

# Developments: Liberal adult education in the margins

In Romania most training is focused on employment, and there is no systematic provision of liberal education apart from the cultural houses in some cities. The situation for adult education in Romania has stayed the same during the last year, with no new policies or initiatives emerging. The funding situation of EAEAs member Asociatia Euro Adult Education has slightly deteriorated.

COVID-19 significantly affected the whole adult education sector in Romania. The crisis forced EAEAs member to reduce the number of staff and activities, while transitioning to digital learning. In addition, the Asociatia Euro had only a small number of projects last year, which led them to reduce the number of employees.

Civil society in Romania is consulted to a certain extent in policy making. The European Pillar of Social Rights has been implemented visibly in Romania, but no consultation with civil society took place according to EAEAs member. Funded by the European Structural Fund, the European Pillar of Social Rights has enhanced social cohesion and fostered many important projects, such as the Youth Jobs initiative. The country reports from the European Semester correspond partially to the experience of Asociata Euro. There are also some projects in place for the implementation of Upskilling Pathways and fostering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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# Challenges: Cohesion policy period coming to an end

Social exclusion was identified as a major challenge to implementing the SDGs. In order to reach this objective, Romania identified in the Partnership Agreement with the European Commission five challenges to be tackled through Cohesion Policy in 2014-2020. One of the challenges focuses on improved employment, social inclusion and education policies to reach the national EU2020 targets:

- Increase the employment rate to 70 %
- Reduce the number of people at risk of poverty with 580 000 by 2020
- Reduce the early school leavers down to 11.3 % and
- Increase the tertiary education participation to 26.7%

As the Cohesion Policy period is coming to the end, new objectives for 2021-2027 will be negotiated by the government.

Asociatia Euro will continue to work with the European Social Fund and Erasmus + projects, targeting the unemployed and people with low levels of education. While most adult education focuses on employability, Asociatia Euro continues to advocate for the provision of liberal adult learning and education. EAEAs member is hoping that the network of culture centers, which are the traditional institutions providing lifelong learning, will receive more recognition and funding by the Romanian government.

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