



## **Capacity Building for the Romanian NRP: Promoting Quality**

Final Report

Public Part

### Project information

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Project coordinator:	Constantin Serban IOSIFESCU, Chairman, Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education / Agentia Romana de Asigurare a Calitatii in Invatamantul Preuniversitar – RAQAPE / ARACIP
Project coordinator organisation:	Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education / Agentia Romana de Asigurare a Calitatii in Invatamantul Preuniversitar – RAQAPE / ARACIP
Project coordinator telephone number:	+40 21 3104213
Project coordinator email address:	<a href="mailto:aracip@medu.edu.ro">aracip@medu.edu.ro</a>

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of the call for proposals EACEA.09/2010 was to award grants to bodies responsible for the implementation of a national strategy for improving quality-assurance systems and for promoting and developing the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework, by assisting the National Reference Points in bringing together the competent bodies in the field and in involving the representative bodies and all national and regional stakeholders in order to ensure that the adopted initiatives are followed up.

In this respect, the project QUALVET@RO promoted the use of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework at national level (in Romania) and between countries (the project having partners from Austria, Italy and the Netherlands) and developed the institutional capacity and visibility, nationwide, of the Romanian National Reference Point, who group the bodies responsible for shaping policy and for the practical implementation of all initiatives in the field of VET, including quality-assurance. The Romanian National Reference Point, established in 2005 and named The National Group for Quality Assurance (in Romanian language: "*Grupul National pentru Asigurarea Calitatii*" – acronym "GNAC") has as its main aims: ensuring coherence and transparency and quality assurance mechanisms in vocational training developed at European and national level, improving mutual trust in certificates of vocational competencies and in facilitating mobility, improving cooperation and mutual learning between initial and continuous vocational training suppliers, at European and national level, developing a quality culture and increasing accountability of all stakeholders involved. The role of the National Reference Point was reinforced by the new Law of National Education (issued in January 2011).

The main results of this project – the communication strategy, the website (backed up by a database of relevant policies, documents, initiatives and best practices – see [www.gnac.ro](http://www.gnac.ro); [www.eqavet.ro](http://www.eqavet.ro) ), the two conferences, the eight workshops, the nine printed materials (three of them, examples of best practice, were produced by our foreign partners), all supported a sustainable cooperation among the decision makers and with all relevant stakeholders, in order to implement, efficiently and effectively, at national level, the relevant EU Policies in the field of VET. More than 2000 relevant stakeholders – decision makers at national and regional levels, VET providers, employers, trade unions representatives, experts in VET quality – were actively involved in this project and benefited by its results. Besides the promotion of EQAVET, the project had a contribution at the implementation of several other EU policies in education and training – mainly EQF, ECVET, the validation of nonformal and informal learning, the key competencies, Europass – in a coherent and homogeneous way. During the debates, the stakeholders stressed the need for planning and implementing together the EU policies in education and training. Thus, one not expected, but valuable result of this was a policy paper named "Towards an Integrated Strategy for the Implementation of European Policies in Vocational Education and Training", developed and debated with the stakeholders' representatives during the conferences and regional workshops, adopted by the National Reference Point and published.

This project demonstrated that only by sustained communication (national and international), by patient and careful negotiation (the three foreign partners gave us good examples in this matter) mutual trust, common understanding and ownership can be built among stakeholders. This entire journey motivated GNAC (the Romanian national reference point) to follow the same ways by implementing the communication strategy developed by this project and to continue to involve all stakeholders in its activity.

## Table of Contents

1. PROJECT OBJECTIVES .....	5
2. PROJECT APPROACH .....	6
3. PROJECT OUTCOMES & RESULTS .....	8
4. PARTNERSHIPS.....	11
5. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE .....	12
6. CONTRIBUTION TO EU POLICIES.....	13
7. CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL POLICIES .....	15

## 1. Project Objectives

The main aim of the project was elaborating and piloting a communication strategy for the Romanian National Reference Point (NRP) of EQAVET (the NRP is called “GNAC” in Romanian Language: “*Grupul National pentru Asigurarea Calitatii*”, meaning the “National Group for Quality Assurance”), in order to implement the EQAVET Recommendation, the policies and the instruments elaborated within the EQAVET network.

The surveys and research made, at national and European levels, demonstrated that the EU policies in education and training, although they are adopted at policy making level, are not known at the level of end users – employers and employees or persons seeking a workplace. From all our researches and analysis, these three initiatives (EQARF, EQF and ECVET) are not so widely known at VET providers’ level but also among other stakeholders. Thus, their implementation would be slower in the absence of a powerful Communication strategy. A previous project of GNAC proved this and, even if there were organized several seminars on quality policies at European and national levels, the need for further communication, dissemination, adaption and even adaptation was obvious. Even at European level, the second Annual Forum of the previous EQAVET work programme (Budapest, 2010) demonstrated the lack of information and documents in the majority of EU mother tongues.

Starting from these identified needs, the QUALVET@RO project had, as **objectives**:

1. **Elaborating and piloting a communication strategy** of the NRP-GNAC in order to implement at national level the EQAVET Recommendation, the policies and the instruments elaborated within the EQAVET Network, by cooperation within GNAC, among Partners and with relevant stakeholders. A common strategy for communication with all stakeholders is essential in order to implement the European policies regarding quality assurance (mainly the Recommendation regarding EQAVET), but also of other initiatives – EQF and ECVET. The crucial role of stakeholders, and mainly of the social partners, in defining and implementing the EU policies was stated more than once.
2. **Raising the level of awareness of all stakeholders**, by national conferences, regional workshops, project website, database of relevant documents and materials published regarding the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation and the policies and instruments elaborated within EQAVET at national level. The necessary premise of all communication is awareness: a lot of stakeholders are not even aware of some important EU initiatives, neither of their benefits. Thus, promoting the EU policies and documents and, moreover, demonstrating their benefits for each category of stakeholders (mainly employers, employees and VET providers) was a permanent concern in this project.
3. **Disseminating, via national conferences, regional seminars, project website, database of relevant documents and materials** published, the policies and instruments elaborated within EQAVET and by the project partners. According with this strategy, all relevant documents, practices and tools developed at European level, the best practices identified together with our partners, were introduced into a database of relevant documents and brought closer to the relevant stakeholders by classical and ITC means (documents translated and disseminated at national level via website and printed materials, conferences and workshops etc.). **All these documents were translated into Romanian language in order to bring them closer to the stakeholders.**

## 2. Project Approach

The Beneficiary (RAQAPE / ARACIP) was the main manager and administrator of the project, on the behalf of the NRP-GNAC, and participated at all activities / work packages of the project. RAQAPE / ARACIP ensured, as well, the subcontracting for the website design, the translating and the printing of the materials, the external evaluation of the project, the accommodation and catering services for the project meetings, eight workshops and two conferences. The other Romanian partner (The National Centre for TVET Development - CNDIPT), as representative of the NRP in international context, supported the development of all deliverables (outputs and outcomes) and ensured the main part of expertise for the development of the Strategy, website, database, printed materials, workshops and conferences, and will sub-contract the external evaluation. RAQAPE / ARACIP and CNDIPT will participate at meetings, thematic workshops and conferences organized at European level (as requested in the terms of reference).

**Having in mind that 85% of the project budget was allocated, by the terms of reference of the Call, at national level,** The foreign partners (ISFOL, CINOP and OeAD – see Chapter 4) participated at the development of the best practice examples (disseminated by the three brochures) and offered consultation during the development of the strategy and of all other results of the project. They participated, as well, at two events in Romania (the kick off meeting and the second – final - conference of the project).

The first event of the project was the kick of meeting (Bucharest, 17-18 May 2011), where partners established the detailed planning of the project and the design of the products. The first months of the project (until December 2011) were dedicated to the design of the products – that will be delivered in the second year of the project: the communication strategy, the website and the database, the newsletters, leaflets and brochures.

The draft communication strategy of GNAC, the first shape of the website and of its content, the first leaflet of the project, the design of the newsletter and the first two issues of the newsletter, the draft content of the three brochures of best practices (elaborated by the foreign partners), the calendar and the content of the 2 conferences and of the 8 regional workshops were discussed (and approved) during two Meeting of the NRP/GNAC (on December the 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011, and January the 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012 – see <http://www.gnac.ro/despre-gnac-eqavet/gnac/documente-si-materiale/>). **The months of December 2011 and January 2012 marks the move from planning to implement phases of the project.**

The second phase of the project began with the first National Conference of the QUAVET@RO project, held in Bucharest, Hotel Royal, on February the 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The purpose of this Conference was to present, to stakeholders representatives selected at national level (40 participants), six EU policies in education and training (EQAVET – the “umbrella” policy, EQF, ECVET, recognition and validation of learning outcomes, key competencies and Europass). **It was the first time these policies were presented together, at national level, in a way that show how they lean on and strengthen each other.** The materials presented at this Conference may be seen at <http://www.gnac.ro/biblioteca/documentele-si-instrumentele-gnac/materiale-prezentate-in-cadrul-primeii-conferinta-nationale-a-gnac/> .

The success of this approach made us change the general approach for further events: even if we followed the general aim, to promote the EQAVET Recommendation, we chose to do this by bringing together these policies and showing how they add value on quality of the VET provision. Thus, for these events (the 8 regional workshops and the second Conference), a

general presentation and a similar set of questions for debate (embracing all 6 policies, under the “umbrella” of quality assurance and EQAVET) were prepared.

The progress of the planned regional workshops (one for each of the 8 development Regions of Romania, realized on March 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, May 5<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, June 5<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>) demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach (see the input materials for the workshops at <http://www.gnac.ro/biblioteca/documentele-si-instrumentele-gnac/materiale-prezentate-in-cadrul-seminarelor-regionale-ale-proiectului-qualvetro/>). There were almost 400 participants, for the 8 regional workshops, representatives of the relevant stakeholders at regional an “grass-root” levels – VET providers, experts in evaluation, local authorities, employers and trade-unions representatives.

The debates during the workshops were vivid and embraced not only quality assurance and communication issues, but, general VET policy issues. Following this trend, two new Newsletter issues (see all four issues at <http://www.gnac.ro/biblioteca/documentele-si-instrumentele-gnac/test/>) and the three best practices brochures (see <http://www.gnac.ro/biblioteca/documentele-si-instrumentele-gnac/exemple-de-bune-practici-in-comunicarea-cu-factorii-interesati-austria-italia-si-olanda-proiectul-qualvetro/>) were developed.

Besides a final shape of the Communication Strategy of GNAC, one side effect of these regional workshops, not anticipated but beneficial was the policy paper named “Towards an Integrated Strategy for the Implementation of European Policies in Vocational Education and Training”. These two final products of the project were adopted by NRP/GNAC in October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and published (see, for these two main products, in Romanian language: <http://www.gnac.ro/2012/11/va-prezentam-strategia-de-comunicare-a-gnac-forma-finala-si-recomandarile-de-politici-publice-rezultate-din-dezbaterea-nationala/>; these products can be consulted in **English language** at <http://www.gnac.ro/2013/01/the-english-versions-for-the-communication-strategy-and-for-the-policy-note-of-the-romanian-national-reference-point-are-now-available/>).

The NRP/GNAC meeting in October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (see <http://www.gnac.ro/despre-gnac-eqavet/gnac/documente-si-materiale/>) approved the final shape of the website and the content of the second National Conference of the project (Bucharest, 8-9 November, 2012). St this Conference, there were 120 participant, representing stakeholders at national and regional levels. Te programme and material of this Conference are presented at <http://www.gnac.ro/materiale-prezentate-in-cadrul-primei-conferinte-nationale-a-gnac-proiectul-qualvetro/>.

The communication with all partners and stakeholders was intense and efficient (most of the issues being solved electronically – more than 1500 emails being exchanged). The project was constantly monitored by the management team – a quality assurance strategy being designed and approved by the partners, from the beginning of the project. This strategy followed the “quality circle” (“plan-do-check-act”) and, established, for each phase, a set of measurable indicators.

Those indicators were evaluated by an independent external evaluator, at the end of the project, subcontracted via public announcement. The final conclusion of the evaluation report: **“Implementation of the project is a success; no failures were identified”**.

The revised communication strategy, following all these events and the intense communication with all partners, were appropriated by the NRP/GNAC members and its implementation began.

### 3. Project Outcomes & Results

The project had the following main outputs and outcomes:

1. **A communication strategy, developed at the NRP/GNAC level**, involving all institutions relevant for the decision making process. This strategy will ensure an **improved cooperation among the relevant institutions**: the “front line” Ministries (of Education and Labour), the institution responsible for the development of the National Qualification Framework and the accreditation of the CVET programmes (the National Qualification Authority), the institution responsible for the external evaluation of the IVET providers (the Applicant, RAQAPE/ARACIP), the institution responsible for the overall development of the IVET sector (The National Centre for TVET Development - CNDIPT), the institution responsible for the accreditation of the in-serviced training programmes for IVET teachers (the former National Centre for Teacher Training, now part of the Ministry of Education). This common strategy will support the coherent development of the policies in VET across the sectors and levels of education and training and the building of a common quality culture.

- **The draft strategy** was outlined (and approved by NRP/GNAC) in December 2011 – January 2012, debated in the two Conferences (February and November 2012), and eight Regional Workshops (March-June 2012)..
- **The final shape**, revised following the 8 regional workshops, was approved by NRP/GNAC in October 2012. In all this time, the draft and, since October 2012, the final shapes of the Communication Strategy were available on the project website.
- **The policy note** “Towards an Integrated Strategy for the Implementation of European Policies in Vocational Education and Training” was an unintended but important result of the project. It followed, as a natural product, after we decided to approach the EU policies in education and training in an integrated way. The debates in the 8 regional workshops produced a set of conclusions (see <http://www.gnac.ro/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/10/Concluziile-Seminarelor-Regionale.pdf>), which were reshaped in a policy document format.

The two main products, can be consulted, in **Romanian language** at <http://www.gnac.ro/2012/11/va-prezentam-strategia-de-comunicare-a-gnac-forma-finala-si-recomandarile-de-politici-publice-rezultate-din-dezbaterea-nationala/>, and in **English language** at <http://www.gnac.ro/2013/01/the-english-versions-for-the-communication-strategy-and-for-the-policy-note-of-the-romanian-national-reference-point-are-now-available/>

2. **The website of the project “QUALVET@RO” and a database of relevant documents** – see [www.gnac.ro](http://www.gnac.ro) or [www.eqavet.ro](http://www.eqavet.ro) – with policies, best practices and other documents in Romanian language and, thus, was accessible for all stakeholders (more than 2000 visitors): VET providers, teachers and trainers, trainees and employers. The draft website and database was presented in January 2012 and the final shapes in October 2012. There are about 1000 pages of relevant materials (European and national policies, tools, analysis and surveys) all translated into Romanian language. In this website we present:
  - The EQAVET Network and the NRP/GNAC: relevant documents, membership, structure, activities.
  - The EU Policies in education and training and, mainly the ones regarding quality assurance in VET and the national policies in all EU countries.
  - The projects and activities, relevant for quality assurance in VET, realized at national level.
  - A substantial library of EU documents and policies.

- The ways the EQAVET Network members apply the indicative descriptors and indicators stipulated by the EQAVET Recommendation.
- The NRP/GNAC documents and materials – here there are presented the results of the QUALVET@RO project.
- A “News and Events” page and a “Forum”.

The structure follows the content (translated into Romanian language) and the graphic layout of the EQAVET Network website ([www.eqavet.eu](http://www.eqavet.eu)) the use of the content and layout being granted by the EQAVET Secretariat.

3. **Nine printed material** – three brochures with best practices, designed together with the partners from Austria, Italy and the Netherlands, regarding topics chosen by the foreign partners. Those three brochures served, as well, as input for the final shape of the Strategy. Other printed materials: two leaflets and four issues of a newsletter.

- One leaflet (the presentation of the project rationale, objectives and expected results) was finalized in May 2011, the other ones (the actual outcomes of the project and a summary of the Communication Strategy and of the Policy Note, was ready in October 2012.
- The three Brochures of best practices, realized by the foreign partners, translated and printed (“The Communication Strategy of ARQA-VET – Aims, Methods, Experiences and Results”, produced by the Austrian partner, OeAD/ARQA VET; “The communication strategy of the Italian Reference Point for Quality in VET and providers networking” produced by the Italian Partner, ISFOL and “EQAVET in the Netherlands. A step by step approach” produced by the partner from Netherlands, CINOP).
- Four issues of the newsletter: No 1 (September 2011) presents the QUALVET@RO project and its background: the EQAVET Recommendation and Network, the Bruges Communiqué, and the Romanian NRP – GNAC; No 2 (December 2011) approaches the issue of the communication with the social partners and presents the Romanian context of the quality assurance in VET (policies, strategies and projects); No 3 (May 2012) presents the (almost) final version of the Communication Strategy of GNAC and the Conclusions of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Forum of the EQAVET network - Helsingor, Denmark, 29-30 March 2012; No 4 (October 2012) presents the Policy Note mentioned above and the Work Programme of the EQAVET Network 2-13-2015.

The printed material were distributed, as printed, to the participants of the conferences and workshops, distributed to the NRP/GNAC members and sent, by regular mail, to all initial VET providers (VET High Schools – about 1300). All the printed materials were posted, as well, on the project website (see: <http://www.gnac.ro/biblioteca/documentele-si-instrumentele-gnac/>).

4. **Eight regional workshops** (Romania is divided into eight Development Regions) were organized in order to collect feedback from the main stakeholders at Regional level on the outcomes of the project (mainly the communication strategy, the content of the website and of the database of relevant documents, the printed materials) stakeholders. The eight regional workshops took place between March and June 2012 (March 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, May 5<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, June 5<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>) and followed the same design: after presenting the project, its website, the communication strategy and the 6 EU policies in education and training (EQAVET, EQF, ECVET, validation of learning outcomes, key competencies, Europass), the participants, coming from all main stakeholders categories (local authorities, VET providers, employers, trade-unions representatives, experts in evaluation and quality assurance) were asked to debate three topics:

- Which should be the main development directions, on medium and long term, in quality assurance for VET, having in mind the principles of the above mentioned EU polices (i.e. transparency, mobility, recognition of learning outcomes, the

involvement of the social partners and of other stakeholders, evidence based decision making)?

- What conditions should be observed in designing and implementing VET programmes, in order to ensure efficiency and trust in the process of validation/certification of the learning outcomes?
- How the communication with the social partners should be optimized, in order to ensure their trust in the qualification offered by the VET system?

The results of the debates were published, on the project website at midterm (after 4 regional workshops – provisional conclusions) and at the end of the process (see <http://www.gnac.ro/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/10/Concluziile-Seminarelor-Regionale.pdf>).

5. **The two Conferences will have as the main aim** to exploit the main product of the project – the Communication Strategy: the draft strategy, at the first Conference, the final Strategy, at the second conference. The two Conferences took place in Bucharest, the first one on February the 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and the second on 8-9 November 2012.

- **The first conference** presented the project and its intended outcomes, the draft communication strategy and the website and the six EU policies above mentioned, the presentations being made by the representatives of the national reference / contact / communication points of those initiatives. In the second part of the conference, the participants were asked to comment the three topics already mentioned (used for the debate during the regional workshops).
- **The second conference** was dedicated to the future: after presenting the outputs and outcomes of the QUALVET@RO and the best practice examples, by the representatives of the foreign partners, the participants were asked to comment (using the “Gallery Tour” technique) the main provisions of the Communication Strategy and of the Policy Note, and to indicate the way they understand their concrete implementation. Another added value of the conference was, in the second day of the event, what we called an “open lesson” (organized in cooperation with the Romanian Evaluation Association EVALROM – see. [www.evalrom.ro](http://www.evalrom.ro)): a well known expert in public policies presented theories and practices in the monitoring and evaluation of public policies, with real examples from the evaluation of social policies; the participants were asked to provide other examples, information and feedback regarding the evaluation of public policies. **This part is especially important because it provided, to the participants, information and practices on how this specific public policy (i.e. “quality assured communication with stakeholders in VET”) should be monitored and evaluated.**

During the project lifetime the representatives of the QUALVET@RO project participated at several meetings, this participation being compulsory by the grant agreement: the kickoff meeting, organized in Brussels, by the Executive Agency, in January 2011 and the seminars and conference organized by the “EQAVET Promotion and Knowledge Management unit”, who was in charge with coordinating the five EQAVET projects selected in the 2010 call for proposals EACEA/09/2010. These events were: 5 seminars (14-15 July 2011, Vienna, Austria; 12-13 December 2011, Brussels, Belgium; 16-17 February 2012, Bucharest, Romania, 25 – 26 June 2012, Breukelen, The Netherlands, 12 – 13 September 2012, Bonn, Germany) and one final conference (Brussels, 17th - 18th January 2013). In all seminars the QUALVET@RO project representatives made presentations on the progress and issues raised by the project and, in the Final Conference, the project representatives ensured the moderation of one of the workshops.

## 4. Partnerships

The partners of this project are:

- **Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education / Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Preuniversitar RAQAPE / ARACIP – Romania coordinator**
- **Centrul Național de Dezvoltare a Învățământului Profesional și Tehnic / National Centre For TVET Development CNDIPT - Romania**
- **Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione dei Lavoratori / Institute for the Development of Vocational Professional Training of Workers ISFOL - Italy**
- **Centre for Innovation of Education and Training CINOP – The Netherlands**
- **OeAD (Österreichische Austauschdienst)-Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung / Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research OeAD-GmbH / ARQA-VET – Austria.**

**The Romanian Partners** – ARACIP and CNDIPT - are members in the Romanian NRP (GNAC) and responsible with the development of the quality assurance systems (standards, guidelines, methodologies etc.) at system level and at provider level. In this respect, these two institutions had the main role in implementing the EQAVET Recommendation in general education and in initial VET. They planned, organized, implemented and monitored together the project development, having contributions to all activities and deliverables and made the most substantial part of the project work – **we mention that, by the specific rules of the call of proposals, 85% of the project budget was dedicated to the national partners.**

**The foreign partners** in this project are the National Reference Points of EQAVET in their countries (Italy, the Netherlands and Austria) and have a wide experience in the field of communication with stakeholders – experience they brought in this project by producing the Best Practice Examples, by the feed-back they provided on the other products of the project and by their participation at the final Conference of the project (November 2012). It was not the first time we cooperated with these partners (for instance, OeAD/ARQA VET is partner in an ESF funded project of the National Centre For TVET Development CNDIPT – Romania) and for sure, not the last: the beneficiary of this project (Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education / Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Preuniversitar RAQAPE / ARACIP) is partner in another project, initiated by the Netherlands NRP – CINOP under the same call.

**As an overall conclusion, this project had an important contribution in consolidating the cooperation among the National Reference Points, across EU, and in gaining common views on the overall EU policies in education and training.**

## 5. Plans for the Future

**On short term**, this project ensured a proper dissemination of information regarding the EU Tools (mainly EQAVET but also EQF, ECVET, Europass) and a closer cooperation among stakeholders – mainly with the social partners. All the projects deliverables are conceived for this purpose: the website and the database ensured a sum of relevant information, in Romanian language, contributing at the implementation of relevant EU Policies in Romania; the printed materials, the Regional Workshops and the Conferences reached the stakeholders who preferred the classical ways of dissemination; the communication strategy, “appropriated” by the relevant stakeholders, will ensure sustainability and continuity of the communication process and will consolidate the mutual trust among stakeholders.

**On medium and long term**, due to the national context (see, below, section 7), the Communication Strategy and the dissemination of the information regarding the EU Tools (EQAVET, EQF, ECVET etc.) is even more necessary. The Communication Strategy will cover both IVET and CVET (the coherence and the communication among these two subsystems being major issues in Romania). The project has been administrated by two public national agency with a very important technical role (ARACIP for quality assurance issues and CNDIPT in the field of initial VET development) and, thus, the products of the projects are mainstreamed and appropriated at national level. One example is the dissemination of all printed material among **all initial VET providers**.

Having in mind that all main institutions with roles in policy making there are members in the Romanian NRP – GNAC (the Ministries of Education and of Labour, the National Qualification Authority), we strongly believe that a commonly developed strategy for communication will enhance the cooperation at national level in the field of VET policies, ensuring: an enhanced cooperation among the NRP-GNAC members; an improved communication with all stakeholders, leading to a better quality of VET; a faster adoption of measures regarding the implementation the EQAVET Recommendation and of all other EU policy initiatives and tools (as such EQF, ECVET etc.); a better knowledge of the European Policies and the development of best practices in VET; a better input for EQAVET network.

The final shape of the communication strategy offers a solid ground to meet these goals, the action planning suggestions being fully feasible, after the end of the project:

1. Improving and updating the GNAC website ([www.gnac.ro](http://www.gnac.ro) (or [www.eqavet.ro](http://www.eqavet.ro)) - the website is updated and completed permanently (including new topics for discussion on the Forum).
2. Publish on the websites of GNAC members the events and activities for the implementation of “European Tools”.
3. Raise awareness on the “European Tools” in all national and international events attended by GNAC members. Similarly, representatives of other “European Tools” will be invited to participate in events organised for the implementation of a particular “European instrument”.
4. Using European funding (Lifelong Learning Programme LLP until 2013, “Erasmus for all” starting from 2014, and the European Social Fund) for the implementation of “European Tools” at national level.
5. Organizing regular forums to ensure dialogue between stakeholders on essential topics such as: contribution of “European Tools” to improving the links between training providers and the labour market, communication between promoters of various “European Tools”, common elements of the quality assurance systems in VET with participation of the representatives of other subsystems (general education, higher education, adult education etc.).
6. Publishing the online quarterly newsletter of GNAC (“Promoting Quality”), using the template developed under the QUALVET@RO project.

## 6. Contribution to EU policies

### Contribution to the Objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme:

- **To support the improvement of the quality, attractiveness and accessibility of the opportunities for lifelong learning available within Member States.** Good communication and wide dissemination of initiatives, projects, policies and best practices are crucial in order to improve quality, attractiveness and accessibility of VET. In this respect, building a Communication strategy and improving communication with all stakeholders will contribute decisively to this objective.
- **To increase participation in lifelong learning of people of all ages, including those with special needs and disadvantaged groups, regardless of their socio-economic background.** VET is considered one of the main education sectors with potential in increasing participation at education for all disadvantaged groups. Thus, quality improvement in VET means, among others, better access for disadvantaged groups and persons. The indicators from the EQAVET Recommendation and their further development within ENQA-VET and EQAVET Networks refer explicitly to the disadvantaged / at risk groups and individuals. Our products will be widely accessible, and the regional dimension is an extra asset in this respect.
- **To promote cooperation in quality assurance in all sectors of education and training in Europe.** Promoting cooperation in quality assurance in all sectors of education and training in Europe is one of the main purposes of the EQAVET Recommendation and of the EQAVET Network and, of course, of the Romanian NRP – GNAC. This goal cannot be fulfilled without a good communication among all stakeholders, at national and European levels, without shared concepts, principles and instruments. Thus, all project results have “added value” related with this LLP Programme objective by the input of the NRPs from four European countries.

**Contribution to the Objectives of the EQAVET Call:** The purpose of this call for proposals is to award grants to bodies responsible for the implementation of a national strategy for improving quality-assurance systems and for promoting the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework - i.e. the NRPs. The NRPs should bring together the competent bodies in the field and to involve the relevant stakeholders (from education and training but also from the labour market), in order to ensure that the adopted initiatives are followed up. In this respect, our project will:

- **promote the use of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework at national level** (Romania) and between countries (the project having partners from Austria, Italy and the Netherlands);
- **consolidate the institutional capacity of the Romanian NRP** (GNAC), who groups the bodies responsible for shaping policy and for the practical implementation of quality-assurance initiatives in the field of VET.

### Contribution to other relevant EU policies:

- The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') have as the first Strategic objective **making lifelong learning and mobility a reality**, especially by updating and developing skills in line with changing economic and social circumstances. In particular, work is needed to ensure the development of national qualifications frameworks based on relevant learning outcomes and their link to the European Qualifications Framework, the establishment of more flexible learning pathways — including better transitions between the various education and training sectors, greater openness towards non-formal and informal learning, and increased transparency and recognition of learning outcomes. **In order to achieve this aim, at**

**national level, a common understanding of the VET system and the cooperation among the decision makers and stakeholders become crucial. Our project will contribute to unify views and initiatives at national level.**

- The Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ('ET 2020') have as the second Strategic objective **improving the quality and efficiency of education and training**, mainly by recognizing the major challenge, in this respect: to ensure the acquisition of key competences by everyone, while developing the excellence and attractiveness at all levels of education and training. High quality will only be achieved through the promotion of evidence-based policy and practice in education and training. **Our project will produce, among others, a data base with relevant documents, instruments, best practices that could be used for an evidence based decision making process. Beside this, the cooperation among stakeholders and decision makers, envisaged by this project, will foster the will and knowledge to work together in this direction.**
- The NRP has an important role not only in implementing the EQAVET Recommendation but also in promoting other European policies. The Romanian NRP-GNAG group the major decision makers regarding the implementation of the Recommendations regarding EQF and ECVET – namely Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, National Council for Adult Vocational Training, ARACIP and CNDIPT. **Their common activity in this project will facilitate further cooperation in the implementation of other European policies in the field of lifelong learning, education and training.**

## 7. Contribution to national policies

The national context is dominated by the new Law of National Education, issued in January 2011, issued after the approval of the financing for this project. The new Law will be the basis for a comprehensive reform of the Education system, starting from a lifelong learning perspective. In this respect, the VET system – including the initial VET but also the continuous VET - will be reformed in a coherent and consistent way, and all the relevant EU policies in this field (EQAVET, EQF, ECVET etc.) will be part of the reforming process.

The National Reference Point (GNAC – The National Group for Quality Assurance) is, now, established within the law (Art. 355/2), as “informal structure, functioning as National Reference Point for quality assurance in vocational education and training, which coordinates the harmonization of the quality assurance systems in vocational education and training”.

In this context, the importance of the National Reference Point is increased and **its coordinating role cannot be fulfilled without communicating with all relevant institutions and stakeholders. Thus, the communications strategy and the communication tools developed in this project are more than necessary.**

In the same respect, within a 5 million EUR project co-financed by the European Social Fund (whose beneficiary is the National Centre for TVET Development), a National Strategy for the Implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation had been developed. This strategy which is, now, publicly debated, has, as well, as one of its main points, the development of a communication strategy with all stakeholders. **In this way, the QUALVET@RO project is a complement and a support for the overall implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation in the Romanian VET system.**

The communication strategy and tools will be beneficial not only for the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation, but also for other EU Tools. The most recent surveys and events, at national but also European level, underlined the need of cooperation in implementing EQAVET, EQF, and ECVET. **The NRP – GNAC groups the institutions functioning as National Reference / Coordination / Communication Points for the EU Tools and, consequently, the communication strategy and tools will boost the cooperation among the institutions responsible for the implementation of the EU Policies in VET and with the main stakeholders at national level.**

