



ROMANIA

WISEs FRAMEWORKS

NATIONAL CONTEXT

The new social-economic enterprises appeared in Romania after 1989, predominantly in the shape of associations and NGOs. Many WISEs continue their work as NGOs to fill in for the lacking public social services and to advocate for a more comprehensive national policy regarding the integration and acceptance of vulnerable people on the labour market.

TYPOLOGY OF WISEs: LEGAL STATUSES, LEGAL FORMS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

In 2015, Romania adopted the Law on Social Economy (Law 219/2015), thanks to which work integration enterprises can be certified and declared as institutionalised WISEs (Typology 1). The law also recognises social enterprises. For each category, organisations need to meet a set of predefined criteria in order to receive a certificate from the public authorities that states the type of enterprises they represent. The law and its framework HG 585/2016 stipulate more obligations than benefits. So far only 45 WISEs have this certification, many *de facto* WISEs did not apply for the official status. The legislation in place is mostly interesting for organizations supporting people with disabilities (so called protective units).

NATIONAL RECOGNITION OF WISEs (Public recognition of the WISEs sector)

Social enterprises and work insertion social enterprises (WISE) are the only two types of organisations to be formally recognised by the 2015 law with public obligations and benefits.

Many public social services institutions rely on the WISE providers for work integration, education, and professionalization of vulnerable groups. WISEs have local NGOs and the private sector as partners.

EXISTING NETWORKS OF WISEs (Networks and mutual support of WISEs)

RISE Romania (Romanian network of social enterprises) is the main network that gathers the work integration enterprises in Romania.

FUNDING SOURCES

- Corporate tax exemption (on profits), at national level, for WISEs Typology 2 (Authorised Protected Unit).
- Subsidy for the recruitment of disadvantaged workers, at national level, for WISEs Typology 1 and 2 (economic entities that hire people with disabilities)
- Tax reduction granted to private and/or institutional donors for WISEs in Typology 2 (Private companies buying goods and services from WISEs that are certified as Authorised Protected Units).

Only around 5% of the national social enterprises received help from public authorities as of 2020. Most of WISEs rely on their own economic activities, the result is that most WISEs entities rely on private sponsorships to be sustainable. Those sponsorship add up to more than 50% of WISE's total income.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF ADULT LEARNING

NATIONAL STRATEGIES OR LEGISLATION

Romania developed a policies to encourage adult learning opportunities since 2007. The policies fall under the Law 76 from 2002 and fail to address exactly disadvantaged workers. Indeed, they do not provide an effective response to the needs on the market and lack an adapted approach to the comprehensive needs of the unemployed, in particular updating skills and providing integrated services.

OBJECTIVES / TARGET GROUPS

Those projects are supporting the development of work skills for the 21st century. The strategies also follow the inclusion of marginalised groups in the modern job market by anticipating school dropout and potential vulnerabilities they might face.

Aim to include mainly vulnerable adults in an education process.

SUPPORT MEASURES

Programmes that are funded by the European Social Funds – ESF (now ESF +).

- POC DRU (Programul Operațional Sectorial Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane) 2007-2013,
- POCU (Programul Operational Capital Uman) in the 2014-2020
- POEO (Programului Operațional Educație și Ocupare), which is currently open for public debates.

There are also two other activities to include vulnerable adults in an education process: training for adults in mostly hand-made crafts and recovery education plan for those without a minimum education level. Adult learning public programme, 'The Second Chance', open for every adult that did not manage to graduate primary or middle school classes.

Skill training classes offered by the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) that offers at the end a certificate in different professions: plumber, barman, waitressing, electrician, chef etc.

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- WISEs have failed to expand and be integrated in the social and employment services framework and public support measures.
- Lack of a public national policy supporting a framework for WISEs in Romania.
- WISEs are advocating for a better legislation that acknowledges their status as WISEs and recognises their impact. The first step being subsidies and tax reductions.