The internationalization of the Romanian higher education contributes both quantitatively and qualitatively for achieving the target in the Europe 2020 Strategy.

Currently, Romania is an active part in several international cooperation initiatives in the field of higher education, mentioning primarily the implication in the Bologna Process and the membership of the International Organization of La Francophonie, Bucharest hosting the Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe of the University Agency of the Francophonie ever since 1994.

In 2012 Romania organized in Bucharest the third edition of the Bologna Policy Forum, where the Mobility for a better learning strategy was adopted.

The analysis Universities in the context of Europeanization and globalization, elaborated by UEFISCDI within the project Quality and Leadership for the Romanian Higher Education, highlighted the following as Romania’s strengths with regard to the internationalization of the Romanian higher education: increased visibility in the African and Asian area, the introduction of the three cycles system and of the ECTS system, favourable quality-price ratio especially for the medicine and engineering fields, academic programmes with teaching in English, French and German, education quality assurance systems, consultancy centres in various fields, centres for obtaining international certificates of professional competences, specialized public relations, European integration departments, etc., diversified academic books offer, summer schools offer, symposia, seminars, conferences.

A complex analysis of the higher education system from the perspective of the internationalization policies and of the specific statistic data was elaborated by national and international experts who formulated a set of recommendations addressed to the government institutions and to the universities, in view of improving the current situation. The analysis is based on study visits in five universities, a self-evaluation tool specific to EUA for data collection, a series of workshops and debates as well as analyses of the data, the official documents or the legislative framework, the results being integrated in the elaborated report The internationalization of the Higher Education in Romania.

The objective of The Government Programme 2013-2016 on Education in the field of internationalization is continuing the consolidation policies of the bilateral and multilateral international partnerships, encouraging the exchange of students, teachers, etc. within the existing programmes (Erasmus, CEEPUS, Fulbright, DAAD, programmes related to the Francophone area, other bilateral agreements etc.) and developing new directions of international cooperation. Likewise, it also sets the objective developing the national and international bilateral and multilateral relations in order to identify the best practices and their implementation in our country, too.

The National Reform Plan 2014 is considering increasing the international mobility of the higher education and vocational education graduates, by introducing the mobility tools from the European Europass Portfolio (the Diploma Supplement for the Bologna cycle and the Supplement to the Professional Qualification Certificate) in the education and professional development systems.

Recent measures for implementing the internationalization process of the higher education in Romania:
• The National Education Law No. 1/2011 facilitates the internationalization of the education by guaranteeing the same conditions of access for all students in the member states of EEA and the Swiss Confederation as for the Romanian students; at the admission to the public and private higher education, for each cycle and study programme, the citizens from the European Economic Area (EEA), the member states, and the Swiss Confederation may apply in the same manner provided by the law as for the Romanian citizens, including in terms of the schooling fees.

• The Romanian state provides scholarships for the foreign students, as a form of encouragement and financial support for the internationalization of the Romanian higher education.

• The universities are required to specify the conditions in which HEI may sign and implement international partnerships, participations to the European and international organizations, the conditions regarding the agreements in research programmes with other economic stakeholders, as well as the conditions which determine the destination of private funds.

• The Ministry of National Education is considering the promotion of the qualifications’ acknowledgement, as a key element in facilitating mobilities. A first step in the policy from a centralized system of acknowledgement at national level to a system based on the institutional autonomy principle was made by the Ministry of National Education, on CNRED’s proposal, by means of the Methodology for acknowledging the periods of studies abroad, aiming at the agreements concluded between the accredited higher education institutions, by means of OMERYS 3223/08.02.2012.

• Likewise, at the level of each accredited higher education institution, information and documentation resources centres (IDRC) are set up, that have responsibilities specified in the methodology, in the procedure for acknowledging the study periods.

• Likewise, in 2013, the Government Decision on the approval of the National Qualifications Framework was elaborated and adopted, by which the correspondence has been made between the NQF levels, the graduation documents that are issued, the type of education and professional development programmes in Romania by which the levels of qualification and the levels of reference of the National Qualifications Framework may be acquired. By NQF 8 levels of qualification were established, that may be acquired through the formal education and professional development system in Romania and through the acknowledgement of the learning outcomes acquired by learning in nonformal and informal contexts, from the lifelong learning perspective.

• According to M.O. No.3359 of the 11th of March 2013 which amends the Methodology for reception to studies and the schooling of the foreign citizens from EU third countries in the Romanian accredited public and private education, approved through OMERYS No. 6.000/2012, the candidates send the documents directly to the education institutions within which they want to study; regulations by which the simplification of the admission procedures and of the bureaucracy was achieved.

• The Romanian ethnics in neighboring countries and the ones with the permanent residence abroad are encouraged to study in Romanian higher education institutions by specific measures, such as scholarships, government agreements: annually, the Ministry of National Education issues the Government Decision by which it establishes the number of student places for the following university year, document that specifies separately the places allocated to the Romanian ethnic
students.

- According to the Teaching Staff Statute, the teaching activities in a language of international circulation may be included in the teaching load, with a 25% salary increase.

- By law, the methodologies for recruiting international teaching staff are discouraging the discrimination of foreign applicants. This means that the same working conditions are applied regardless of the country of origin.

- According to the National Education Law (Law 1/2011) - The Higher Education Institutions (HEI) may set up teaching programmes in languages of international and minority circulation. The specific financial incentives may be granted to the higher education institutions for such activities.

- The higher education institutions that conduct joint degrees type - university programmes with prestigious foreign universities and programmes conducted in languages of international circulation are encouraged and financially supported.

- The methodology for distributing the public funds from the basic funding and the supplementary funding for the Romanian universities supports the internationalization process in education, encouraging the development of programmes in foreign languages and PhD programmes in co-tutelage, by assigning supplementary funds in this respect. Furthermore, at Bachelor level, the universities are encouraged to develop study programmes in languages of international circulation and in rare languages, as well as study programmes performed in foreign university branches. For all these, the universities may receive supplementary points in the calculation methodology for the allocation of funds. According to the methodology, the Master and PhD studies programmes in the field of science and advanced technologies, the programmes in languages of international circulation and the joint degrees programmes are encouraged by means of preferential funding.

Monitoring the internationalization efforts of the higher education for the purpose of rendering compatible the Romanian education system with other efficient higher education systems is materialized in the following monitored activities:

- Encouraging the higher education institutions in view of organizing the preparatory year.

- Encouraging the higher education institutions in view of elaborating special study programmes for foreign students, in languages of international circulation.

- Encouraging the matriculation of foreign students.

- Carrying out systematic activities of external promotion of the study programmes.

- Diversifying the services for foreign students (e.g.: support for renting residential spaces).

- Involving the higher education institutions in making international networks/partnerships at
European level and using the institutional and academic partnerships, particularly for improving PhD studies.

- Encouraging the mobilities at international level.
- Encouraging the international inter-university partnerships.

**Student mobility**

The mobility and the exchange of students in Romania are ensured through the following cooperation programmes and initiatives in the education and training field:

- The European Union programmes
- The cooperation programmes and the bilateral initiatives
- The cooperation programmes and the multilateral initiatives (others than the European Union programmes)
- Unilateral initiatives for supporting the students’ mobility.

The types of activities involved, the duration, the funding sources and mechanisms, as well as the responsible bodies concerning the students’ mobility through the European Union programmes are established within the legal basis and the guidelines of the respective programmes.

The mobility and the students exchange within the cooperation programmes and the bi- and multilateral initiatives in the education and professional development field are regulated by the conventions concluded between the Romanian Government/ the Ministry of National Education and the Governments/ministries of education from the respective countries. According to the programme’s specificity and the parties’ interests, the bi- and multilateral cooperation programmes may include the mutual granting of scholarships – for partial or complete studies at various educational levels.

Regardless of the type of scholarship granted, the duration of studies abroad is fully acknowledged at the return of the student in his / her country. The Ministry of National Education is considering the promotion of the qualifications acknowledgement, as a key element in facilitating the mobilities. Thereby, at the level of each accredited higher education institution, information and documentation resources centres (IDRC) are set up, that have responsibilities specified in the methodology and procedure for acknowledging the study periods. A first step in the policy from a centralized system of acknowledgement at national level to a system based on the institutional autonomy principle was made by the Ministry of National Education, on CNRED’s proposal, by means of the Methodology for acknowledging the periods of studies abroad, aiming at the agreements concluded between the accredited higher education institutions, by means of OMERYS 3223/ 08.02.2012.

**Academic staff mobility**

The mobility and the exchange for the academic staff in Romania are ensured through the following types
of cooperation programmes and initiatives in the education and training field.

- The European Union programmes and the Council of Europe programmes for the permanent training of the educational staff

- The cooperation programmes and the bilateral initiatives

- The cooperation programmes and the multilateral initiatives (other than the Europeans Union programmes)

- Unilateral initiatives for supporting the mobility of the academic staff.

The types of involved activities, the duration, the sources and the funding mechanisms, as well as the bodies responsible of the mobility of the academic staff by means of the European Union programmes and the Council of Europe training programmes are established within the legal basis and the guidelines of the respective programmes.

The mobility and the exchange of the academic staff within the cooperation programmes and the bi- and multilateral initiatives in the education and professional development field are regulated by the conventions concluded between the Romanian Government/ the Ministry of National Education and the Governments/ the ministries of education of the respective countries. According to the programme’s specificity and the parties’ interests, the bi- and multilateral cooperation programmes may include the mobility of the academic staff, the mutual granting of scholarships or other grants, the organization of various conferences, seminars etc.

During the participation to mobility and exchange activities, the academic staff may be remunerated by the Romanian state or by the host country – depending on the activity’s duration and type, as well as on the concrete agreement based on which the activity is conducted.

For example, during the mobilities effected in the European Union programmes in the education and professional development field, the salaries of the teaching and academic staff are paid by the Romanian state, while the direct costs regarding the mobility (travel expenses, daily allowance, schooling fees etc.) are covered according to the regulations of the respective programmes.

At the same time, Romania has ratified with numerous states bilateral conventions for avoiding the double taxation of the respective states’ citizens in the periods in which they are legally remunerated for various activities.

These conventions specify explicitly the tax exemption periods for the academic staff that is remunerated only for teaching and/or research activities in the partner state.