



Human Rights and Democracy in Action

Pilot Projects on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education

**Addressing Violence in Schools
through Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education**

Policies on combating school violence in Romania

(Draft report)

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1. Introduction

School violence has become a public fact in Romania in the last 10-15 years, especially after being formally signed the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (1995). From that moment is dated the first concerns of public policy for having inside schools a safe space for child development. In recent years public opinion and civil society have become increasingly concerned about the violence occurring in schools. This report aims to present the main moments in the evolution of these concerns.

2. General Institutional Framework

a. Legal Framework

We have selected and presented in chronological order those normative acts which in the last 20 years have added elements to "school violence" regulation, control and limitation, in all forms of expression.

The first concerns regarding regulation: 1995 - 2002

Government Order No. 972/ December 4, 1995 on the approval of the National Plan of Action in Favour of the Child – stipules that the Ordinance that transposes the U.N. recommendations regarding the child's rights into a national action plan.

Law no. 128 / July 12, 1997 on the status of teaching staff stipulates (Title I, art. 4 para. 4) that one cannot hold teaching or leadership positions in education if one performs activities which are incompatible with the dignity of being a teacher, such as: commercial activities inside the school unit or in the adjacent area; trade with obscene or pornographic materials; engaging in public activities that involve body exhibition in an obscene manner (conform Title I, art. 4 para. 4 b and c).



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Chapter II of Title VI notes that *teachers teaching, auxiliary staff and the management, guidance and control position liable to disciplinary action for breaching their duties according to the individual employment contract and for breach rules of conduct that harms the interest of education and prestige of the institution* (under art. 115).

The same text will be repeated in subsequent versions of the Regulation, re-approved in other Orders of the Ministry of Education.

Law no. 678/November 21, 2001 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings - Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport achieved, individually or in partnership with other relevant Ministries and / or non-governmental organizations active in the field, educational programs to prevent trafficking in persons as follows *accomplish educational activities for secondary and higher education students, provide informing and counselling activities for parents and students on the consequences of trafficking in persons and disseminate information on children's rights and trafficking in humans* (chapter II, art. 8).

The Order of the Minister of Interior and Minister of Education and Research on cooperation in education and anti-crime training of students (the Order of the Ministry of Interior No. 183/November 29, 2001 and the Order of the Ministry of Education and Research No. 3032/January 14, 2002). This Order includes regulations on school violence and refers to prevention of violence, students' victimization, juvenile delinquency and crime by means of cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Interior. In addition to the above-mentioned central ministries, school and police inspectorates are also empowered as responsible institutions. The law establishes the main prevention activities and their scope, related actions, the topics suggested, ways of accomplishment and the participants involved. The common Order¹ recognizes that in schools (students) there may be

¹ The Order of the Minister of Interior and Minister of Education and Research regarding cooperation in education and training students in anti-crime



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victims of "physical aggression (hitting), sexual assaults, theft, and fraud" (Thematic prevention of students' victimization).

Law No. 48/2002 approving Government Ordinance No. 137/2000 regarding the prevention and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination (published in the Official Bulletin No. 69/ January 31, 2002) - normative act to prevent and combat discrimination.

*Law no. 218/April 23 2002*** (Republished), on the organization and functioning of the Romanian Police - This law stipulates the general duties of the police. Thus The Romanian Police ... is the institution specialized in protecting the individuals' fundamental rights and freedoms, private and public property, preventing and detecting crimes, public order and safety compliance, under the law (article 1). At the local level, the public order territorial authority has the following duties: to contribute to the development of the Plan of activities and fixing the objectives and minimum performance indicators, aiming at protecting the community interests and ensuring public safety (Under article 18, letter a).*

Regulations adopted in 2004 (right before Romania's accession to the European Union)

The adoption of the law on child protection was an important element for the regulation of children's rights in Romania; it also had an impact on violence phenomena in schools.

Law 272/2004 on the protection of children's rights² calls for respectful treatment of the child ... prohibits any corporal punishment in the process of education (Art. 89, paragraph 1).

Governmental Order No. 726/May 14, 2004 on the approval of the Priority Actions Plan in the field of child protection against abuse, neglect and exploitation between 2004 and 2005 - The Ordinance

² The law was mainly about defining the child's civil rights, with emphasis on elements regarding adoption, parents' rights. The elements regarding school were very briefly mentioned.



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establishes a priority action plan for child protection, teacher training, building institutional partnerships and raising public awareness. The issues regarding child protection against forms of violence can be found in the following objectives of the suggested plan and their related actions: Initial and continuous training in child protection against abuse, neglect and exploitation, by *introducing in legislation mandatory initial and continuous training in child protection for the professionals who interact with the child* (Objective II); Raising public awareness on child abuse, neglect and exploitation by *conducting media campaigns to raise public awareness on the issue through projects or national programmes in progress, in the responsibility of some ministries* (e.g. health education in schools, democratic citizenship education, health education, prevention and combating domestic violence) (Objective IV).

Gov. Order 1295/ August 13, 2004 on the approval of the National Action Plan for prevention and combating of children trafficking - as part of this plan, many objectives are mentioned, such as: Informing and raising awareness on the phenomenon of child trafficking, the risks associated and the legal provisions; Developing services regarding assistance and support of families in difficulty, especially in high risk areas, concerning children trafficking; Strengthening the national legislation; Training the central and local structures staff with responsibilities in this field.

Gov. Order no. 1504/September 16, 2004 on the approval of the National Plan of Action to prevent and combat child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children for commercial purposes - these legislative act aim at the prevention and combat of children sexual abuse and their sexual exploitation for commercial purposes, the collaboration of different participants at local and national level and international level of action to be implemented etc.

Law no. 371/ September 20, 2004 on the establishment, organization and functioning of community police. According to this law, supervising schools is among the responsibilities of the community police (chapter III, art. 7, paragraph e). The *community or proximity police officer's* provide assistance and protection, give safety advice, mediate conflicts, be the liaison between police and



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population and advise people vulnerable to victimization. The proximity policeman has an important role in preventing violence, intervenes with bodies, at the request of citizens to settle conflict situations, capture of perpetrators, solving social cases notified to establish the facts and resolution (chap. III, art. 7, paragraph h).

Gov. Order No. 1769 /October 21, 2004 on the approval of the National Action Plan for the elimination of child labour - the matters covered by this ruling concern the transposition of the international regulations on the elimination of the child labour into a national action plan. Among the objectives: institutional capacity of the structures with attributions in preventing and combating child labor, developing action programs, information, awareness and mobilizing society to prevent and combat child labor, the development of national policies etc.

Gov. Order No. 1251/2005 on measures to improve the activity of learning, training, compensation, rehabilitation and special protection of children / pupils with special educational needs in the system of special education and integrated special - inclusive education represents the "permanent improvement to schools, aimed at exploiting existing resources, especially human resources to support participation in the educational process of all people in a community. " The same legislation defines inclusion as "the process of preparation of schools to include in the educational community members, regardless of the characteristics, disadvantages or their difficulties." In this respect, inclusive school is "in which the school provides education for all children and is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes. Children in these schools enjoy all the rights and social and educational services in accordance with the principle of 'resource follows the child' '.

Order 1540 / 19.07.2007 on banning school segregation of Roma children and approving the Methodology for preventing and eliminating school segregation of Roma children - aims to prevent, prohibit and eliminate segregation, seen as a serious form of discrimination, involving negative consequences equal access of children to quality education. In order to achieve these objectives, it is



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prohibited from the 2007-2008 school year, training classes I and V was segregated, with mostly or only Roma students (according to Art. 1 paragraphs 1 and 2).

Regulations readopted recently

Order approving the Regulation of organization and functioning of schools (Annex to the Order of the Ministry of National Education. 5 115/2014 approving the Regulation for organizing and functioning of pre-university institutions) - This document stipulates the rights and obligations of teachers, students and parents. In case of non-compliance that we have in the school unit, they may be disciplined. It also established powers on preventing and combating violence in schools and discrimination and promoting interculturalism (chapter III, Section 1 and 2).

b. Specific measures and activities undertaken by governmental bodies

- **The actions of the Ministry of Education**

*Ministry National Strategy: Strategy on reducing the phenomenon of violence in school units (The Order of the Minister of Education, Research and Youth No. 1409/2007)*³.

How is "school violence" defined?

The concepts of violence used throughout a research⁴ study in relation to violence behavior were: verbal and psychology violence (name calling, threats, harassment etc.); physical violence; behavior

³ In 2004-2007 it was developed as well as other studies and analysis of school violence. Conclusions of all these researches reveal the breadth and diversity of expressions of violence in schools and proposed recommendations and courses of action to prevent the phenomenon. On this basis, the Ministry of Education and Research has developed the strategy on curbing violence in school units (OMECT no. 1409/2007).

⁴ Jigău, M. (coord.). *Violența în școală*. ISE, MEC și UNICEF, București: Ed. ALPHA MDN, 2006, p. 6
http://www.unicef.org/romania/ro/Violenta_in_scoala.pdf



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that is fall into a law category (rape, consume of drugs, theft etc.); offense made to the teachers status/authority; other types of deviant violence in relation to school.

The definition of "school violence" is done by enumerating some specific behaviours – verbal, physical, psychological violence, offence to the teacher. There are 5 relationships in which school violence can occur:

- student - student violence (verbal, physical)
- students -teachers violence (refusal to participate in certain school activities, verbal or non-verbal violence up to serious aggressive behaviour.)
- teachers - students violence - verbal and non-verbal aggression, student exclusion from classes or physical punishment.
- parental violence at school
- violence in the area around the school

It is recommended that schools organize debates in which students can freely express their opinions and address classroom management from a social and psychological perspective.

The strategy establishes principles and general guidelines on preventing and combating violence in schools, roles and functions of the educational institutions system framework. New institutional structures (National Council was established by the Ministry of Education and Research in order to prevent violence in schools, county commissions, committees in every school) and an operational plan of action.

The strategy is expected to pursue four action plans:

- Interventions at the individual level: early identification of potentially violent students and the causes behind violent or aggressive manifestations; individualized assistance programmes for the



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students involved in cases of violence (as perpetrators or as victims); active involvement of the potentially violent or aggressive students who acted violently in assistance programmes conducted by the school in partnership with other specialized institutions (Community Police, Authority for Child Protection and Adoption, local authorities, Church and other organizations specialized in care and education programmes for children and youngsters) etc. ;

- Relational interventions regarding:

- family (Informing parents about the services which the educational units can provide to prevent school violence and improve relations between parents and children (counselling, psychological support, mediation); involvement of specialized staff (school counsellors, psychologists) in such activities; support for families requesting assistance and guiding them towards specialized services, identification of resource parents who can participate to preventing or solving existing cases of violence, etc.;

- school (including on the agenda of school formal meetings (the Board of Directors, Teachers Council, Student Council, parent committees) topics related to school violence, which aim at raising awareness on the extent of the phenomenon and the analysis of violence forms, participants and the causes within that institution); develop coherent prevention and intervention strategies; turning the internal regulations, specific to each school, from a formal tool into a real prevention tool; setting up mediation structures (resource centres) at school level so as to help identify sources of conflict, the participants involved and ways of solving) etc.;

- Curricular intervention: (debates, during counselling and guidance, on situations of violence occurred at school or in its neighbourhood and encouraging students to express their opinions on these situations and possible solutions; enhancing relevant topics on the issue of violence, which are found in various school subjects curriculum (individual rights and duties, freedom, behaviour norm/rule, decision-making and its consequences, social skills, etc.) and others;



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- Community-level interventions: (Initiating community awareness programmes on school violence together with the responsible institutions; developing partnerships between the school and other local institutions - police, gendarmerie, local authorities, NGOs, etc. – aiming at students' safe arrival at destination and creating a psychological and physical safe neighbourhood for pupils;
- Social interventions: (Organizing social campaigns by means of various public communication channels; implementation of a national system to monitor violence phenomena in schools, inclusion of topics on school violence in the training programmes for teachers etc.

At educational units level there are Committees for preventing and combating violence in schools which should implement these interventions

(<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:hSWcwlOtlcIJ:www.edu.ro/index.php%3Fmodule%3Duploads%26func%3Ddownload%26fileId%3D6227+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=ro>).

- **Campaigns**

- Joint campaign against school violence carried out by UNICEF Romania together with the Ministry of Education with the message "*You are a hero in the school yard when verbal violence stops.*" (October 2015). The campaign aims to inform and raise awareness at national and local level on the forms and consequences of verbal violence in school. The campaign will take place between October 2015 and June 2016 and includes two video clips (one that illustrates verbal violence among peers and one between students and teachers), two radio spots, billboards and online campaign. The campaign encourages children to report to the adults any cases of violence (<http://www.unicef.ro/media/6604-2/>).



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- National wide Campaign / "Do not let violence to turn you into a criminal!", which was aimed at reducing the risk of high-school students getting involved in violent actions. About 40,000 young people between 15 and 17 years old were informed about the legal provisions governing minority and the legal consequences associated to committing crimes or other antisocial acts. The campaign was structured on two levels: one represented by the information-preventive activities (organization of thematic debates with students) and a creative one, consisting of youth involvement in an anti-violence essay contest (adevarul.ro/locale/calarasi/nu-lasa-violenta-transforme-intr-un-infractor-campania-adreseaza-unui-numar-20000-liceeni-1_50aee1f17c42d5a663a1728f/index.html).

- **Projects on the development of children's rights**

Program on the promotion of children's rights and we have rights (2006) - far Implemented by "Save the Children" at national level, aimed at preparing students and teachers in school education for the knowledge, support and promotion of children's rights. The project had a direct impact on the curriculum by introducing therein some optional courses on children's rights (<http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/?id2=00020000>).

My rights are your rights project (2006-2007) - This project was developed by the Centre Education 2000+ where the main objective was to initiate a campaign to implement the principle of non-discrimination in education (on ethnic, gender etc.) focusing on human and child rights. The project beneficiaries were students, teachers, parents, local authorities, representatives of civil society at the local level (<http://www.pr-ong.ro/ro/program/47.html>).

- **Guides developed**

Guide on Preventing and Combating Violence in Schools (2006) – the Institute of Education Sciences and the National Institute of Criminology, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and



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with financial support from UNICEF Romania conducted between January 2004 and April 2005 the project School Violence. This guide is the result of documentation and research on the phenomenon of school violence and is designed to assist headmasters and teachers who are interested in developing a culture of non-violence in their schools, based on a strategy to prevent violence sources and causes. Therefore the guide aims to provide headmasters and teachers with the following: brief information regarding the issue of school violence, suggestions for developing a strategy to prevent and combat violence at school level, adapted to the specific context in which it operates, tools to identify school violence sources and causes, suggestions for activities that can be developed within a strategy to prevent and combat violence, issues to be considered, controversial exercises and topics stimulating effective communication regarding school violence between all school participants (<http://www.ise.ro/prevenirea-si-combaterea-violentei-in-scoala-ghid-practic-pentru-directori-si-cadre-didactice-2>).

Good practice guide for positive education of parents, teachers and pupils; Stimulating the children's positive behaviour - Lessons Learned (2011) – the guide is the result of Save the Children Organization's initiative, who wanted to offer resources and effective ways of educating children to all those working with children and parents, (http://salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p000600010002_Stimularea%20comportamentelor%20pozitive%2014%20oct.pdf).

3. Civil society activism

Romanian the **Ombudsman** (Deputies People's Advocate) is specialized in different areas of activity, such as: human rights, equality of chances between men and women, religious cults and national minorities; rights of the child, family, young people, pensioners, persons with disabilities; army, justice, police, penitentiaries; area of property, labour, social protection, taxes and duties; prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.



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The actions of the Save the Children organization (<http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/>)

Save the Children (2007-2013) - The Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development – aimed in developing structures and mechanisms for information, training, monitoring and communication in the field of prevention and fight against violence in schools at the local, regional and national level. Thus, 4.000 children and 204 volunteers were involved in interactive activities, the general topic of which was violence prevention in 50 schools from different parts of the country (Bucharest, Argeş, Timiş, Mureş, Dolj, Neamţ, Iaşi, Suceava). (http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p00060005_Raport%20Anual%20SC%202010%20-%20engl%20ptr%20BT.PDF).

Counselling centres, "Youth Against Violence" prevention programme

Counselling centres, prevention programme "Youth against Violence". It was funded through the Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013, implemented in Bucharest and Timiş, Mureş, Iaşi, Neamţ, Dolj, Argeş, Suceava counties. 13,176 pupils from 187 schools benefited from various activities on combating violence in school: practical lessons specially designed for the educators (Pupil's Notebook), 200 interactive sessions aimed at promoting dialogue and non-violent behaviour, 35 forum theatre performances, theme camp at Poiana Pinului (Bacău), the distribution of the "Pupils' Pocket Guide", designed to help children understand what is behind the aggressive behaviours they manifest on a daily basis or see in others. 1,000 parents and 1,800 specialists in the field of education, health and social performance participated in information activities, with regard to the importance of adopting non-violent behaviours and children growth, care and positive education practices (http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p00060005_Raport%20Anual%20SC%202010%20-%20engl%20ptr%20BT.PDF).

Campaign against domestic violence: Save the Children provides for all those experiencing domestic violence, may they be parents or children, direct counselling services in five counselling



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centres for parents (opened in Bucharest, Iași, Timișoara, Târgu Mureș and Suceava) and the Centre for Emotional and Behavioural Education for Children in Bucharest. The www.parintibuni.ro site, an online information and advice platform, provides a team of psychologists prepared to offer positive advice on parenting and on how to overcome crisis without resorting to violence.

Listen to her/his soul campaign: Save the children (2012) completed an educational programme aimed at eliminating violence against children and promoting positive educational models. Thus, 27 kindergartens implemented complex intervention programmes with a view to preventing and eliminating aggressive behaviours, programmes where training and workshops were provided to educators, parents and children alike. 46 educators completed the training programme “GradiSmartStart” covering essential educational issues for preschool children (http://www.salvaticopiii.ro/upload/p00060005_Raport_anual_2012_EN%20FIN.pdf).

Since 2009, the Ministry of Education has launched a structural theme of youth violence, financed by the European Social Fund. The project called **Youth against Violence** aimed to implement support measures for schools, teacher resource centres and other institutional structures with responsibilities in the area to reduce the phenomenon of school violence.

The project was implemented by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation in collaboration with the Institute of Education Sciences, OSC Agency and "Save the Children" Organization. The project directly contributes to the accomplishment of the overall objective of the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development - SOP HRD and is part of the KAI 1.1 Access to education and quality initial training.

Specific objectives of the project

- Developing a performance system to monitor school violence and a common methodological framework for all counties;



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- Implement activities addressing school violence awareness among different categories of school participants and public opinion;
- Support the institutional development of structures responsible for national, county and local coordination of combating school violence;
- Creating a network of trainers with expertise in preventing and combating school violence at different levels of decision;
- Increasing the institutional capacity of county training centres to improve quality and vary school violence training; students' active involvement in activities regarding the prevention and combat of school violence, organized in school and extracurricular activities.

Target groups - students, management, monitoring, evaluation and control staff with school inspectorates, headmasters and members of school Board of Directors.

Project activities

- Create and implement a system to monitor the phenomena of school violence;
- Support for institutional development;
- Training in violence preventing and combating;
- Training students and volunteering;
- Communication activities.

Project results

- Improving a school violence monitoring system;
- institutional development support;
- Training in preventing and combating school violence;
- Training pupils involved in conflict management and communication / non-violent interaction programme.
- The issue of school violence is a constant interest in contemporary European policy, formally becoming a political issue. School violence, which has always been recognized as a reality at the school



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level, is widespread at different levels and its manifestations vary from one education system to another. The importance of school violence and the need to promote educational policies to reduce this phenomenon are widely accepted at the European level. The "Youth Against Violence" project aims at non-violent child education, so that youngsters do not follow the model of adults' violent behaviour, they do not understand and accept violence as being natural, they learn to manage their own conflicts and assimilate non-violent relationship methods, they develop and adopt a balanced behaviour with other people.

One of the supporting measures accomplished by this project was conducting a training programme for teachers. This course aimed at providing a new perspective on how to prevent and combat school violence, based on blended learning system (combining face to face meetings with online learning activities). The training programme has been accredited with 84 hours, and each teacher successfully completing it receives a certificate with 21 transferable professional credits (see <http://www.ise.ro/tineriimpotrivaviolentei> for further details).

Press review – The press review with many articles on violence can be found on the "Youth against Violence" project website <http://www.tineriimpotrivaviolentei.edumanager.ro/revista-presei.html>

The actions of Child Helpline organization (<http://www.telefonulcopilului.ro/>)

It conducts the "Stop Bullying" project in 2014. It promotes the "bullying" concept among students: disdain from one's friends or colleagues calling names, referring to one's physical appearance, family or medical problems.

The project consisted of carrying out bullying promotional activities in 20 schools (primary, middle schools and high-schools) in Bucharest. They also conducted a study at the end of the project (probably based on the questionnaires distributed during the meetings with the students).



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Project financed by OMV – Petrom S.A.

It is important to mention that the definition used and promoted among students refers only to verbal violence (bullying), not to the more serious forms such as physical violence (hitting, punching and kicking).

The actions of Accept Romania organization (<http://accept-romania.ro/>)

Defending and promoting the rights of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) in Romania, as human rights.

The project (started in September 2015) "Time for combating discrimination against LGBT in Romanian high-schools ", aims to identify the perceptions and attitudes of high-school young people towards the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender). The research also aims to describe the school environment in terms of personal safety of LGBT students in Romania.

The actions of the National Council of (high-school) Students⁵

- Qualitative Study (2015): Violence in school, family and community "through the eyes of children"
- Suggested Student Status:
- Required rights: No forms of protection or violence prevention are mentioned. No regulations regarding teachers' attitude towards students are required.
- Interdictions undertaken by students:

⁵ *** *Azi vorbim noi!* Ministerul Muncii, Familiei, Protecției Sociale și Persoanelor Vârstnice, Consiliul Elevilor și UNICEF, 2015, at <http://www.unicef.ro/wp-content/uploads/try1.pdf>.



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- to have attire, behaviours and attitudes which are offensive, blatant or provocative towards colleagues and / or the school staff;
- to offend and use aggressive language and behaviour towards colleagues and the school staff

4. Official statistics

A methodology on "Records of Violence" in schools at the level of educational units and territorial - administrative structures was elaborated in 2012. The guide was developed by specialists with the Institute for Education Sciences for a project financed from European structural funds. However it still lacks official recognition to ensure systematic, secure and coherent registration of the violence cases in schools.

Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education has provided statistical data on the phenomenon of violence in schools at certain times.

- According to The Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports there were 18,793 cases of school violence nationwide reported in the school year 2014-2015⁶; this number is decreasing if reported to the previous school year.
- 3397 of these cases are associated with verbal violence.
- 41% of the children were harassed and intimidated by peers at school.

International statistics referring to Romania and other countries participant in the project

Teenagers 11-15 years old having participated in bullying⁷

Romania: 59% (first rank)

⁶ Source: <http://www.agerpres.ro/politica/2015/10/09/cimpeanu-in-anul-scolar-2014-2015-au-fost-raportate-18-793-de-cazuri-de-violenta-in-scoli-14-57-00>

⁷ Source: (Global Study UNICEF) 2014: Social determinants of health and well-being among young people. HEALTH BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN (HBSC) STUDY: INTERNATIONAL REPORT FROM THE 2009/2010 SURVEY, at http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/163857/Social-determinants-of-health-and-well-being-among-young-people.pdf



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Greece	39
Poland	32
Hungary	28
Spain	21
.....	
Sweden	14 (last rank)

- **Child Helpline Study (2014):** 46% of children have been or still are bullying victims. 57.6% declare that it occurred in the classroom. The online or via SMS on mobile phones bullying victims accounted for 51.8 of the total (Source: <http://www.telefonulcopilului.ro/uploaded/rapoarte-anuale/2014/raport%20anual%202014.pdf>).

- **Save the Children** study (2014): 7% of the children say they are abused (beaten) in school by their teachers, physical violence having double values in rural areas compared to urban, 2.3 times higher among Roma children, 5 times higher among boys than girls. 86% of the children complain of being scolded by teachers when they are wrong, 33% are offended and labeled at school by teachers. 75% of schools have problems with violence.

Conclusion: the frequency of emotional and verbal abuse committed by teachers in the name of "educational method" is extremely high (Source: <http://www.ziare.com/scoala/elevi/elevii-sustin-ca-sunt-batuti-si-jigniti-de-profesori-la-scoala-studiu-1302930>).

- **TALIS survey** (2013): the data collected allow separate analysis regarding student's behavior and teacher contribution to the atmosphere of education units. Among the factors analyzed: personal safety (physical or verbal harassment or abuse the teachers or students); late to school, teacher absenteeism or students; criminal behavior (vandalism or possession or use of drugs and alcohol); and discrimination. A final indicator mentioned in the study relates to the atmosphere in schools, the quality of relationships between students and teachers. Thus, on average, 98% of the countries



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participating in the study reported good relations between teachers and pupils, with notable exceptions. In addition, most teachers (between 91% and 96%) reported positive relationships between teachers and pupils in school in which they operate. There is a change only where students need additional aid. Brazil (77%), Korea (77%), Mexico (72%) and Sweden (74%), thus, less than eight in ten teachers reported that students receive support if they need extra help (Source: http://www.rocnee.eu/Files/raport_talis_2012.pdf).

- **Aggression in school**, conducted by Lawrence Șoitu and Cornel Havârneanu (2001): the results show that students have misconduct against teachers. The research aimed to identify on the one hand, the forms of manifestation of aggression students against teachers, their severity, and on the other hand, to identify the causes of aggressiveness manifested through a variety of verbal, emotional or physical behaviors. The sample used in this study was 97 teachers aged 24 and 60 years from three high schools in Iasi and Botosani. In this regard, the teachers described the following aggressive behavior manifested by students: looks and gestures that are threatening, physical aggressive reactions, insults and outrage, absenteeism, refusal to fulfill loads, noise and indiscipline. In general, teachers explain the behaviors of their students as due to the following factors: low level of culture, self-dissatisfaction, imitate aggressive behavior from colleagues bigger school program loaded lack of motivation for school work, media influences and alcohol and drugs.

- **The influence of socialization agents (family, school, the reference group) on predelincente behaviors of students**, conducted by Adrian Ibis (2001): it studied two main issues, namely: "the factors that influence juvenile deviant behavior "and" the causes of non-school attendance "carried out at the level of Bucharest. In the juvenile deviant behavior the sample was of 462 teachers from educational institutions and secondary education sectors of the capital, and in the case of frequency on non-school attendance, a study was conducted on the sample of 272 teachers and a sample of 814 students from secondary schools and high schools of Bucharest. In the first case the analysis shows the following aspects of research: overwhelming most teachers (92%) are totally dissatisfied with the



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behavior of young people both in school and in family and society, while only 7% are satisfied with this aspect. Almost half of teachers surveyed believe that schools can contribute in a large degree to decrease deviant manifestations of young people, 14% considers that the school can contribute to a very large extent and 36% believe that school can contribute in a small amount to tackle this phenomenon.

5. Reflective commentary

The legislation develops intense after 1995. However, Romanian legislation appears to remain fairly general, even vague in some aspects.

- There is no obvious continuity in the policies applied. Each government / administration seems to come across an empty ground and must start policy development from the beginning. Six years after the adoption of the National Strategy in 2013, the Romanian Prime Minister V. Ponta was saying during a visit to a school that the government that wants to find new solutions to a problem that did not exist until recently: "the safety of students and teachers ", "... together with the police and local gendarmerie a protection system to ensure safety in schools"⁸.

- **Violence seems to come from somewhere outside the school.** Practical measures focused on assuring security in schools. The danger is considered to come from outside. Stopping violence that comes from outside (security measures in schools) is very important. The first goal of the National Strategy 2007 refers to the Prevention and combat of physical, verbal or other aggressions that may occur to students, teachers and other school staff, caused by **people from outside the school environment**. Rules regarding strangers having access inside the school yard and inside the educational unit should be included in the school internal regulation (including distinguishing marks for school students).

⁸ Sabău, A., *Siguranța în școli, o nouă problemă pentru autorități*. Ziarul Tutuor Maramureșenilor, 2013, at <http://www.ifz.ro/siguranța-in-scoli-o-noua-problema-pentru-autoritati/html>



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The Ministry's National Strategy makes no reference to the relationship between violence and weaknesses of democratic and human rights education. There is no reference either on proliferation of violence and lack of school democracy and deficiencies of democracy and human rights education.

The concept of bullying is still not officially recognized. From this point of view, civil society is conceptually more advanced than the school administration.

Civil society involvement is growing bolder and addresses various forms and aspects of school violence (see NGOs Accept Romania and Child Helpline).

Notes on methodology of monitoring school violence (after Guide on Preventing and Combating Violence in Schools)

It especially aims at serious cases of violence starting from physical violence with weapons, even if it includes minor physical violence or serious insults. Instead lighter verbal violence, violence as refusal to participate in school activities, wilful disturbance of the class in more or less visible ways, as well as all forms of cyber violence are not mentioned. Violence inflicted by adults (teachers or other staff) on students is not considered at all.

The repetitive nature of aggressions is not taken into account (although according to some authors only they could be classified as school violence).

The so-called subjective forms of violence including hostile attitudes, school absences, refusal to participate in class and activities (according to Doina Salavastru, p. 166, 2004)⁹ are not considered.

⁹ at <https://alingavreliuc.files.wordpress.com/2010/10/dorina-salavastru-psihiologia-educatiei.pdf>



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As a consequence, things still do not work at this level of statistical evidence; it is proved by a recent statement (2014) of the Minister of Education himself: he blamed the accuracy of official statistics on school violence: there are counties that reported 70 cases of violence and others have referred to 2,500 cases for the same period of time: statistically speaking it is impossible. That means **not knowing exactly what to measure, one measures what one wants** (said by mr. Remus Pricopie, Minister of Education at that time)¹⁰.

- Policies and strategies developed and (partly) implemented by school authorities have not been visible for the public yet. The intervention made recently (2015) in the Chamber of Deputies by a member thereof who criticizes public policies related to school violence is significant in this regard. There are mentioned ¹¹ issues such as:
 - The lack of official fair and transparent statistical records on schools violence cases. The person considers that "the schools units protect the image of the schools they manage, preferring not to register less serious or isolated cases of violence", while the school inspectorates only centralize schools reports to forward them to the higher authority.
 - The insufficient human resources in schools: "Not all teachers and school managers are trained in preventing and combating school violence and counselling psychologists are assigned, in fact, a number of 1000--1500 students, although the law OMECTS nr. 555/2011 provides a number of 400 pre-schoolers or 800 pupils per school counsellor, and therefore, these committees are purely formal and monitor only the effects and not the causes leading to the phenomenon of violence."
 - The lack from the legislation of "codes of ethics for teachers and students".

¹⁰ Lehaci, F. *Jos masca! În: De ce copiii români sunt campioni europeni la violență*. Semenele Timpului. Revistă de analiză și opinii creștină, at <http://semneletimpului.ro/social/copii/unicef/copiii-romani-campioni-europeni-la-violenta.html>

¹¹ <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/steno/steno.stenograma?ids=7460&idm=1&sir=&sep=and&idv=5477&idl=1&prn=1>



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