

Education system

Romania

described and compared with
the Dutch system

This document contains information on the education system of Romania. We explain the Dutch equivalent of the most common qualifications from Romania for the purpose of admission to Dutch higher education.

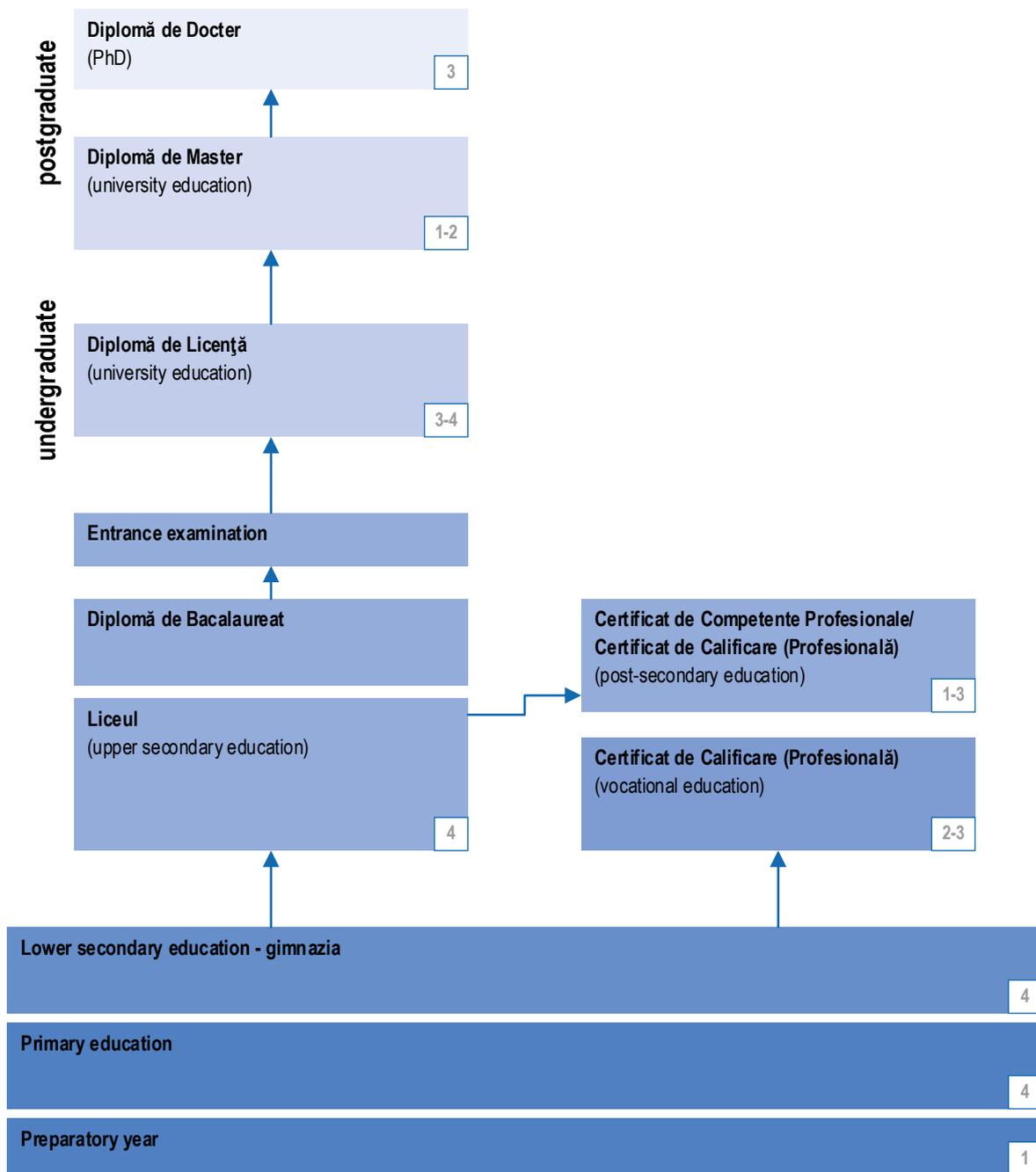
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We assemble the information for these descriptions of education systems with the greatest care. However, we cannot be held responsible for the consequences of errors or incomplete information in this document.



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■ Education system Romania



 Duration of education

Evaluation chart

The left-hand column in the table below lists the most common foreign qualifications with corresponding levels in the EHEA and European qualifications framework. The other columns show the Dutch equivalent along with the corresponding levels in the Dutch and European qualifications frameworks.

Degree or qualification and EHEA-QF level		EQF level	Dutch equivalent and NLQF level		EQF level
<i>Certificat de Competente Profesionale/Certificat de Calificare (Profesională)</i> obtained in post-secondary education			MBO diploma (qualification level 3 or 4)	3/4	3/4
<i>Diplomă de Bacalaureat</i>			VWO diploma	4+	4
<i>Diplomă de Bacalaureat</i> (obtained before 2005)			HAVO diploma	4	4
<i>Diplomă de Licență (Ciclul I)</i> (3 to 4 years)	1 st	6	HBO or WO bachelor's degree	6	6
<i>Diploma de Inginer (Ciclul I)</i> (4 years)	1 st	6	HBO or WO bachelor's degree	6	6
<i>Diplomă de Licență, Diplomă de Arhitect (Ciclul I and II)</i> (5 to 6 years in regulated professions)	2 nd	7	HBO or WO master's degree	7	7
<i>Diploma de Master (Ciclul II)</i> (1 to 2 years)	2 nd	7	HBO or WO master's degree	7	7

* not formally linked yet, see the chapter [Qualification frameworks](#).

NB

- The information provided in the table is a general recommendation from which no rights may be derived.
- EHEA-QF = Qualifications Frameworks in the European Higher Education Area. NLQF = Dutch Qualifications Framework. EQF = European Qualifications Framework.
- The [EQF/NLQF level](#) is not so much a reflection of study load or content; rather, it is an indication of a person's knowledge and skills after having completed a certain programme of study.
- Information about Dutch equivalent qualifications can be found on our website: [education and diplomas the Netherlands](#).

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- [The Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market \(SBB\)](#), evaluates statements on foreign qualifications and training at VMBO and MBO level. The evaluation may vary if SBB evaluates the diploma for admission to VET schools or the labour market in the Netherlands.

■ Introduction

Romania (România) is a democratic republic in the south-east of Europe. Romania joined the EU in 2007.

Form of government

Romania has had a democratic government since the fall of communism in 1989. The parliament has the legislative power and consists of 2 houses. The head of state is the president, and Romania is divided into 41 districts.

Language

Romania has large minorities (Hungarians and Roma) and smaller minorities, such as Germans and Serbians. Recognised minorities can all receive education in their native language.

Education

Political responsibility for the education system lies with the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research (*Ministerul Educației și Cercetării științifice*).

During the communist era (1946-1989), the primary focus was on the country's economic development. The education system focused on technical programmes and subjects that supported the communist ideology. Institutes were very specialised, and private education was forbidden. In the early 1990s, education institutions gained greater independence through:

- new legislation;
- curriculum reform;
- reduction in the number of technical programmes;
- allowing private institutions.

Through an Act instituted in 2004 (*Lege nr. 288*), higher education was divided into 3 cycles to comply with the Bologna process:

- bachelor's
- master's
- doctorate

The current National Education Act was adopted in 2011.

Some general characteristics:

- Compulsory education: age 6 to 17.
- Language of instruction: Romanian. Some programmes also offer a minority language (e.g. Hungarian, German) or the language of a specific school (English or French).
- Length of the academic year: mid-September to June (2 semesters).

■ Primary and secondary education

Public education in Romania is free. There are also private schools with specific teaching philosophies or a different language of instruction (such as English or French).

Primary education

Children receive primary education (*invatamantul primar*) at a primary school (*scoala primara*) where generalist teachers teach:

- Year 0, a preparatory year for 6-year-olds (mandatory since 2012);
- Years 1-4, for 7-11-year-olds.

Secondary education

Secondary education consists of 3 stages:

- lower secondary education, Years 5-8;
- compulsory upper secondary education, Years 9 and 10;
- optional upper secondary education, Years 11 and 12.

Lower secondary education: *gimnazia*

Students aged 11-15 complete the lower secondary years (*invățământ gimnazial*, often translated as 'middle education') at a *gimnaziu*. All students take the same programme, however some schools offer programmes with special language or IT profiles. Students who pass the final lower-secondary exam are awarded the *Certificat de Capacitate* (with an accompanying list of subjects and marks).

Upper secondary education: *liceu*

Depending on their lower secondary results, students may decide to continue on to upper secondary school (the *liceu*). Upper secondary school is divided into 2 levels:

- *Ciclul inferior al liceului*, middle secondary education, Years 9-10;
- *Ciclul superior al liceului*, senior secondary education, Years 11-12*.

* Up to Year 13 if taken via night classes.

The whole of upper secondary education offers a choice of 3 routes; within each route, students can select a specialisation.

- Theoretical route with 2 profiles:
 1. Mathematics and sciences
 2. Languages and social sciences
- Technical route with 3 profiles:
 1. Services
 2. Natural resources and environmental protection
 3. Technology
- Aptitude-based route, with 5 profiles:
 1. Arts
 2. Military
 3. Pedagogics

4. Sports
 5. Theology
- *Diploma de Bacalaureat*: after 4 years of *liceu* and passing the national final exam (*examen de bacalaureat*).

In terms of level, a *Diplomă de Bacalaureat* is comparable to a VWO diploma.

Certificates

There are various certificates in addition to the *Bacalaureat* diploma.

- *Certificat de absolvent* (certificate of completion): issued to students after 2 years, Years 8-10.
- *Certificat de absolvire a liceului* (*Certificate of secondary school completion*): issued to students who do not take or who fail the national final exam (*bacalaureat*).
- NB Although this certificate does not grant admission to higher education, it does provide entry to post-secondary education and the labour market.

Bacalaureat diplomas pre-2005

After the reform of the Romanian higher education system, the bachelor's-master's degree structure was introduced in the 2005-2006 academic year. Romania's entry to the EU in 2007 meant that the structure of the education system was made to match that of the other (surrounding) European countries as closely as possible. For this reason, the evaluation of the *Bacalaureat* diploma changed.

In terms of level, a *Diplomă de Bacalaureat* obtained before 2005 is comparable to a [HAVO](#) diploma.

Secondary vocational education

In Romania, secondary vocational education is provided by a *școala de arte și meserii* (school of the applied arts). Students begin after completing their lower secondary years (i.e. after Year 8 of *gimnaziu*). There are 2 foundation years, and an optional 3rd year. The government will be working to reform this system from 2016-2020, after which all secondary vocational education programmes will take 3 years.

- Diploma: *Certificat de Calificare (Profesională)* after passing the *examen de certificare*. This diploma is always awarded at a specific level (e.g. level 3), and grants admission to higher education.

This type also includes general vocational education, and after 3 years students can continue on to combined general and vocational education programmes in the 'technical route'. In addition to their vocational diploma, students can also sit the *Bacalaureat* exam and obtain that diploma.

Post-secondary education

Students complete post-secondary education (*învăţământ postliceal*) at *şcoli de specializare postliceala* (specialised post-secondary schools) or *şcoli de maistri*.

- Duration: 1 to 3 years.
- Content: technical and secondary vocational education programmes.
- Diploma: *Certificat de Competente Profesionale*, *Certificat de Calificare* or *Certificat de Calificare Profesională*. These diplomas are always awarded at a specific level (e.g. level 5). They do not grant access to higher education.

In terms of level, a *Certificat de Competente Profesionale* or *Certificat de Calificare (Profesională)* obtained in post-secondary education is comparable to an [MBO](#) diploma (qualification level 3 or 4), depending on the duration and specialisation of the programme.

■ Admission to higher education

In Romania, it is the higher education institutions themselves that decide on admission. The prerequisites are:

- a *Diploma de Bacalaureat* with a minimum average mark of 6;
- possibly an entrance exam, or *Examen de Admitere*;
- occasionally an intake interview as part of the admissions procedure.

NB Students who have excelled in Olympiads or other official national or international competitions are often exempted from the entrance exam.

The government decides how many places are funded per programme, and therefore how many students may be admitted. Students who are prepared to pay tuition fees may also be admitted; these students are subject to simplified admission requirements.

■ Higher education

Romania does not have a binary higher education system. This means that, unlike the Netherlands, there are no separate institutions for higher professional education. It is also often unclear from the programme or diploma name whether the qualification is academic or vocational in nature.

Higher education in Romania is provided by universities, academies and institutes. In 2016, Romania had:

- 55 state-run institutions;
- 37 recognised and accredited private institutions;
- 10 recognised and provisionally authorised private institutions.

The private institutions account for a large proportion of all higher education, and focus primarily on vocational study programmes such as those in economics, management, philology, theology and law. These institutions obtain most of their funding from tuition fees and sponsoring.

Students can complete higher education in various ways:

- full-time (*invatamant de zi*);
- part-time (*invatamant cu frecventa redusa*);
- daytime and evening classes (*invatamant seral*);
- distance education (*invatamant la distanta*).

NB Evening, part-time and distance education programmes take 1 year longer to complete than the corresponding full-time programme.

In the 2005-2006 academic year, all higher education institutions (both private and state-run) were legally obliged to adopt the new three-cycle structure:

- Cycle I: *Licență, Studii universitare de licență*.
- Cycle II: *Master, Studii universitare de masterat*.
- Cycle III: *Doctor, Studii universitare de doctorat*.

Romania's entry to the EU in 2007 also meant that the structure of the education system was reviewed, and made to match that of the other (surrounding) European countries as closely as possible.

■ University and higher professional education

Cycle I

Romanian university education consists of 3 cycles. The first is called *studii universitare de licență*.

- Duration: usually 3 years, however technical and engineering programmes take 4 years (180-240 ECTS).
- Content: often includes a work placement (mandatory for technical programmes); not all programmes require a thesis.
- Diploma: *Diploma de Licență (ciclul I)* or *Diploma de Inginer* (in technical or engineering specialisations). These diplomas grant access to the labour market or to a master's programme.

In terms of level, a *Diploma de Licență* or *Diploma de Inginer* obtained via a 3 or 4-year university programme (EHEA-QF 1st cycle/[EQF level 6](#)) is comparable to a [HBO](#) or [WO](#) bachelor's degree, depending on the specialisation and nature of the programme.

Integrated programmes

- Duration: 5 years (for pharmacy and urban engineering) or 6 years (medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and architecture), 300-360 ECTS. All of these programmes are for regulated professions.
- Content: cycles I and II.
- Diploma: *Diploma de Licență* or *Diplomă de Arhitect*. These diplomas grant access to the labour market or to a doctorate.

In terms of level, a *Diploma de Licență* or *Diploma de Arhitect* obtained via a 5- or 6-year university programme (EHEA-QF 2nd cycle/[EQF level 7](#)) is comparable to a [WO](#) master's degree.

Pre-2005

Higher education was organised differently prior to 2005, and included short-cycle programmes (4 years) and long-cycle programmes (5-6 years). In general these older diplomas are considered equivalent to lower levels than the current diplomas, since the students were at a lower level when they started.

Cycle II

The second cycle of higher education is called *studii universitare de masterat*.

- Duration: 1 or 2 years (60-120 ECTS); 4-year bachelor's programmes are followed by a 1-year master's; 3-year bachelor's programmes are followed by a 2-year master's.
- Content: further specialisation in the first-cycle field, finishing with a thesis.
- Diploma: *Diploma de Master (ciclul II)*. This diploma grants access to the labour market or to a doctorate.

In terms of level, a 1 or 2-year *Diplomă de Master* (EHEA-QF 2nd cycle/[EQF level 7](#)) is comparable to a [HBO](#) or [WO](#) master's degree, depending on the specialisation and nature of the programme.

Cycle III

The third cycle of higher education is called *studii universitare de doctorat*.

- Duration: 3-4 years, 5 years as an exception.
 - Content: there are 2 programme types:
 1. Academic programmes with coursework and training (2-3 semesters) and writing/defending a thesis (3-4 semesters);
 2. Vocational programmes in the field of sport, music or the arts.
 - Admission: a *Diploma de Masterat* and sometimes also an entrance exam, or an 'old' *Diploma de Licență* obtained prior to the implementation of the 3-cycle Bologna process, possibly in combination with an entrance exam.
- Diploma: *Diploma de Doctor*, comparable to a PhD.

■ Assessment systems

Romanian higher education systems use a 10-point marking system, where 5 is the lowest satisfactory mark and 10 is the highest mark obtainable.

Romania uses the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). On average, 1 credit represents 27 hours of work. More information on ECTS is available in the [ECTS User's Guide](#) issued by the European Commission.

Information about the value of foreign grades can be found on [our website](#) (Dutch only).

■ Qualification frameworks

Since 2013, Romania has had the Romanian National Qualifications Framework (ROQF). In 2014, a report was submitted that proposed linking the framework to the European Qualification Framework (EQF), however this process is still underway. Like the EQF, the Romanian framework consists of 8 levels.

More information:

- [Romania - European inventory on NQF 2014](#).
- [Referencing the Romanian National Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework \(December 2016\)](#).

■ Accreditation and quality assurance

Various national umbrella organisations are responsible for accreditation and quality assurance.

ARACIS

The 'Romanian agency for quality assurance in higher education' (*Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior*, ARACIS) is responsible

for quality assurance and accreditation. ARACIS is a member of the ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education). [ARACIS](#) draws up standards and procedures, issues reports and conducts inspections.

Accreditation process

Accreditations take place at institutional and faculty level, and are valid for 5 years. New faculties are eligible for provisional accreditation that ARACIS evaluates annually.

If a report shows that a faculty is not performing adequately, the Ministry of National Education will issue a warning and the shortcoming must be rectified within 1 year. After 2 years of inadequate performance, the ministry can close the faculty.

The [website of the Romanian Ministry of Education](#) has overviews with recognised higher education institutions.

■ **Bologna process**

Romania signed the Bologna Declaration in 1999. The *Lege nr. 288* law has been in force since 2004, under which the Romanian higher education system conforms to the Bologna process. The 3-cycle structure (*Studii universitare de licență*, *Studii universitare de masterat* and *Studii universitare de doctorat*) was introduced in the 2005-2006 academic year.

More information can be found on the [website of the European Higher Education Area \(EHEA\)](#).

■ **International treaties**

Romania signed the Lisbon Convention in 1997, and ratified it in 1999. Romania has bilateral mutual recognition agreements in the field of education with many countries, including France, Cyprus, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

■ **Diploma Supplement**

In 2005-2006, all higher education institutions in Romania became obliged to issue a (free) diploma supplement in both Romanian and a common foreign language. Diploma supplements were first issued by some institutions in 2000.

More information about the Diploma Supplement (DS) can be found on the [website of the European Commission](#).

■ Composition of file

A Romanian student file will contain:

- a diploma;
- an overview of final exams;
- a diploma supplement (an overview of subjects taken, hours and marks);
- a certified translation of the diploma and the list of marks (in Dutch, English, German or French).

A *Diplomă de Bacalaureat* consists of 1 page with:

- the diploma (front side);
- exam results (rear side).

Names on diplomas

Diplomas usually state the student's surname first, followed by their given name(s), separated by the initials of the student's father. These initials do not appear on passports.

Verification

Bacalaureat diplomas can be verified on the [website of the Ministry of Education](#) (only in Romanian). Diplomas are available from 2004, and searching is possible by school year, date of issue and province.

■ Overview higher education institutions

The [website of the Ministry of Education](#) offers (in several languages) an overview of all Romanian higher education institutions:

- a [list](#) of public institutions;
- a [list](#) of military institutions;
- a [list](#) of accredited private institutions;
- a [list](#) of private institutions with a provisional accreditation.

■ Useful links

- [Centrul National de Recunoaştere şi Echivalare a Diplomelor](#) (CNRED), the Romanian ENIC/NARIC.
- The [Ministry of National Education](#) (in various languages) including an [overview](#) of recognised higher education institutions.
- [Website of the 'Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education'](#) (*Agenţia Română de Asigurare a Calităţii în Învăţământul Superior*, ARACIS).
- The [Bacalaureat website](#) of the Ministry of Education with results from 2004 (only in Romanian).