the field of early school leaving, low rate of participation in education and for supporting increased flexibility in second chance education;</p>



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Indicative operations	Examples of Activities that match the IO	List of Eligible Activities
<p>5. Reintegrating early school leavers in education (including “Second chance education” programs);</p>	<p>(i), j), n)</p>	<p>p) Development and implementation of innovative tools and methodologies for addressing early school leaving ;</p> <p>q) Support for development of non-formal and informal learning for potential early school leavers and early school leavers/abandon;</p> <p>r) Integration of sustainable development approach in tools and methodologies for the dissemination of awareness on pollution prevention, management of change etc.;</p> <p>s) Development and implementation of ICT training sessions, foreign language courses for the target groups;</p>
<p>6. Providing integrated guidance and counselling for persons with early school leaving</p>	<p>(g), i), o), p)</p>	<p>t) Innovative, inter-regional and trans-national activities for preventing and correcting early school leaving.</p>



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Annex 10 - Summary Background Note to the Rationale for the Indicators System for the Evaluation and Monitoring of the Structural Instruments

The indicators system was designed to support the evaluation and monitoring of the agreed objectives of the structural instruments in Romania as defined in the NSRF⁹⁵. The strategic priorities set out in the NSRF further elaborated through seven operational programmes (OPs), including SOPHRD.

Council Regulation no. 1083/2006 of July 11, 2006 the requirements for reporting progress under the OPs is set out, in summary, as follows:

- Operational programmes must contain a limited number of indicators, making it possible to measure progress in comparison to the initial situation and achievement of objectives (article 37).
- Choice of indicators will be made taking into consideration the principle of proportionality (article 13).
- The MA and MC must ensure the quality of the OP through ensuring monitoring and tracking of indicators as appropriate (article 66).
- AiRs and Final reports will contain information regarding progress made in implementing the OP and PAs vis-à-vis their verifiable specific objectives, making, where appropriate, a quantification, using the indicators referred to in article 37 (1) point (c) at level of priority axis (article 67).

The EC has prepared a series of working documents to facilitate Member States in seeking to create systems of indicators to measure progress in implementing the Structural Instruments such as: “Guidelines on evaluation methods: indicators of monitoring and evaluation” (2006) (Working Document no. 2, DL2); “Guidelines on evaluation methods: Report of key indicators at level European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund” (2009) (Working Document no. 7, DL7).

⁹⁵ Development of basic infrastructure at European standards; long term competitiveness increasing of the Romanian economy; development and effective use of the human capital in Romania; consolidation of an effective administrative capacity; promoting a balanced territorial development



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In Romania, the Central Evaluation Unit at ACIS plays the key role regarding the design and implementation of the indicators system used in monitoring and evaluation of the OPs. For that purpose ACIS developed the Single Management Information System (SMIS) designed to collect information regarding implementation of the OPs at all levels of the system and at all stages of the implementation cycle.

In each OP there are programme level indicators and then, at the level of the FDI working document the respective MAs provide additional indicators to meet specific, sub-objective needs.



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Annex 11 - The Implementation of the SOP HRD – Evaluation, Selection & Contracting

1. Programme Framework / Structure

As described in the FDI SOPHRD, there are seven fields of activity (PAs) each of which is further defined under sub-domains known as KAI of which there are twenty-one (see Annex 1 for details).

The MA SOPHRD is subject to the Ministry for Labour, Family and Social Protection (MoLFSP) and has overall responsibility for the programme and the fund. The MA designated 11 IBs to assist it in implementing the programme and these include 8 Regional Implementing Bodies (RIBs)⁹⁶ that are subordinate to the MoLFSP and three National-level IBs as follows:

- National Agency for Employment (NAE);
- Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports; and the
- National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education Development (NCTVED).

It was also planned to appoint two National Intermediate IBs based on a public procurement process but this has not, as yet, been successfully implemented⁹⁷.

The MA SOP HRD is fully responsible for the overall management and implementation of the SOP HRD and up to end-2009 it assumed direct responsibility for all Strategic projects⁹⁸ (i.e., projects valued at between €0.5 m euro and € m euro) across PAs 1 to 6. In addition, it has a direct implementation role in respect of PA 6 “Promoting social inclusion” / KAI 4 “Trans-national initiatives on inclusive labour market” and for both of the KAI under PA 7 “Technical Assistance”. The IBs are variously responsible for the implementation of all other PAs / KAIs as indicated in Annex 1.

⁹⁶ The RIBs were set up in 2006 under the co-ordination of the NAE and in 2007 were subsumed under the control of MoLFSP (HRD and Budget Directorate) and designated as subordinate in function to the MA SOP HRD.

⁹⁷ The additional, unplanned implementation responsibilities that were taken on by the MA as a result of the failure to appoint these IBs has had obvious implications for the MAs capacity to manage the associated volume of work.

⁹⁸ The third addendum (April 2010) to the Agreement for Delegation of Functions of the powers of RIBs involved an extension of those devolved powers to include selection, monitoring and implementation of Strategic Projects and to include monitoring and implementation of state aid PA 3 – KAIs 3.1 & 3.2, PA 5 – KAI 5.1, PA 6 – KAIs 6.2 & 6.3; and de minimis projects KAI 3.2 & KAI 5.1.



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Over time, the MA has delegated various tasks to the IBs under Delegation Agreements⁹⁹. These Agreements refer, *inter alia*, to the duration and objective of the agreement, commitments and warranties, obligations and rights of parties, delegated tasks, monitoring mechanism for the respective delegated tasks and so on. Under the Agreements the IBs are responsible for implementing the FDI with a focus on:

- evaluation and selection of projects according to selection criteria established by the SOP HRD Monitoring Committee;
- monitoring the implementation of projects – delivery of outputs and results, checking on eligibility of expenditure and assessing whether the costs and expenses were actually incurred;
- ensuring financial data collection for monitoring and evaluation;
- ensuring that beneficiaries keep separate and adequate accounting systems for the management of the funds;
- ensuring that adequate audit track procedures are in place; and
- ensuring the adequacy of information and publicity measures.

The MA SOP HRD monitors the implementation of delegated tasks through various reports that are submitted by the IBs (e.g., six monthly reports, RSI – raport semestrial de implementare) as well as through document checking and site visits.

According to the system in place up to the end of 2009¹⁰⁰ the evaluation and selection of proposals for grant and strategic projects is implemented at MA level by the *Contracting Directorate, Selection of Operations Service & Quality Management Directorate* and at IB level by the *Selection of Operations Department and the Technical Verification Department*. The procedures for project application, evaluation and selection are governed by Manuals of

⁹⁹ In 2008 only the initial procedures were in place. According to the Agreements of Delegation of functions between the MA and the RIBs (September 2008) functions were delegated to RIBs regarding selection, monitoring and implementation of grant projects PA 3 – KAIs 3.1 & 3.2, PA 5 – KAI 5.1, PA 6 – KAIs 6.2 & 6.3. The first addendum (February 2009) devolved the Help-desk and the Archiving function and introduced the possibility for the MA to withdraw powers from the RIBs if they under-performed. A second addendum (April 2009) brought in further changes including the granting of power to the IBs to approve modifications to project contracts. A third addendum (April 2010) refers to reinstating and extending the powers of RIBs with regard to strategic project selection, monitoring and implementation, and to monitoring and implementation of state aid under certain KAI as above.

¹⁰⁰ Manuals of Procedures were elaborated in 2008 and were first revised in February 2009 with a view to aligning the organizational chart and internal regulation with the procedures. The second revision was based on the Audit Authority's report and the Complement Assessment Report.



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Procedures at the level of MA and IBs. The KAIs are typically implemented in compliance with two types of call for proposals, as follows:

- Strategic calls for proposals with a deadline for submission for projects valued from 500,000 to 5,000,000 euro or 1.850.000 to 18.500.000 lei;
- Grant-type calls for proposals with rolling submission for projects valued from 50,000 to 499,999 euro or 185.000 to 1.850.000 lei per project – the aim was to have approval based on a “first-come, first-served” principle.¹⁰¹

In addition a limited amount was available for state aid and *de minimis* support. State aid *support for vocational training* applies for PA 2 “Linking Life Long Learning (LLL) and the Labour market” (KAI 2.1 & 2.3) and for PA3 “Increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises” (KAI 3.2). State aid *support for employment* applies for PA 5 “Promoting active employment measures” (KAI 5.1 & 5.2). *De minimis* aid applies for PA 3 “Increasing adaptability of workers and enterprises” (KAI 3.2).

2. Calls for Proposals

The calls for strategic projects are launched by the MA¹⁰² and the MA publishes Guidelines for applicants to coincide with the calls. The application forms are filled in and submitted online by the potential applicants, then registered by the MA, checked for administrative compliance and transmitted for evaluation (by independent evaluators) following the encrypting of the identification data of the applicants. The selection procedure is carried out by an Evaluation Committee comprised of independent experts, staff of the MA SOP HRD and/or IBs (noting there are three stages to the process as follows: eligibility of project, technical and financial evaluation and eligibility of the applicant & partners). The Evaluation Committees make their technical assessment based on the four selection criteria approved by the SOP HRD Monitoring Committee as follows: project relevance; methodology; sustainability and cost effectiveness. Following the selection process, evaluation reports are produced including the list of the projects proposed for contracting (average score ≥ 65), the list of projects rejected as well as a reserve list (one evaluation report for strategic projects;

¹⁰¹ Noting that up to this point in the implementation of the SOP HRD the calls for grant type projects have in fact operated on a deadline basis rather than on a rolling call basis. The submission date is taken into account later in the process but projects are evaluated in batches rather than in sequence.

¹⁰² Details on all calls for proposals made over 2008 & 2009 are provided at Annex x.



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initial report, periodical reports and final report for grant projects) subject to approval of the Managing Authority. At that stage the proposals move on to the contracting stage in respect of which specific timeframes are set out in the Guidelines for applicants that pertained to end-2009.

The MA set up the evaluation methodology for both strategic and grant-type projects based on lessons learned from previous evaluation and selection processes. Prior to the start of the evaluation process, training sessions for evaluation committee members were held. The Evaluation Methodology provides instruction on: setting up the Evaluation Committee; evaluation of project proposals; allocated duration of main stages of evaluation; Evaluation Committee conclusions; method to inform potential beneficiaries on evaluation process results; annexes to evaluation process documents. The Claims Solving Methodology describes the steps to be followed by the Claims Solving Committee in reviewing a project proposal following a claim on evaluation and selection result. The official stages for the evaluation and selection of project proposals are:

1. Programming the process
2. Setting up the Evaluation Committees and the Claims/ Appeals Solving Committee
3. Evaluation and selection sessions
4. Receiving and solving of claims
5. Monitoring the fulfilment of delegated tasks under evaluation and selection process.

For strategic projects the evaluation and selection process should start after the deadline for submission of project proposals. The selection process is designed to take 30 days i.e., from transmission of application to the Evaluation Committee to approval of the Evaluation Report¹⁰³. For grant projects and state aid and *de minimis* aid projects the applications have to be sent to the Evaluation Committee within 30 days from of the launch of the call provided that at least twenty proposals are received. After the start of the evaluation and selection process, the next batch of projects to be evaluated should also be forwarded to the Evaluation Committee within 30 days of their receipt.

¹⁰³ According to the Evaluation and Selection Procedure in place up to 2009



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Project proposals are submitted online using the “Action Web” IT system (available on www.fseromania.ro). Action Web generates a set of declarations that must be submitted (as originals) by the applicant within a fixed number of days (typically five working days) from the online submission of the project proposal, together, as relevant, with the partnership agreement. *The administrative verification* of the application forms comprises two stages. In the first stage, Action Web rejects incomplete application forms or those submitted late and in the second stage, the accuracy¹⁰⁴ of the mandatory annexes of the application forms is controlled. The estimated duration of this stage is of **three days**. Further evaluation of project proposals occurs only for those proposals in respect of which both the online application and original declarations (together with the partnership agreement as necessary) are submitted in due time and assuming they are administratively compliant. Thus, for each Call for proposals, two lists are drawn up as follows: (list 1) project proposals rejected following the administrative check; and (list 2) project proposals administratively compliant, to be transferred to the evaluators. Applicants should be informed within 10 days from the completion of this stage about the status of their proposal, including an indication of nonconformity where appropriate.

The project proposals that are to progress in the process should then be sent to the evaluators within two days. The applicant identity is hidden from the evaluators and, as such, the evaluation is conducted purely on the basis of the information provided on the application form with no opportunity for further clarification.

The appraisal and selection process comprises three main topics as follows: (i) project eligibility and applicant eligibility¹⁰⁵; (ii) project evaluation/selection; and (iii) eligibility of applicants. The evaluators check project eligibility based on eligibility criteria and they check applicant eligibility based on financial detail and demonstrated administrative capacity. This stage is estimated to last for two days. Only the eligible applications at that stage will be

¹⁰⁴ The process changed or was modified since the start of the application process in February 2008 until the last calls for proposals in May 2009. The eligibility of the project and of the applicant was checked; however, initially the eligibility of the applicant was checked before the selection process. In 2009 the approach was split so that, first, the eligibility of the project was checked followed by technical and financial evaluation and in the final stage the eligibility of the applicant & partners were checked. The last step was the contracting process, when all documents were required to be presented certifying the status and financial standing of the applicant and partners

¹⁰⁵ A first step based on financial and administrative capacity data – this should take about 2 days.



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further evaluated. The projects' technical evaluation/selection is estimated to last for five days. That aspect of the evaluation is based on established criteria / sub-criteria and only relevant projects that scored than 18 on the Relevance criterion and with an average score of ≥ 65 overall are proposed for financing (noting that the approach changed in 2010). Three lists are drawn up i.e., (list 1) rejected projects and (list 2) projects provisionally proposed for financing and (list 3) projects on the reserve list.

The full eligibility of applicants is further checked for the projects proposed for financing. This contracting stage is estimated to take an estimated 17 days and consists of requests for supporting documents (for provisionally selected projects only). The applicant identity is now revealed and requests for clarification are permitted (with a 72 hours deadline for the receipt of clarifications). If the project promoter fails to provide clarification within that deadline, the proposal will not be assessed any further. At the end of the check for the eligibility of applicants, two lists are drawn up to include (list 1) projects with correct and complete support documents received within deadline and (list 2) projects rejected.

Within five to fifteen days from the approval of the Evaluation Report the beneficiaries should be informed in writing of the outcome of the process. Also, within fifteen working days from the approval of the Evaluation Report the relevant data should be entered into the SMIS system. Although the established procedures have established deadlines for the entry of data into SMIS throughout the process (appraisal, evaluation, selection and contracting) *the system does not provide data on the duration of the various stages thereby limiting the extent to which ongoing monitoring and evaluation of efficiency can be undertaken.*

Once projects enter the implementation phase, the MA provides promoters with instruction to facilitate compliant and orderly implementation. A Manual for Beneficiaries has been developed covering, for example, issues such as accounts keeping, pre-financing, public procurement, financial audit services, cash flow forecast, and instructions for reimbursements. Guidelines for public procurement and cash flow forecast were also provided.

Information and training sessions were held for beneficiaries / successful project promoters. Help-desk services are available at AM and IB levels for the period from the launch to the deadline of calls for proposals. FAQ and the corresponding answers are posted on web sites



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to support beneficiaries and a “Blue line” phone facility was established in May 2009. Towards the end of 2009 regional training sessions were held for beneficiaries of grant and strategic projects. It consisted of training in a range of areas including, for example: project implementation; building a project team; meeting contractual obligations; partnership; financial management; monitoring and reporting; horizontal issues; and information and publicity.



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Annex 12 - Details of I&P and Helpdesk Activities 2008-2009

2008

- The Help-desks the MA and the 11 IBs responded to 2,564 questions during 2008 with a view to facilitating beneficiaries in their understanding of the application procedures and FAQ were published on the official website.
- A total of 52 training seminars were held on making an application. These were held in all 8 development regions between March-November 2008 and were attended by 2,200 people.
- A total of 568 participants representing successful projects attended seminars between September and October 2008 that were designed to address a range of topics including: project and financial management, project implementation monitoring, audit, rules on carrying out financial flow, public procurement process.
- The SOPHRD Visual Identity Manual to assist beneficiaries in complying with relevant requirements (visual identity rules, use of relevant elements for advertisement: logos, colours, font, etc.).
- National conferences were held and attended by about 400 people.
- Launch conferences for the 2008 Calls for proposals were organised in February, April and July.
- At regional level, seminars were organised between May and August 2008 to inform mass-media representatives on SOP HRD funding opportunities – about 200 journalists attended;
- A “National Public Information Campaign for Promoting the SOP HRD” was conducted between November 11 and December 2, 2008 to increase the level of information amongst the general public regarding the benefits of accessing the ESF through the SOP HRD,
- The SOPHRD Annual Conference was held on 23rd of December 2008.



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2009

- Information and training seminars for potential beneficiaries and beneficiaries were conducted and help desks for potential beneficiaries were open at the MA and the 11 IBs on a daily basis throughout the project submission period.
- A “Blue line” was established in May 2009 to support beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries; 4,116 questions were responded to by end November 2009.
- 8 Press conferences, one national launch, 11 training seminars promoting state aid and de minimis aid schemes were held and were attended by 90 media representatives and 1,225 potential beneficiaries.
- 2 launch conferences for Calls for project proposals were held attended by 469 participants and 23 media representatives.
- Meetings were held with the Regional Pacts for Employment and Social Inclusion, and Partnerships workshops were held attracting 214 participants.
- Various seminars and training sessions were held as follows: audit procedures (219 participants); Training on how to avoid irregularities (60 participants); Beneficiaries training session on project and financial management (927 participants); 7 Training sessions on the “ESF role in the economic re-launch” (753 participants)
- Training sessions for *Blue Line* personnel (9 participants).
- Training in “Quality in proposal writing” for the Regional pacts for employment and social inclusion members of technical secretariat (67 participants).
- 2009 Annual SOP HRD implementation conference.



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Annex 13 - Background to the Information and Publicity Functions

In response to the requirements of the relevant Regulation¹⁰⁶, ACIS drew up a National Communication Strategy (NCS) covering all OPs. It sets out the general framework for implementing the I&P measures. In addition, the MA for each OP (including SOP HRD) prepared a Communication Plan (CP) in compliance with the Regulation and the Romanian guidelines as presented in the NCS noting that, in practice, the respective MAs and IBs associated with the management of the OPs implement the I&P measures differently notwithstanding the fact that certain information and publicity objectives are common to all OPs as follows:

- raising awareness among the general public concerning the EU contribution to the modernisation of Romania, highlighting the economic and social impact of the Structural Instruments (SI);
- providing clear, accurate and up-to-date information related to the financing opportunities under the SI, the procedures to be followed in order to obtain funding, the eligibility and selection criteria and the institutions responsible for managing the SI in Romania;
- ensuring the highest level of transparency for the activities undertaken by the MAs and to increase the confidence of the general public and potential beneficiaries in the system responsible for the management and implementation of the SI in Romania;
- enhancing internal and inter-institutional communication in order to ensure effective coordination of information and publicity measures undertaken by various MAs.

The I&P measures related to SOP HRD are financed under PA7 (Technical Assistance), KAI 7.2 – *Support for SOP HRD Promotion and Communication* and are implemented under the CP for SOP HRD. The CP for SOP HRD notes that the MA has overall responsibility for the I&P measures at national level, whereas the IBs coordinate the communication actions to be

¹⁰⁶ Council Regulation (EC) N° 1828/2006 sets out the minimum content of a Communication Plan (CP) and how it should be prepared. A CP must detail aims and target groups, the strategy of the information and publicity (I&P) measures to be taken by the Member State or the MA, the indicative budget for implementation of the plan, the bodies responsible for implementation of the I&P measures and an indication of how those measures are to be evaluated in terms of visibility and awareness of the OP.



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carried out at regional and local level, but also the I&P activities specific to the KAIs they are responsible for. While the MA is responsible for providing general information on the SOP HRD, increasing the awareness level among the target groups and also for ensuring compliance with visibility rules, the IBs are required under the CP to manage communication activities addressed to the specific needs of the potential applicants and beneficiaries¹⁰⁷.

¹⁰⁷ There are just two dedicated I&P staff at the level of the MA and they are charged with co-ordinating all of the I&P activities associated with the OP. There are two I&P staff located in each of the Regional IBs. The IB MERYYS and the IB NCTVED have regional offices with three information officers in each (24 staff each). The Public Employment Service has one member of staff dedicated to information and communication. Nine people are externally contracted to respond to queries on what is known as the Blue Line (see below).



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Annex 14 - Questions for the Omnibus Survey

Are designed to enable us to respond to that aspect of the ToR that requires us to:

analyse the results of the information and advertisement measures/campaigns from the perspective of visibility and the level of awareness of the general public.... concerning the opportunities for grants from SOP HRD and the role of European Union in SOP HRD grants¹⁰⁸

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1 | How would you describe your level of awareness of EU funding supports to Romania as: | <p>Very Good</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Not so good</p> <p>Poor</p> <p>Very Poor</p> |
| 2a | How informed would you say you are about EU funding supports to Romania? | <p>Very well informed</p> <p>Well informed</p> <p>Not very well informed</p> |
| 2b | Can you name any specific EU funds that are helping to develop the Romanian economy and society? | <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> |
| 2c | IF YES: Please name the funds that you know about: | <p>European Social Fund (ESF)</p> <p>European Development Fund (ERDF) Regional Fund</p> <p>Other _____</p> |

¹⁰⁸ Our surveys of Contracted Projects and Unsuccessful applicants respectively will pick up the views of other target groups such as public administration; business; research/ academic; NGOs/ civil society, including labour unions, patronate/ employers' associations.



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3a Do you know approximately how much EU funding will be invested in Romania between 2007 and 2013? Yes

No

3b IF YES: How much?

4a Have you heard of the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resource Development (SOPHRD) Yes

No

If no – no further questions

4b **If Yes, how did you find out about SOP HRD?** ESF website, Romania;
Television advertisement;
Radio advertisement;
Newspaper advertisement;
Official publicity / information conference or seminar;
Word of mouth;
Other: _____

4c If you wished to apply for funding under SOPHRD, would you know where to look for assistance in making your application? Yes

No

4d **If YES, where would you look for such assistance?** _____

5a Have you or an organisation that you have worked with ever applied for funding from the SOPHRD? Yes

No



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5b Have you or an organisation you have worked with ever been involved in a project that was funded under SOPHRD? Yes

No

5c If NO: Do you know of any other individual or organisation that has received funding under the SOPHRD? Yes

No



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Annex 15 - Applications per KAI by application type, financial volume/value and status of application

TYP	KAI	No of calls	Sum of budget of all calls per KAI (LEI)	Number of applications			Projects sent in electronically and not further processed		Projects registered as submitted and not further processed		Projects renounced by beneficiaries after official submission		Projects still in evaluation status		Projects rejected while evaluation		Projects selected for funding and not yet further processed		Projects selected for funding but not contracted (in reserve)		Projects contracted		Success rate of contracted projects by number and financial volume requested		Success rate of overall selected /contracted projects by number and financial volume requested		Financial absorption rates for applications			
				qcpProjCount	qcpProjBudgFinApplReqSum	Share of applied to available funding	qcpProjCount_Stat2	2_Sent	qcpProjCount_Stat3	3_registered	qcpProjCount_Stat9	9_renounced	qcpProjCount_Stat9_0	90_in-eval	qcpProjCount_Stat6	6_rejected	qcpProjCount_Stat4	4_selected	qcpProjCount_Stat5	5_reserve	qcpProjCount_Stat7	7_contracted	Success-rate proj	Success-rate fin	Success-rate proj	success-rate fin	contracted	selected		
Grant	1.1	1	20,000,000.00	139	181,279,431.88	906.40%	7	5,421,730.00							103	137,020,620.23	4	5,230,744.00	16	19,620,068.97	9	13,986,268.68	6.47%	7.72%	20.86%	21.42%	69.93%	194.19%		
Grant	1.2	1	20,000,000.00	174	233,241,720.55	1166.21%	22	25,853,896.24							124	171,457,365.96	8	12,529,332.20	14	17,421,532.15	6	5,979,594.00	3.45%	2.56%	16.09%	15.40%	29.90%	179.65%		
Grant	1.3	1	60,000,000.00	166	207,429,162.98	345.72%	16	16,933,299.15							94	119,738,749.79	29	33,724,024.22	11	11,227,755.00	16	25,805,334.82	9.64%	12.44%	33.73%	34.11%	43.01%	117.93%		
Grant	1.4	1	64,995,000.00	18	14,903,710.34	22.93%	1	279,790.00							11	8,626,927.34	1	308,063.00			5	5,688,930.00	27.78%	38.17%	33.33%	40.24%	8.75%	9.23%		
Grant	1.5	1	55,223,000.00	33	46,564,443.13	84.32%	2	1,791,930.00							17	21,933,525.80	8	13,567,384.33			6	9,271,603.00	18.18%	19.91%	42.42%	49.05%	16.79%	41.36%		
Grant	2.1	1	40,000,000.00	261	272,960,869.38	682.40%	20	17,280,746.00							187	200,975,582.77	1	316,443.00	17	15,445,491.34	36	38,942,606.27	13.79%	14.27%	20.69%	20.04%	97.36%	136.76%		
Grant	2.2	1	69,176,000.00	223	310,229,615.75	448.46%	15	31,732,430.27							170	229,352,809.62	27	35,811,147.46			11	13,333,228.40	4.93%	4.30%	17.04%	15.84%	19.27%	71.04%		
Grant	2.3	1	100,000,000.00	163	176,614,384.20	176.61%	8	11,467,679.32							126	133,697,036.13	1	1,641,098.00			28	29,808,570.75	17.18%	16.88%	17.79%	17.81%	29.81%	31.45%		
Grant	3.1	8	148,000,000.00	223	636,349,869.19	429.97%	14	359,871,603.34							170	228,914,374.49	5	6,826,110.00			34	40,737,781.36	15.25%	6.40%	17.49%	7.47%	27.53%	32.14%		
Grant	3.2	8	155,799,999.98	409	458,244,903.17	294.12%	20	15,011,759.01							296	333,035,896.90	16	17,362,263.74	15	23,666,507.61	62	69,168,475.91	15.16%	15.09%	22.74%	24.05%	44.40%	70.73%		
Grant	3.3	1	40,000,000.00	48	82,713,782.00	206.78%	1	5,620,091.00							20	35,892,541.69			1	1,779,792.00	26	39,421,357.31	54.17%	47.66%	56.25%	49.81%	98.55%	103.00%		
Grant	4.1	1	33,000,000.00	10	7,728,435.00	23.42%									5	4,182,622.00					5	3,545,813.00	50.00%	45.88%	50.00%	45.88%	10.74%	10.74%		
Grant	4.2	1	18,500,000.00	4	3,867,156.00	20.90%									1	1,355,493.00					3	2,511,663.00	75.00%	64.95%	75.00%	64.95%	13.58%	13.58%		
Grant	5.1	8	105,000,000.01	89	105,676,741.94	100.64%	4	5,719,067.00							50	55,861,540.31	6	9,861,128.00	1	1,323,770.50	28	32,911,236.13	31.46%	31.14%	39.33%	41.73%	31.34%	42.00%		
Grant	5.2	1	118,000,000.00	134	162,711,453.87	137.89%	6	4,100,508.00							105	132,777,929.91	2	3,455,656.00			21	22,377,359.96	15.67%	13.75%	17.16%	15.88%	18.96%	21.89%		
Grant	6.1	1	100,000,000.00	127	171,430,239.59	171.43%	7	6,374,816.00							109	151,558,470.99					11	13,496,952.60	8.66%	7.87%	8.66%	7.87%	13.50%	13.50%		
Grant	6.4	1	12,867,330.90	7	11,278,196.00	87.65%									5	7,987,969.00	1	1,597,249.00			1	1,692,978.00	14.29%	15.01%	28.57%	29.17%	13.16%	25.57%		
TOTAL		38	1,160,561,330.89	2,228	3,083,224,114.97	265.67%	143	507,459,345.33	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,593	1,974,369,455.93	109	142,230,642.95	75	90,484,917.57	308	368,679,753.19	13.82%	11.96%	22.08%	19.51%	31.77%	51.82%		
State aid	2.1	1	9,053,213.00	5	3,619,104.28	39.98%	3	597,776.28							1	1,469,026.00			1	1,552,302.00			0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	42.89%	0.00%	17.15%		
State aid	2.3	1	143,544,205.00	222	203,454,274.20	141.74%	31	31,083,619.50	81	83,562,166.34					57	50,944,071.46	22	17,470,887.80	31	20,393,529.10			0.00%	0.00%	13.96%	10.02%	0.00%	14.21%		
State aid	3.2	2	147,565,250.00	490	347,023,990.58	235.17%	45	24,217,650.38	86	51,180,830.50					161	130,339,353.78	71	48,307,613.97	116	84,559,689.87	11	8,418,852.08	0.00%	0.00%	25.92%	26.79%	0.00%	63.01%		
State aid	5.1	1	108,000,000.00	52	34,426,127.71	31.88%	8	1,554,740.00	6	6,094,246.00					7	6,760,489.00	15	6,547,409.00	16	13,469,243.71			0.00%	0.00%	30.77%	39.13%	0.00%	12.47%		
State aid	5.2	1	118,650,000.00	16	18,490,311.00	15.58%	4	831,055.00	1	1,394,722.00					3	13,273,600.00	6	1,622,929.00	2	1,368,005.00			0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	7.40%	0.00%	1.15%		
TOTAL		6	526,812,668.00	785	607,013,807.77	115.22%	91	58,284,841.16	174	142,231,964.84	0	0	229	202,786,540.24	114	73,948,839.77	166	121,342,769.68	11	8,418,852.08	0	0.00	0.00%	0.00%	22.55%	21.38%	0.00%	24.63%		
Strategic	1.1	3	418,244,242.20	65	821,073,846.86	196.31%	9	100,028,821.21							16	236,021,057.81	25	237,525,322.39	7	116,418,847.45			8	131,079,798.00	12.31%	15.96%	23.08%	30.14%	31.34%	59.18%
Strategic	1.2	3	521,539,311.10	178	2,014,277,484.44	386.22%	25	350,234,350.96							62	744,299,366.71	80	746,554,136.82	2	31,867,642.10			9	141,321,987.85	5.06%	7.02%	6.18%	8.60%	27.10%	33.21%
Strategic	1.3	3	765,869,616.40	212	2,309,842,730.52	301.60%	33	405,080,614.01							81	1,034,800,642.23	75	581,526,180.06	6	83,358,298.89	6	61,623,616.00	11	143,453,379.33	5.19%	6.21%	10.85%	12.49%	18.73%	37.66%
Strategic	1.4	3	425,877,056.30	53	542,052,537.34	127.28%	2	16,144,123.00							40	391,041,747.40	3	44,514,467.42			8	90,352,199.52	15.09%	16.67%	20.75%	24.88%	21.22%	31.67%		
Strategic	1.5	5	489,072,494.50	139	1,523,915,853.82	311.59%	18	122,614,099.01							28	268,909,194.78	63	851,673,961.30			30	280,718,598.73	21.58%	18.42%	66.91%	74.31%	57.40%	231.84%		
Strategic	2.1	3	475,392,191.70	245	2,112,566,030.37	444.38%	55	428,598,645.84							61	582,046,511.51	116	988,575,687.27	2	31,539,376.45	4	24,400,916.30	7	57,404,893.00	2.86%	2.72%	5.31%	5.37%	12.08%	23.84%



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TYP	KAI	No of calls	Sum of budget of all calls per KAI (LEI)	Number of applications	Applications requested finance	Share of applied to available funding	Projects sent in electronically and not further processed		Projects registered as submitted and not further processed		Projects renounced by beneficiaries after official submission		Projects still in evaluation status		Projects rejected while evaluation		Projects selected for funding and not yet further processed		Projects selected for funding but not contracted (in reserve)		Projects contracted		Success rate of contracted projects by number and financial volume requested		Success rate of overall selected /contracted projects by number and financial volume requested		Financial absorption rates for applications	
dtIntervT ype	fiKai	qcpCo untCal 1	qcpCallFinLeiSu m	qcpProj Count	qcpProjBudgFin ApplReqSum		qcp Proj Cou nt_Stat2	2_Sent	qcp Proj Cou nt_Stat3	3_registered	qcpProjCount _Stat9	9_renounced	qcp Proj Cou nt_Stat9 0	90_in-eval	qcpPr ojCou nt_Stat6	6_rejected	qcp Proj Cou nt_Stat4	4_selected	qcp Proj Cou nt_Stat5	5_reserve	qcpPr ojCou nt_Stat7	7_contracted	Success- rate proj	Success- rate fin	Success- rate proj	success- rate fin	contracted	selected
Strategic	2.2	3	610,968,003.00	150	1,773,624,200.38	290.30%	17	160,101,365.72					100	1,192,432,002.63	24	326,201,263.03					9	94,889,569.00	6.00%	5.35%	6.00%	5.35%	15.53%	15.53%
Strategic	2.3	2	677,975,000.00	165	1,581,266,225.59	233.23%	17	191,468,439.39					39	343,232,951.07	100	969,528,901.13	2	20,699,085.00			7	56,336,849.00	4.24%	3.56%	5.45%	4.87%	8.31%	11.36%
Strategic	3.1	2	229,849,939.20	378	3,786,015,544.90	1647.17%	47	465,581,908.93			1	2,375,000.00	97	972,881,286.73	220	2,211,636,420.24					13	133,540,929.00	3.44%	3.53%	3.44%	3.53%	58.10%	58.10%
Strategic	3.2	2	322,190,000.00	376	3,849,287,308.53	1194.73%	21	238,680,583.14					106	1,150,399,727.40	213	2,067,936,637.18	24	244,559,149.10			12	147,711,211.71	3.19%	3.84%	9.57%	10.19%	45.85%	121.75%
Strategic	3.3	3	204,334,195.20	106	883,706,382.13	432.48%	8	78,145,433.00					23	199,671,137.87	58	486,990,287.04			2	18,087,499.07	15	100,812,025.15	14.15%	11.41%	16.04%	13.45%	49.34%	58.19%
Strategic	4.1	3	282,965,437.40	31	349,069,811.23	123.36%	6	74,209,429.16					2	25,800,015.75	16	192,774,646.32					7	56,285,720.00	22.58%	16.12%	22.58%	16.12%	19.89%	19.89%
Strategic	4.2	3	167,576,122.20	11	133,707,336.73	79.79%	1	12,798,750.00					4	45,396,282.73	2	27,345,988.00					4	48,166,316.00	36.36%	36.02%	36.36%	36.02%	28.74%	28.74%
Strategic	5.1	2	406,666,000.00	101	1,093,448,603.84	268.88%	15	146,691,372.58					16	175,578,914.63	43	450,063,193.19	25	290,803,750.03			2	30,311,373.41	1.98%	2.77%	26.73%	29.37%	7.45%	78.96%
Strategic	5.2	3	902,789,765.60	177	1,734,388,047.19	192.11%	8	63,393,457.00			1	2,992,675.00	18	209,760,123.64	110	1,104,432,290.04	27	231,445,488.72			13	122,364,012.79	7.34%	7.06%	22.60%	20.40%	13.55%	39.19%
Strategic	6.1	3	942,564,858.10	183	2,024,701,870.20	214.81%	7	54,296,232.93					2	29,886,188.00	128	1,376,239,552.96	29	387,380,893.08			17	176,899,003.23	9.29%	8.74%	25.14%	27.87%	18.77%	59.87%
Strategic	6.2	3	175,432,990.80	202	2,382,389,711.53	1358.01%	25	312,892,831.73					45	490,891,146.31	115	1,420,116,019.45	2	26,972,468.60			15	131,517,245.44	7.43%	5.52%	8.42%	6.65%	74.97%	90.34%
Strategic	6.3	3	152,846,395.90	167	1,636,637,863.61	1070.77%	18	190,686,361.56					104	1,086,151,053.00	25	146,363,563.60	6	77,632,060.05	1	16,681,907.00	13	119,122,918.40	7.78%	7.28%	11.98%	13.04%	77.94%	139.64%
Strategic	6.4	2	163,542,987.60	37	355,840,435.24	217.58%	12	57,436,035.14					18	178,771,286.45	5	84,825,467.65	2	34,807,646.00					0.00%	0.00%	5.41%	9.78%	0.00%	21.28%
TOTAL		54	8,335,696,607.20	2,976	30,907,811,824.45	370.79%	344	3,469,082,854.31	0	0.00	2	5,367,675.00	794	8,698,019,694.47	1,423	14,078,586,498.55	200	2,473,673,134.19	13	120,793,938.37	200	2,062,288,029.56	6.72%	6.67%	13.88%	15.07%	24.74%	55.87%
OVERALL TOTAL		98	10,023,070,606.09	5,989	34,598,049,747.19	345.18%	578	4,034,827,040.80	174	142,231,964.84	2	5,367,675.00	1,023	8,900,806,234.71	3,130	16,126,904,794.25	475	2,737,246,546.82	99	219,697,708.02	508	2,430,967,782.75	8.48%	7.03%	18.07%	15.57%	24.25%	53.76%



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Annex 16 - Action Categories Assigned to KAI

KAI	ID Action Category	Title Action Categorie
1.1	7	Invatamant pre-universitar
1.2	8	Invatamant superior
1.3	5	Formare profesionala continua
1.4	5	Formare profesionala continua
1.5	2	Cercetare post-doctorala
1.5	11	Programe doctorale
2.1	14	Tranzitia de la scoala la locul de munca
2.2	9	Masuri corective de parasire timpurie a scolii
2.2	10	Masuri preventive de parasire timpurie a scolii
2.3	5	Formare profesionala continua
3.1	5	Formare profesionala continua
3.2	1	Acces pe piata muncii
3.2	5	Formare profesionala continua
3.3	3	Dezvoltarea capacitatii reprezentantilor societatii civile
3.3	4	Dezvoltarea retelelor si parteneriatelor cu reprezentantii societatii civile
4.1	12	Serviciul Public de Ocupare
4.2	12	Serviciul Public de Ocupare
5.1	1	Acces pe piata muncii
5.2	13	Sustenabilitate zone rurale
6.1	6	Implementarea economiei sociale
6.2	1	Acces pe piata muncii
6.3	1	Acces pe piata muncii



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Annex 17 - Internal and External Factors that have Influenced, Continue to Influence and will Influence the Implementation of SOPHRD

Internal Factors that have Influenced, continue to Influence and will Influence the Implementation of the SOPHRD

Influencing Factor	Comment
Conceptual Gap – Programme Management	<p>Perhaps the most significant but least tangible internal factor to have influenced the evolution of the implementation of SOPHRD is what we refer to as a 'conceptual gap' with regards to programme management. It appears from our reading of the system and structures in place that the understanding of the programme management task / function at MA level has not been strategic and is, instead, control focused. Whereas control is a necessary component of the programme management function it is not the core of that function which, in the case of SOPHRD, is to ensure the effective management of the disbursement of funds in favour of the development of human capital in Romania. Failure to develop a system and supports that are designed to measure up to that central task has resulted, for example, in very high rates of failed applications with the associated waste in effort across the system and may result in the decommitment of funding available to Romania due to low rates of absorption.</p> <p>In our engagement with the programme it appears that there is minimal engagement with the quality of what it supports and that is largely due to the control fixation that predominates (see below), which results in labyrinthine rules and regulations, persistent revision of rules and the creation of confusion amongst promoters. At a technical level this absence of focus on strategy is reflected in the complete absence of impact indicators for the programme.</p>
Communication	<p>Effective communication is critical in any venture and of particular importance in an undertaking of this scale i.e. a programme with funding of c. 4beuro involving literally thousands of actual and would-be stakeholders and a large, complex, implementation structure. Notwithstanding the fact that the overall Information and Publicity effort (to let people know of the availability of funding) was generally adjudged to have been well executed, a range of communication issues arise.</p> <p>The lack of effective communication is a dominant theme throughout the evaluation and this has impacted on programme implementation and will continue to do so unless it is addressed. For example, and despite the long delays in decision-making in terms of project approval and contracting as detailed in Chapter 3 and again in this chapter, applicants received no update on the status of their applications over the various stages of the process. Ineffective communication in terms of help-desk provision also impacts on project implementation as providers attempt, often unsuccessfully from an audit perspective, to interpret rules and regulations in 'real life' situations.</p>
Control Fixation & Centralisation	<p>Notwithstanding the fact that the interaction of Romanian and EU legislation is problematic (see below) and that this raises serious issues for programme managers in interpreting what may or may not be done, there is an over-whelming</p>



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Influencing Factor	Comment
	<p>control focus at MA level (noting that some IBs adopt a similar approach) that has seriously impacted on the implementation of the OP. This is the consequence of the ‘conceptual gap’ that we refer to above in that the financial management burden associated with programme management seems to have dominated all other considerations such that the MA took upon itself an inordinate number of low-level control tasks (many of which were duplicating tasks already carried out down through the system chain). The MA then claimed to have too few staff to carry out the tasks that it had taken upon itself despite the fact that it had, for example, eight under-utilised RIBs and three National IBs at its disposal. Rather than acting as the manager of a system, the MA got itself directly involved in tasks at every level resulting, inevitably, in delays in the system, policies being changed mid-stream (e.g. the responsibilities of the RIBs which have changed again more recently although in this instance the MA has once again devolved significant autonomy to the IBs), corrigenda issuing at the last moment and so on.</p> <p>The above is associated with the heavy, bureaucratic implementation of the programme as referenced below; however, it is also associated with the issue of trust which, in turn, is associated with culture as discussed in the table that follows and that presents External Factors influencing the implementation of the OP.</p> <p>In certain cases, Romania has put in place a number of intricate regulations, rules and procedures of a more restrictive and demanding nature than those contained in relevant EU Financial Regulations (e.g., strict and binding lists of eligible activities, 100% checks on declared expenditure) – we also understand that in certain instances, such as in respect of public procurement, the MA enforced rules that were even more constraining than the national procurement guidelines. This impedes efficient and effective implementation at all levels. Requirements pertaining to calls for proposals and certain practices in the implementation stage are clear examples of the desire for 100% certainty that no mistakes are made, including several signatures on each page within the Application File, 100% checks and controls, as well as the duplication of checks between MAs and IBs in the case of reimbursement claims. The danger in all of this, however, is that in placing so much emphasis on micro-managing the minutiae and working to attain an impossible goal (e.g., 100% certainty) the focus on the ‘big picture’ is lost.</p>
Bureaucracy and lack of co-ordination	<p>The control fixation referred to above results in excessive bureaucracy that is, in turn, exacerbated by overall lack of co-ordination. For example, project promoters are required to produce volumes of data that are not systematically used to inform programme management but only for control purposes e.g. details on participants by age, gender, employment status etc. This data could be used to inform management and strategy but is actually used for bureaucratic purposes only. The overlapping and duplication of checks between the MAs and IBs in respect of reimbursement claims is another example of intense bureaucratisation that results, for example, in delays in the processing of payments and impacts on implementation at project level. This example also highlights the lack of trust within the system itself, let alone in respect of project promoters, and this is commented on below.</p> <p>Within the context of the SOPHRD the development of the Action Web system as an alternative to the centralised SMIS system adds another layer of bureaucracy that administrators and officials have to deal with. This highlights a lack of co-ordination within the system that appears to have resulted from poor communication amongst the relevant authorities in the design and setting up of the SMIS system in the first instance. As it stands, the existing systems do not speak</p>



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Influencing Factor	Comment
	<p>to each other and those responsible at IB and MA level are required to manually input practically identical information into both systems / databases.</p> <p>There are other examples of excessive bureaucracy such as the need for projects to notify the MAs and IBs of even minor changes in project activities, even if these have no material effect on project results.</p>
Inexperience	<p>Notwithstanding the academic qualifications and more general public service experience amongst many of those we have engaged with over the course of the evaluation, it is the case that the management of a programme on this scale and at this level of complexity is entirely new not only for individual members of staff and management but for the system as a whole. That said, the passage of time, training and ongoing exposure to broader practice throughout the EU will rapidly ameliorate this factor.</p>
Responsibility & Initiative	<p>Over the course of the evaluation we encountered many able and well qualified officials who are well capable of operating a more efficient and effective system. However, in the absence of top-down direction there appears to be little appetite amongst individual officers to rectify aspects of the system that are not working or to take responsibility for making things work overall. We understand that this is associated with a 'blame' culture that tends to heavily punish even minor errors. The effect however, is to further embed the inherent bureaucracy of the system and to stifle possible innovation and continuous improvement. Change, where it does occur, tends to be reactive and in response to crisis rather than proactive. The recent devolution of powers to the IBs in respect of Strategic projects is a case in point. What would have appeared to be an obvious use of the resources within the system has been brought about, it seems, because the system was seizing up and not on the basis of a thought-out strategy for the ongoing implementation of the programme that will hold for the remainder of the life of the programme.</p>
Trust	<p>Although an intangible, the element of trust needed to effectively manage a programme of this scale and with so many stakeholders, is substantial. However, there appears to be very little trust within the system and this is a serious impediment to progress. The lack of trust manifests itself in various ways such as the reluctance of the MA to maximise the use of the IBs over 2008 and 2009 and/or the level of scrutiny to which project promoters are subject. We understand that part of this is associated with Romanian legislation and its interaction with EU legislations (as commented on below), part of it may be to do with the effects of political change within the system (also commented on below) but whatever the causal factors it would appear to us that it is a lack of trust that is at the heart of the control fixation, heavy bureaucratisation and system supplication that we have identified through the evaluation. Some quotes from project promoters during our focus groups sessions serve to illustrate: "we do not appreciate being looked upon as thieves"; "MA needs to change its attitude and to value promoters as key contributors to the process and the strategy"</p>



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External Factors that have Influenced, continue to Influence and will Influence the Implementation of the SOPHRD

Influencing Factor	Comment
Culture of Suspicion	<p>The dominant culture within the administration leads to the lack of trust and heavy bureaucracy and to a failure to predict and solve problems that arise. Many of those we spoke to suggested that the control fixation and lack of trust reflect the incidence of corruption within the system although amongst those we spoke with, the practice of corruption always seems to reside ‘somewhere else’ within the system i.e., none of the people we engaged with did not consider themselves or their immediate colleagues to be corrupt. The pervasiveness of this culture (dominated by the suspicion of corruption as against its actuality?) has had and continues to have a detrimental effect on the system overall.</p>
Economic Crisis	<p>The SOPHRD started at a time of significant economic growth in Romania and elsewhere. However, as highlighted in Chapter 2 of this report, the economic environment has radically altered. Given that the general environment and economic context of 2007 influenced the setting out of the priorities and relative balance of spending within the OP, the changed current environment is influencing and will continue to influence implementation.</p> <p>In Chapter 2 we highlighted key changes in the economy and drawn certain conclusions in that regard. In the final chapter we draw attention to key conclusions and make recommendations in that regard, particularly in respect of the balance of priorities across the programme. However, the changed economic context has had or has exacerbated other issues. In the first instance the ongoing fiscal crisis will mean less public servants (including teachers and trainers) who are paid less for what they do making those professions less attractive than they already are and thereby challenging the system to deliver necessary programmes of the required quality to support a range of client groups. Furthermore, the lack of exchequer resources continues to inhibit the delivery of necessary programmes and interventions (e.g. reintegration of the unemployed, active labour market programmes etc.) thereby restricting the capacity of service deliverers and possibly placing really significant funding demands on certain measures within the OP to address any gaps that arise in that respect. The PES is a case in point where available human resources are directed towards registering the unemployed and making payments while, in some instances, training centres lie idle.</p> <p>Associated with this is the issue of differing rates applying to officials directly involved in implementing projects and those who indirectly support implementation – there appears to be significant industrial relations type-issues that have arisen in this regard that have blocked or stalled implementation to date and the current economic crisis is likely to exacerbate the capacity of the state to address these.</p> <p>A further effect of the changed economic context will be to limit the availability of match funding / co-financing for current (particularly in the absence of multi-annual budgeting) and prospective promoters having the possible effect of making the absorption of the available funds even more challenging than it already is. This situation is exacerbated by what is commonly referred to as the credit squeeze brought about by the threatened liquidity of commercial banks and their consequent reluctance to lend funds to cover contingencies that may, for example, be associated with delays in payments. That scenario would result in</p>



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Influencing Factor	Comment
	real challenges for project promoters.
Legislative Incoherence	<p>Over the course of engagement with stakeholders and promoters during the evaluation the 'chaotic' legislative structure was referred to on many occasions. The interaction of that legislation with EU regulation appears to be particularly convoluted and raises challenges for stakeholders at all levels. The response to this clearly needs to be centrally managed in order to remove needless impediments and to co-ordinate efforts towards realising strategic benefit to the Romanian economy. As it stands, the lack of coherence and harmonization in the legislation frequently lead to delays and bottlenecks at all stages of the processes associated with the management and implementation of the programme but more particularly with regard to reimbursement, audit and financial control more generally including, for example, the definition of eligible funding (which seems to have changed frequently, sometimes retrospectively and which appears to be interpreted differently by different arms of the state). Many project promoters said they received conflicting advice regarding financial matters. It would appear that officials are either reluctant to provide guidance in the event that that guidance is incorrect and/or when they do interpret a situation their advice can be contradicted by others.</p> <p>The heavy legal requirements also impact on project approval and selection where applicants are required to acquire and present a large number of official forms in order to qualify for funding - when we asked why the promoters could not pre-prepare these forms rather than waiting to be approached by the authorities we were informed that many of the forms and permits had a relatively short lifespan and, as such, pre-preparation was not possible (particularly given the length of time it takes for an application to move from submission stage to ultimate contracting stage). Furthermore, promoters are also faced with regular renewal obligations given the short lifespan of the official documents in question.</p>
Co-ordination	<p>Whereas there is inadequate co-ordination within the direct remit of the managers of the SOPHRD as commented on above, there would also appear to be a significant lack of co-ordination in respect of the overall implementation of the SI in Romania. The fact that there is so much ambiguity in the rules, regulations and laws governing the implementation of the funds (noting that this phenomenon is also referred to in the Second Draft Evaluation of the NSRF) suggests a lack of proactive management at the centre that is focused on clarifying and resolving issues and removing impediments to effective implementation. This reflects to some extent on the political system and the relative lack of urgency/priority that has been attached until more recently to the low rates of absorption (noting that the Prime Minister's Office recently released a statement, referred to in the final chapter of this report) detailing what it understood to be key issues arising in that regard). However, it also reflects on relevant arms of the public service inasmuch as the confusion and debilitating level of bureaucracy appears to have been tolerated and no strategic moves were taken during the period in question to ensure that the various authorities spoke with one voice and one understanding of the rules that govern expenditure under the various OPs.</p>
Changes in the Political System	<p>The issue here is not related to political instability or even changes in government <i>per se</i> but to the effect that such change has on the administration. The extent and level to which political change results in managerial and administrative change</p>



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	<p>within the system is significant – in fact, at the time we conducted our fieldwork and met with each of the RIBs, six of them were without a Director. The effect of this is to weaken ‘institutional memory’, to result in long lead-in periods while the new officials ‘find their feet’ and, perhaps most destructive of all, results in changes in direction or approach that can stifle the initiative of strategic thinkers to plan ahead as they know their efforts may be simply nullified as a result of political / administrative / managerial change. In fact, one of the most striking features to emerge from our interviews was the extent to which current incumbents are prone to suggesting that past efforts were of little value whatsoever.</p>
<p>Absence of integrated policy / strategy for development of human capital</p>	<p>Many of those we interviewed over the course of the evaluation asserted that whereas the concept of ‘strategy’ is not new to Romania, the production of truly strategic documents is not something that is common. With reference to the development of human capital, some of those interviewed said that the SOPHRD is the most advanced ‘strategic’ statement available with regard to human capital development (noting that we are of the view, as elaborated on above, that the SOPHRD lacks a strong strategic focus). This absence of well-researched strategy backed by in-depth situation analysis and labour market forecasting potentially weakens the ongoing strategic relevance of the OP and also has implications for planning and input to the next round of structural funds negotiations and the targeting of available funding.</p>
<p>Unemployment, Social Exclusion and Poverty</p>	<p>The inevitable increases in the numbers experiencing unemployment, social exclusion and poverty as a result of the economic crisis is presenting serious challenges to the capacity of the delivery system (particularly given the fiscal challenges facing the government). The pressure of the demands from affected groups will continue to increase and will put serious strain on the VET delivery system and hence on the implementation of the SOPHRD.</p>
<p>Capacity and capability of applicants and contracted promoters</p>	<p>The capacity of applicants to submit quality proposals taking into account all of the various stipulations that apply and the ongoing capacity and capabilities of successful project promoters from a project management perspective also raise implementation difficulties. The high rate of rejection (52%) and the low rate of ongoing drawdown of funds are indicative of the issues arising in this regard. We have also commented above (Chapter 2) on the possibility that applicants respond on the basis of observing the technical intricacies of the programme (e.g. eligible activities) rather than from a strategic assessment of need as they see it on the ground (assuming they have the capacity and ‘intelligence’ to do this) and this can lead, in turn, to difficulties in implementation with particular reference to eligibility / audit and to the capacity to change to meet needs as they are found and/or as they evolve.</p>
<p>Availability of qualified evaluators on the market</p>	<p>As noted in the Second Draft Evaluation of the NSRF, “Project evaluation culture in Romania is at an early stage of development”. This impacts on both the amount of projects that can be evaluated (given the call and project-centred approach to the disbursement of funds that has been adopted to date under SOPHRD) and on the level at which evaluation of projects can be implemented (we noted earlier the technical rather than policy-focused aspect of project evaluation). This raises challenges for implementation, quality and strategic coherence.</p>