

# ICAS HANDBOOK

## VOLUME I

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

ROMANIA

RUSSIAN FEDERATION



Prepared by ICAS International Credential Assessment Service of Canada Inc.  
with Series Special Consultant R. O. Ormsby, B.A., M.Ed.

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**ROMANIA**



# Introduction

## Historical Background

Romania has been subject to exterior influences that have affected its education system. The strongest influence on present day Romanian education remains the former Soviet type of education with its emphasis on standardization and specialisation of programs and institutions.

The system of education has remained in flux in Romania since 1989. The OECD reports that the years 1990-92 were a period of radical change and that a readjustment period began in 1992. In September 1995, a new education law was enacted and this was modified in 1997. In 1998, a National Assessment Examination Service was created. Its purpose is to monitor national education quality, to provide tests and other assessment tools to measure student achievement and to administer the two national examinations.

Currently, changes are taking place to westernize the system with increased emphasis on flexibility of curricula which will facilitate student mobility. Structural changes are taking place, new programs are being created and a credit transfer system is being introduced. Newly created private institutions are increasing in number and established institutions at the postsecondary level are being renamed and restructured.

## Compulsory Period of Education

The period of compulsory schooling has varied over the years; for example, prior to 1989, compulsory education lasted for ten years, but since 1990 has been reduced to eight years. General compulsory education has usually consisted of eight forms for those between ages seven and fourteen and will be increased by one year. The exact date by which those with nine years of compulsory education will emerge from the new system is inconsistent. Some indicate 1998/99 and others 2003/04. Compulsory education is concluded with an *examen de capacitate*. Under the new national curriculum, compulsory education will consist of nine years divided into three cycles:

"Fundamental Acquisition Cycle: pre-school year and forms I and II

"Development Cycle: forms III-VI

"Observation and Orientation Cycle: forms VII - IX.

## School Year

In Forms I to VII, the school year lasts thirty-four to thirty-six weeks, depending on the grade. School starts in September and ends in June. There are three terms, each followed by a vacation. At the secondary level, the school year is thirty-six weeks in Forms IX to XI and is two to four weeks shorter in Forms XII and XIII. At the university level, the school year is September/October to June/July and is divided into two semesters. The norm at most higher education institutions is a fourteen week semester. These parameters may vary, depending on the program and when it was taken.

## **Language of Instruction**

While there is instruction available for linguistic minorities (such as Hungarian and German) at all levels, the language of instruction is generally Romanian.

## **Postsecondary Institutions**

Given on-going changes in the education law of Romania, it is important to distinguish between the various types of institutions at the tertiary level. Traditionally, a recognized institution in Romania has been one that has been granted state approval from the Ministry of Education. In December 1993, the Romanian Parliament passed the Law on the Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions and Recognition of Diplomas. As a result, the National Council of Academic Evaluation and Accreditation (CNEAA) was established. The role of this Council - an academic body independent of the Ministry of Education and the government - is to evaluate and accredit both state and private institutions and programs at the higher education level.

Private institutions at the higher education level that have attained accredited status with the National Council of Academic Evaluation and Accreditation may issue diplomas that carry the same validity as those issued by accredited state institutions. However, those private institutions at the tertiary level without approval from the National Council of Academic Evaluation and Accreditation may issue only higher education certificates to their graduates.

Credentials that have been issued by private universities and other institutions of higher education that are not clearly validated or accredited by the Ministry of Education should be assessed with caution. Where doubt exists, the appropriate body in Romania should be contacted for further information.

## **Credit System**

Until recently, there has been no system of credits that would correspond to a North American system of credit for course work/classroom/lab hours. However, many institutions are adopting the European Credit Transfer System, mainly to facilitate portability of educational credentials. It is possible to convert hours of study indicated on the *Foaie Matricola* (issued by the institution attended) to a semester credit equivalent.

## **Grading Practices**

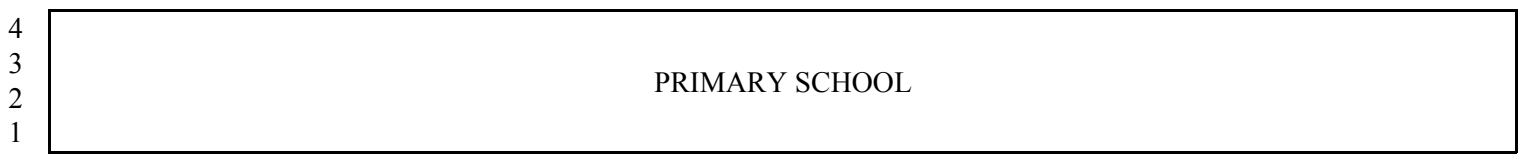
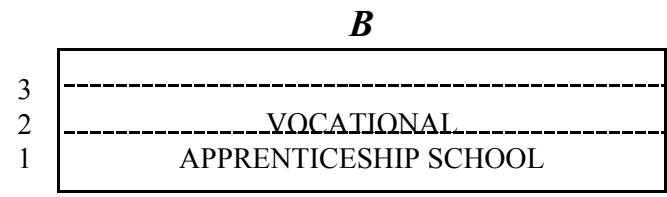
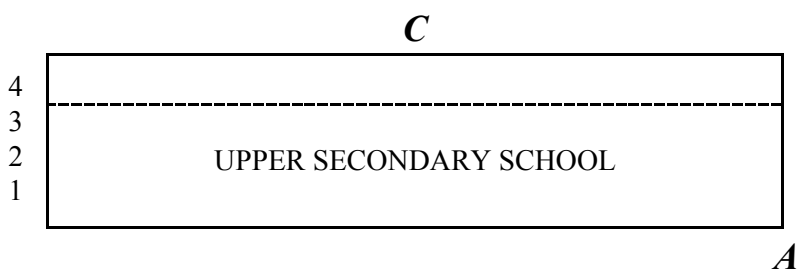
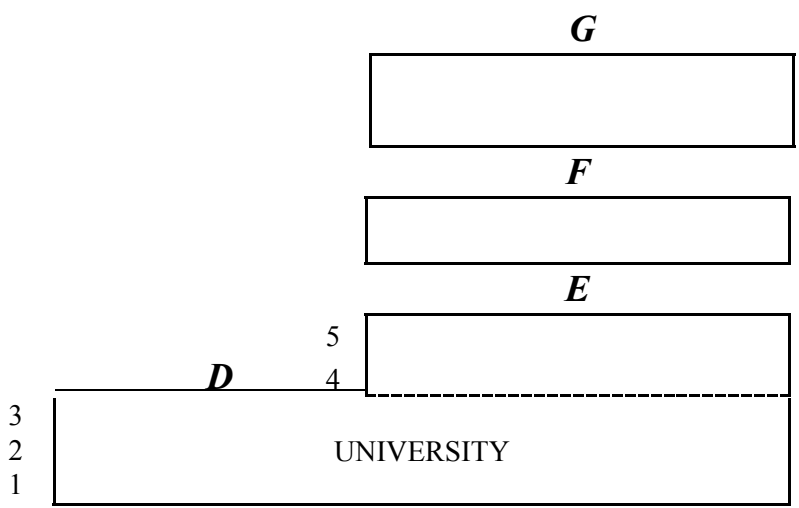
The entire education system of Romania has traditionally followed a ten-point grading system when assessing student performance and achievement. The grade of 5 (*cinci*) is the minimum passing grade per course. However, at the postsecondary level, at least 6 is required to pass the *examenul de diploma* (diploma examination). Individual grades are: 10 (*zece*); 9 (*noua*); 8 (*opt*); 7 (*sapte*); 6 (*sase*); 5 (*cinci*); 4 (*patru*).



## Documentation

It is necessary to insist on official documentation attesting to studies. Translations can be liberal and interpretive; for example, it is not uncommon to see a first degree of five years duration (*Diploma de Licenta* or *Diploma de Inginer*) translated as a Master's degree. It is essential, therefore, to compare originals with translations and to identify key terms for documents or titles representing a given level of achievement. When possible, a transcript (*Foai* *Matricola*) listing subjects and hours should be requested. Dates, serial numbers and hours of instruction on original diplomas and transcripts should be carefully cross checked with those on the translation. The *Notele*, which often accompanies the Diploma issued by the institution, does not normally indicate hours of instruction. It is therefore of limited use for evaluation purposes. For secondary school credentials, reports (*situatia scolara*) showing subjects completed with grades are available.

- A* - Certificate de capacitate
- B* - Certificate/Diploma de absolvire
- C* - Diploma de Bacalaureat
- D* - Diploma de absolvire
- E* - Diploma de Licenta / Diploma de Inginer
- F* - Diploma de Master/Magister
- G* - Diploma de Doctor



**STRUCTURE OF THE ROMANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Romania - Primary						
Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
None	Age 7 is standard	4 years	4 years	Lower secondary education	Classes are often referred to as forms I-IV.  In special circumstances a child may start at age 6.	Grade IV

Primary education in Romania is organized in day classes; these usually operate in the morning. Primary level education may be offered at schools with forms I-IV, I-VIII or forms I -XII. This depends on the school population in the vicinity. Pre-school education is optional and is offered for children between age three to seven; a pre-primary class will gradually become obligatory.

Romania - Lower Secondary						
Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
<i>Certificat de capacitate</i>	Completion of primary school	4 years	8 years	Upper secondary education and vocational stream	Can be offered at <i>Gymnaziu</i> , or <i>Liceu</i>  Students must pass the <i>examen de capacitate</i> (final national examination) to receive the <i>Certificat de capacitate</i> .	Grade VIII

When students complete lower secondary school, they can continue with general upper secondary education or they may decide to opt for one of the vocational types of upper secondary education.

### Romania - Upper Secondary

Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
<i>Diploma de Bacalaureat/ Maturitate</i> (Academic and specialised high school)	Completion of lower secondary and an entrance exam	4 years; specialised programs may be 5 years. Evening and extra-mural programs are 1 year longer.	12 or 13 years	May apply to sit exams for admission to higher education	To obtain the <i>Diploma de Bacalaureat</i> , students must pass the <i>Bacalaureat</i> exam.	Secondary school graduation
<i>Certificat de absolvire a liceului</i> (also referred to as a Diploma in some references)	As above	As above	12 or 13 years	May not apply to sit exams for admission to higher education  May enrol in specialized technical and vocational postsecondary institutions or seek employment.	The <i>Certificat de absolvire a liceului</i> may be awarded to those who complete grade twelve in a specialized secondary school but who do not take or pass the <i>Bacalaureat</i> exam.	Secondary school graduation
<i>Atestat Profesional</i>	As above	As above	12 or 13 years	May apply to sit exams for admission to higher education	The <i>Atestat</i> requires an additional exam in the specialty subject. The <i>Atestat</i> alone may be awarded to those who complete grade twelve in a specialised secondary school but who do not take or pass the <i>Bacalaureat</i> exam.	Secondary school technical training
<i>Certificat de Calificare</i> (Certificate of Qualification)	As above	4 years	12 years	Qualifies holder to work in a specific field	For students in 12-year day programs; requires an examination  Not available to those in day / evening 13-year programs	Secondary school technical training

Upper secondary education is varied and can be offered at a number of types of schools (e.g., academic or technical *Liceu*, vocational schools and apprenticeship schools). Duration of studies can be affected by form of study (day vs evening) and stream (academic vs specialised / technical). Apparently, the new law on education will introduce a three or four-year high school.

### Romania - Technical/Vocational

Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
<i>Diploma de absolvire a scolii profesionale</i> (secondary vocational school diploma)	Completion of lower secondary and an entrance exam	3 years (usually)	10 to 11 years	Two-year graduates may continue secondary education by passing an entrance exam to Grade X.  Three-year graduates may sit the entrance exam to Grade XI.	Programs can be full-time or part-time. Practical training is included in the curriculum and takes place in factories and on farms. Graduates of two and 3-year <i>scoli profesionale</i> are not eligible for admission to higher education.  According to OECD, 2, 3 or 4-year programs currently exist	Grade X or XI with technical training
<i>Certificat de absolvire a cursului de calificare</i> (Certificate of completion of a vocational qualification program)	Completion of Grade XII	1 year	13 years		Students who fail the <i>Bacalaureat</i> exam may increase their technical skill by completing an additional year. They take an exam created by the Ministries of Education, Labour and Social Safety.	Technical training at the senior secondary school level
<i>Diploma de absolvire a scolii complementare sau de ucenci</i> (Diploma from apprentice / complementary schools) -	Completion of lower secondary and practical test; entrance is open to those without the <i>Certificat de capacitate</i>	2 or 3 years or 1 - 3 year sandwich courses	9 or 11 years	Graduates may sit the entrance exams to a <i>scoli profesionale</i> .  If admitted, they can complete further studies to receive the <i>Diploma de absolvire a scolii profesionale</i> .	These programs are for those who graduate from lower secondary but who do not qualify for academic or vocational secondary schools. General education and practical training are included.  Duration depends on profile and occupation for which the training is offered.	Grade IX, X or XI with practical training

Romania - Postsecondary Non-university Education						
Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
<i>Diploma de absolvire a scolii postliceale de specialitate</i> (Diploma from specialised post-secondary school)	Graduation from an academic or technical <i>liceul</i> and the <i>Bacalaureat Diploma</i>	1 - 3 years	14 - 16 years	Qualifies the graduate as a mid-level technician	Non-university specialised technical programs  The older version of these institutions, established in the 1970s, appears to have disappeared as of the mid/late 1980s.  Some sources indicate that a <i>Certificat</i> is awarded.	College level study as appropriate
<i>Diploma de absolvire a scolii tehnice de maistri / Diploma de Maistru</i> (Master Technical school Diploma)	Graduation from a <i>lyceum</i> plus three years work experience	1.5 years (day) or 2 years (evening)	Varies		These programs are offered at technical schools for craftsmen and foremen. The diploma entitles the holder to become a supervisor or foreman. Study is predominantly part-time.  Some sources indicate that a <i>Certificat</i> is awarded.	As above

*Post-liceal* education is organized upon the request and with the financial support of companies and public institutions. Postsecondary public health-service schools are financed by the Ministry of Education.

### Romania - Higher Education - University-Undergraduate Level

Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
<i>Diploma de Subinginer</i> (Sub-engineer's Diploma) <i>Institutul de Subingineri</i>	<i>Bacalaureat</i> and entrance examination	3 years	15 years	Employment	The <i>institutuls de subingineri</i> evolved out of the former 3-year pedagogical institutes.  The <i>Subinginer</i> program appears to have been phased out iafter 1990. The former institutes have been granted university status.	College diploma
<i>Diploma de absolvire de colegiu</i> (post-1992)	As above	2 - 3 years	14 - 15 years	Employment and third year of long-cycle programs with approval of the university senate	This is short-cycle higher education.  Teacher training programs are generally two years in duration.  Those who fail examinations receive a <i>Certificat de studii universitare de scurta durata</i> .	College diploma or university study as appropriate
<i>Diploma de Licenta / Diploma de Stat</i> (Licentiate Diploma)	As above	4 years (day)  5 years (evening & extramural)  Some day programs may be 5 years	16 or 17 years	May apply to sit exams for admission to graduate education	To obtain the <i>Diploma de Licenta</i> students must pass the Licenciate exam. Those who fail receive a <i>certificat de studii</i> .  Translators often translate the <i>Diploma de Licenta</i> , which is an initial degree in the Romanian higher education system, as a Master's degree.	Bachelor's degree - 4 years; study toward master's for 5-year day program
<i>Diploma de Inginer</i> (Engineering Diploma)	As above	5 years	17 years		Programs in engineering or agriculture. These programs were offered at special polytechnic institutes.	Bachelor's degree in comparable field plus study toward master's



Romania - Higher Education-University-Undergraduate Level (continued)						
Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
<i>Diploma de Arhitect, Doctor-medic, Doctor-medic veterinar</i>	As above	Generally 6 years	18 years	Employment in profession		Appropriate first professional degree

Prior to the late 1960s, elementary/secondary education in Romania lasted eleven years. *Diploma de Licenta* programs in humanities and social sciences at the time were five years. When the years of pre-university education were increased to twelve years in 1968-69, *Licenta* programs were correspondingly reduced to four years. In 1989, some universities increased the duration of the *Licenta* to five years. Prior to 1990, there was also a fifth year of specialization available (*Anul V de specializare*) in the natural and exact sciences.

Romania - Higher Education-University-Graduate Level						
Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
<i>Diploma de Master / Magister</i> and title of Master	Undergraduate degree	1 - 2 years	Varies; usually at least 18 years cumulative	Employment Further study	This is a newer type of program established after 1990 - also referred to as <i>studii aprofundate</i> .  Requirements include a dissertation	Master's degree in related area
<i>Diploma de Doctor</i> and title of Doctor (after 1990)	Undergraduate degree and entrance exam	Usually 4 - 6 years but varies - see notes below	Varies	Profession, e.g., university professor	Highest award in Romanian education system  Research papers and a final thesis are required; the latter must be defended publicly	Earned doctorate degree in related field
<i>Diploma de studii aprofundate de specializare</i>	Undergraduate degree and entrance exam	1 year minimum	Varies	Access to profession	New type of qualification  Must pass <i>dizertatia</i> ; diploma mentions specialisation obtained	Master's degree
<i>Diploma de studii academice postuniversitare</i>	As above	2 - 3 years at post-graduate institutions	Varies	Access to further education and the labour market	Content and level of program requirements depend on each institution.  Diploma mentions specialisation	Post-bachelor's study
Upgrading courses	Undergraduate degree	Maximum of 2 semesters			The exact duration is determined by university senates, by field.	Varies

Higher education comprises two categories of institution: 1) Public/State higher education institutions; 2) Private higher education institutions.

Private higher education institutions have increased considerably since 1990. Though not state-funded, they are subject to regulation when not accredited by CNEAA. Their programs culminate in a certificate or attestation, neither of which is considered equivalent to a traditional degree in Romania, although both are recognized in the labour market.

University higher education is organized into three levels: 1) short-cycle programs (*scurta durata*); 2) long-cycle programs (*lunga durata*); 3) postgraduate programs (*postuniversitar*). This latter category is diversified and offers master's degrees, doctorate degrees and several other types of graduate-level education (postgraduate academic studies; specialisation studies; upgrading courses).

Several types of programs were established at the postgraduate level after the educational reforms of the 1990s. These newer types of programs will continue to be reviewed. The PIER report of 2000 cautions that postuniversity/postgraduate studies and qualifications of Romania “pose the greatest authentication and interpretation challenges for admission officers and credential evaluators in other countries”.

The doctorate degree under the current system of education is not to be confused with the Doctorate that existed under the education system prior to 1990. The former Doctorate is listed in major reference materials as requiring 3 - 5 years of study after the initial degree (*Examen de Stat*). The period of study cited in publications required for the new Doctorate appears to vary according to institutions and previous level of education (e.g., “2-4 years by thesis following master”; “a further 6 years”; “a further 3-5 years”). Those with a *Diploma de Licenta* who are in a doctoral program and whose *Diploma de Licenta* was in a different field from that of the doctoral studies, may complete additional training programs. Those who hold a *Diploma de studii academice postuniversitare* in the same field or specialization may be exempted from this additional training.

### Romania - Teacher Education

Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
<i>Educator / educatoare</i> (pre-school teacher)	Lower secondary	Standard is 5 years; in rare cases, can be 4 years; older programs, 6 years	Generally 13 years	Employment Higher education	Appears that, as of 1998, training for pre-school and primary level is available only at higher education institutions	Secondary school graduation
<i>Diploma de Bacalaureat Profilul invatator</i>	Lower secondary	Standard is 5 years; in rare cases, can be 4 years	Generally 13 years	Employment Higher education	Graduates receive the title of <i>Invatator</i> (primary school teacher).	Secondary school graduation
<i>Diploma de absolvire</i> (also receive title of <i>institutor</i> )	<i>Bacalaureat</i> from pedagogical lyceum (13 years)	2 years	Generally 15 years	Employment Higher education	This type of training is considered to be at the higher education level.	College diploma
<i>Diploma de absolvire</i> (also receive title of <i>institutor</i> )	<i>Bacalaureat</i> from non-pedagogical lyceum (12 or 13 years)	3 years	15 - 16 years	Employment Higher education	This type of training is considered to be at the higher education level.	College diploma
<i>Diploma de Licenta / Inginer</i> (also receive title of <i>Profesor</i> for secondary level teaching)	<i>Bacalaureat</i> and entrance exam	4 or 5 years (depending on subject area)	Varies according to previous education and study period	Graduate level education Employment	Offered at higher education institutions  In order to teach, graduates must complete pedagogical seminar courses in addition to academic courses in a degree program.	Bachelor's degree with teacher education; study towards master's for 5-year programs

Romania - Teacher Education (continued)						
Name of Credential	Admission	Length of Study	Total Years	Access to:	Notes	Comparable Level
Diploma from 2-year <i>Institute pedagogice de invatator</i>	<i>Bacalaureat</i>	2 years	14 years	Employment in pre-school and forms I-IV	Training for pre-school and forms I - IV; program no longer available  Program was offered at the <i>Institut pedagogic de invatatore</i> .	College diploma
Diploma from 3-year teacher-training institutes - <i>institute pedagogice de 3 ani</i>	Secondary school completion (12 years)	3 years	15 years	Employment in forms V-VIII	Specialised subject-matter training for forms V - VIII; program no longer available  These former 3-year pedagogical institutes were classified at the higher learning level. They were subsequently converted to <i>subinginer</i> institutes and then converted to universities.	College diploma

Secondary level teachers in Romania are subject specialist teachers in one or two areas and must have completed long-cycle higher education. They receive little theoretical or practical teacher education preparation within the degree program. Primary school teachers receive a greater proportion of study devoted to pedagogical preparation. At the primary level, individual subjects such as music, religion, foreign languages and physical and health education are taught by specialist teachers (*profesori*) who will have completed at least short-cycle higher education. Two or three-year programs at university colleges (*colegiul universitar*) also train pre-school and primary level teachers to teach a specific subject area (e.g. music, a foreign language etc.). Graduates of these programs are then qualified to teach at the lower secondary level.

Currently, teacher training for pre-school and primary teachers is available only at the higher education level. In 1998, reforms made it possible for pre-school and primary school teachers to be trained at university colleges rather than at pedagogical secondary schools and in 1999, forty-three new pedagogical university colleges were founded.

Teachers in secondary schools and *postliceal* schools must have a degree from a higher education institution. Foremen-instructors normally have a postsecondary certificate in the teaching area and three years of job experience.

A three-tier system of upgrading and tenure exists for teachers in Romania. Teachers must pass the *definitivat* examination after the first three years of training. After another five years, teachers may apply for the *Gradul 2* qualification. Courses and examinations are involved. After an additional five years, teachers may be awarded the *Gradul 1* qualification. This requires additional inspection and study.

## GLOSSARY OF USEFUL ENGLISH-ROMANIAN TERMS

***Adeverinta*** - Certificate

***Certificat de absolvire*** - Certificate of graduation or Certificate of completion

***Certificat de studii universitare de lunga durata*** - A leaving certificate awarded to students who completed their studies as part of a program in higher education but who failed the *examen de licenta*

***Colegiu universitar*** - A university college which offers three-year programs leading to a Diploma. The college may be part of a university or may be autonomous.

***Diploma de absolvire a unui colegui*** - Diploma that certifies that the student completed studies at a college and passed the *examen de absolvire a colegiului*

***Diploma de Bacalaureat*** - Diploma that certifies that the holder has completed upper secondary education and has passed the required *examen de bacalaureat*

***Diploma de Licenta*** - First university degree (four to six years of study)

***Diploma de Doctor*** - Highest academic degree awarded in Romania. It represents several years of study beyond the *Diploma de Licenta* and independent research

***Diploma de Inginer*** - First university degree in a scientific field awarded by specialized technical institutes and polytechnical institutes (five-year programs)

***Educator*** - Pre-school teacher who was trained at the upper secondary level

***Examen de Licenta*** - Final examination taken at the end of long-type higher education. Three general examinations and the defense of a diploma paper are required

***Foaie Matricola*** - Transcript providing details of studies completed within a program of studies. The information is organized in columns showing type of course (lecture vs seminar), hours of class/lab study, and grades obtained

***Gimnaziu*** - Lower secondary school

***Institutor*** - Primary or pre-school level teacher who was trained at a university college (two or three-year program)

***Invatamant superior*** - Higher education offered in universities, institutes, academies, and university colleges

***Invatator*** - Primary level teacher who was trained at the upper secondary level

***Liceu*** - Upper secondary school

***Maistru*** - Qualification / title of Master Craftsman or Foreman

***Master*** - Master's degree, awarded after the Licenta degree

***Notele*** - Mark sheet listing examinations taken and marks awarded

***Practica*** - Practice (*productiva* = work related; *pedagogica* = teaching practice)

***Scoala profesionala*** - Vocational school

***Scoala postliceala*** - A postsecondary school offering vocational training

***Situatia scolara*** - Grade report

***Studii aprofundate*** - Postgraduate academic studies consisting of four types of programs

***Subinginer*** - a lower level engineering qualification obtained in a three-year program at a polytechnical institute

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