

**EDUCATION, SCHOLARSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIPS AND YOUTH  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME IN ROMANIA**

**FINANCED THROUGH THE EEA GRANTS 2014-2021**

**GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS 2020  
PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
(VET)**

**1. LEGAL BASIS**

- [Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Grants 2014-2021 and Annex 3 on Information and Communication Requirements](#)
- [Memorandum of Understanding between Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and the Government of Romania on the Implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021](#)
- [Guideline for Educational Programmes - Rules for the establishment and implementation of programmes falling under programme area 3 “Education, Scholarships, Apprenticeships and Youth Entrepreneurship”](#)
- [Government Ordinance no 34/2017 concerning the institutional framework for the coordination, implementation and management of financial support granted to Romania through the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021](#)

**2. GLOSSARY**

- Donor States (DS): Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway
- Beneficiary State (BS): Romania
- Programme Operator (PO): National Agency for Community Programmes in the Field of Education and Vocational Training (ANPCDEFP)
- Donor Programme Partners: The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education – SIU and The National Agency for International Education Affairs – AIBA (Liechtenstein).
- National Focal Point (NFP): within the Ministry of European Funds
- Project Promoter (PP): the successful applicant that receives a grant.
- EEA: European Economic Area

**3. CONDITIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION**

**3.1 Cooperation and mobility projects in the field of VET**

<b>Eligible applicants</b>	Romanian VET schools
<b>Eligible Romanian partner</b>	A Romanian Company which has signed an agreement for students' internship (practical stages) with the applicant institution.
<b>Host institution</b>	<p>VET institutions or other entities connected to VET systems from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donor States or from Switzerland (institutions which have specific cooperation agreements with Liechtenstein).</li> <li>• The Beneficiary States (BS) of the program (except for Romania): Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Hungary.</li> </ul>
<b>Description</b>	<p>The general objective of the Programme – to enhance the human capital and knowledge base in Romania – is materialised in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) field through projects that aim at improving the quality of students' work-based learning in Romania.</p> <p>Through these projects, the need for improved matchmaking of graduates' skills to labour market demands will be addressed.</p> <p>During a study visit which is going to take place in a Donor or Beneficiary State, the staff of Romanian VET schools and Romanian partner companies will identify best practices and will learn from the VET school visited and from the partner companies of this school how to improve the work based learning for Romanian VET students. Alternatively, when physical mobility will not be possible by the end of the project due to Covid-19 pandemic, virtual activities can be envisaged.</p> <p>The learning outcomes of the participants at the study visit/virtual activities will be valorised through the improvement of the work based learning activities of the students.</p>
<b>Eligible activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activities that strengthen the cooperation and networking between Romanian partner institutions and Donor State host institutions;</li> <li>• testing and/or implementing innovative practices in the field of work based learning;</li> <li>• designing, testing and using better documents and tools for the improvement of work based learning of students (memorandum of understanding, learning agreements, assessment tools and guides for internships' tutors, new curriculum, etc.);</li> <li>• activities that facilitate the recognition and validation of knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired through work based learning;</li> <li>• activities to support learners with disabilities/special needs to complete education cycles and facilitate their transition to the labour market;</li> </ul>

- activities to better prepare the professionals (VET teachers and tutors in companies) for implementing in practice the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion in their daily behaviour towards the students;
- activities that support digitalisation of the teaching/learning processes, including digitalisation of the internships, where possible
- Study Visit-Mobility activity (**compulsory**). During the study visit the following activities may be organised: presentations of the systems and strategies in the VET field in both countries, workshops, visits to DS or BS companies that organise internships for students (**compulsory**) (during these visits the students of the host school who take part in practical activities are observed and specific documents, related to the students' internships in the respective companies are analysed), debates with relevant stakeholders, job shadowing, documents' analysis.

All the activities carried out during the study visit/virtual activities must contribute to sharing examples of good practice regarding the learning of students at work.

The sending and the host institutions shall first agree on a Work Programme to be achieved by the staff undertaking the mobility. The Work Programme shall contain at least the following: objectives of the mobility/virtual learning activities, added value of the activity, agenda and content description of the programme and the expected outcomes. At the end of the period spent abroad/virtual activities, the host institution will provide to the Romanian participants a Certificate of Attendance and the Europass Mobility Document (following a process of evaluating the learning outcomes obtained by the participants).

The study visit duration: 5-10 days

NB: 1) As mentioned above, if the study visit cannot take place physically by the end of the project due to Covid-19 restrictions, virtual activities with similar purposes may be envisaged.

2) All the documents/tools/materials will be developed jointly by the partners: the Romanian VET school and the partner company.

## **Who can participate**

### **Activities at local level:**

Students and staff of the PP and partner company staff.

### **Participants at the study visit/virtual activities:**

Management and VET staff and one English language teacher from the PP, together with Romanian partner company staff (managers, tutors for students' internships/practical stages). If the PP enrolls students with special needs and the psychological counsellor is

involved in the internships of these students, this counsellor can also participate at the study visit.

There must be a balance between the number of participants from the PP and from the partner company so that the visit becomes relevant for future cooperation.

**N.B. The number of Romanian participants at the study visit/virtual activities depends on the institutional needs and the objectives of the visit and it is limited by the maximum grant of a project, but also by the capacity of the host institution in DS or BS to organise the visit.**

During the study visit, students and staff of the host institution and / or the staff of its partner company will join the Romanian participants in the activities in the DS or BS.

**Application procedure** The application will be sent electronically to PO, at [proiecte\\_VET@eea4edu.ro](mailto:proiecte_VET@eea4edu.ro), following the procedures described in the 2020 Call for Proposals (available on [www.eea4edu.ro](http://www.eea4edu.ro)).

**Deadline for application** Applicants shall submit their application **by 4.06.2021, 13.00 Romanian hours the latest.**

**Duration** The duration of a Mobility Project is 12 months (01.10.2021-30.09.2022).

**Eligible costs and payments flows:**

**Eligible costs:**

**Project management and implementation (scale of units costs)**

Project management (e.g. for activity planning, budget planning, coordination and communication between partners, financial management, etc.); local project activities (e.g. classroom work with learners, organisation and mentoring of embedded learning/training activities, drafting the Memoranda of Understanding, the learning agreements, elaborating the units of learning outcomes for work based learning and local curriculum etc.); information, promotion and dissemination (e.g. brochures, leaflets, web information, etc.)	500 Euro /month for PP
	Contribution to the activities of PP (the VET school)
	250 Euro/month
	Contribution to the activities of the partner company

**Costs related to the mobility-Study Visit**

- a. Individual support for participants at the Study Visit

<p>Individual support for Romanian staff including for accompanying persons for participants with special needs (if applicable) -unit cost</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the host organisation / institution is resident in a DS or in Switzerland:  200 Euro / day (unit cost)</li> <li>• If the host organisation / institution is resident in one of the Beneficiary States of the program:  150 Euro / day (unit cost) 200 € /day (unit cost)</li> </ul> <p>Subsistence for additional 2 travel days (one before and one after the activity period) could be allocated (if needed)</p> <p><b>NB:</b> if the participant takes part in a virtual learning activity, he/she is not entitled to receive travel costs but will receive 15.9 EUR/activity day as unit cost<sup>1</sup></p>
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b. Transport (unit cost): according to the distance band calculated with the distance calculator available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources\\_en#tab-1-4](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en#tab-1-4)

Description	Amount (unit cost)
<p>Contribution to travel costs of participants, from their place of location to activity venue and return</p>	<p>Distances between 10-99 km: 20 Euro / participant</p> <p>Distances between 100-499 km: 180 Euro / participant</p> <p>Distances between 500-1999 km: 275 EUR / participant</p> <p>Distances between 2000-2999 km: 360 EUR / participant</p> <p>Distances between 3000-3999 km: 530 EUR / participant</p> <p>Distances between 4000-7999 km: 820 EUR / participant</p>

c. Linguistic support:

<p>Contribution to the linguistic preparation of the participants at the Study visit/virtual activity-staff of the VET school and partner company (except for the English teacher)</p>	<p>150 Euro/participant (unit cost)</p>
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d. Special needs support

<p>Additional costs related to participants with special needs</p>	<p>Up to 100% of eligible costs-real costs, for participation in mobility</p> <p>Condition: financial support for special needs must be motivated in application</p>
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<sup>1</sup> This way of financing and level of the unit cost is similar with the one established in 2020 for Erasmus+, for participants in virtual learning. teaching and training activities

e. Organisational support for the host institution of the mobility:

Organisational support for host institution	<p>200 Euro / Romanian participant at the Study Visit for the host institution.</p> <p><u>Alternatively, the Organisational support for the host institution may be allocated based on real costs, on the basis of an invoice issued by the host institution, including for the organisation of virtual activities.</u></p> <p><b>Note: If the host institution opts for real costs, these costs must not include accommodation and meal expenses for the Romanian participants at the study visit.</b></p>
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**Exceptional costs**

Contribution to real costs related to subcontracting or purchase of goods and services, that are necessary for the implementation of the project and that are not covered by the unit costs	<p>100% of eligible costs-real costs</p> <p>Condition: Subcontracting has to be related to services that cannot be provided directly by the participating organisations for duly justified reasons. The application must justify why these services are necessary to achieve the objectives and results of the project. Equipment cannot concern normal office equipment or equipment normally used by the participating organisations.</p>
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**Financing mechanism and rule of allocation**

For Project Management and Implementation, Individual support, Linguistic support, Transport and Organisational support for the host institution: scale of unit costs, automatic allocation. Alternatively, the Organisational support for the host institution may be allocated based on real costs, on the basis of an invoice issued by the host institution.

For Special needs support and Exceptional costs: real costs, covering 100% of the eligible costs if they were approved by PO.

**Payments**

First advance payment : 80% of the approved financing.

The first advance will be paid to the PP within 60 days from the signing of the project contract.

The second installment in advance, up to the remaining 20% of the funds will be paid within 60 days from the receipt of the interim project report, provided that the project promoter has already spent at least 70% of the first installment.

After the evaluation and approval of the final report, within 60 days from its receipt, the final grant will be established and, if appropriate, the PO will issue a debit note for the remaining unspent funds.

**3.2 National projects in the VET field**

**Eligible applicants**

Public institutions / authorities with responsibilities in the field of VET at national, regional or county level. **VET schools are not in this category.**

**Description**

The general objective of the Program - to enhance the human capital and knowledge base in Romania - is materialised in the field of vocational education and training (VET) through projects aimed at improving the quality of learning for VET students in Romania through work-based learning.

Through these projects there will be addressed the needs to improve the correlation of the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours) acquired by the initial VET graduates with the requirements of the labour market.

Within the project there will be planned, organised and carried out 1-2 events like:

- information / learning events, focusing on ways to improve the quality of Romanian students' work-based learning.
- workshops for designing of relevant documents for improving the quality of the Romanian students' learning, so that they could achieve the necessary skills for the labour market.

The learning outcomes of the participants at the event / events will be valorised by improving the work-based learning activities of the Romanian students.

**Eligible activities**

The projects consist of:

- Planning, organising and conducting 1-2 type events like:
  - information / training sessions for people with responsibilities in the field of VET at national, regional, county, local level, VET teachers, tutors from companies, representatives of VET schools, companies and of the social partners;
  - workshops for:
    - o elaborating and testing documents and tools of a better quality, for improving students' work-based learning (Training Standards, Memoranda of Understanding, Learning Agreements, School Plans);
    - o elaboration of methodologies and tools that are necessary for the validation and recognition of the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired

by the VET students through work-based learning;

- training of professionals (VET teachers, tutors in companies) on how to put into practice the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion in their daily behaviour towards students.

The duration of an event is a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 3 days of activity.

- Dissemination and exploitation of the results and products obtained /developed in the event / events.

## **Who can participate**

### **Planning and organising the event activities**

The staff of the PP institution.

### **Activities for dissemination and exploitation of the results and products (obtained / developed in the event / events)**

The staff of the PP institution and the participants at the event / events.

Participants at the event:

- People with responsibilities in the field of VET at national, regional, county, local level;
- Representatives of the Sectoral Committees;
- Representatives of the social partners;
- Representatives of the VET schools and of the companies that provide work-based learning activities for students;
- VET teachers;
- Tutors from companies;
- Staff of the PP institution;
- Maximum 1 expert in the VET field from DS.

Minimum number of participants if a single event is foreseen in the project:

For 2-day events:

for the minimum grant (24000Euro): 42 participants;

for the maximum grant (35000 Euro): 60 participants;

For 3-day events:

for the minimum grant (24000Euro): 30 participants;



for the maximum grant (35000 Euro): 48 participants;

If 2 events are foreseen in the project, the minimum number of participants for one event is: 21 participants.

- Application procedure** The application shall be sent electronically to PO, at [proiecte\\_VET@eea4edu.ro](mailto:proiecte_VET@eea4edu.ro), following the procedures described in the Call for Proposals 2020 (available on [www.eea4edu.ro](http://www.eea4edu.ro)).
- Deadline for application** Applicants shall submit their application by **18.06.2021**, 13.00 Romanian hours the latest.
- Duration** The duration of a national project in the field of VET is 6 months from the date of the signature of the contract by the last of the two parties.

**Eligible costs and payments flows:**

**Eligible costs:**

**Project management and implementation (scale of units costs)**

Project management (for example: for planning activities, budget planning, coordinating activities, financial management, etc.); logistical activities related to the event / events; information, promotion and dissemination activities (for example: brochures, leaflets, information on the web, etc.), activities to exploit the results obtained in the event / events.	500 Euro /month for PP  Contribution to the activities of PP (the VET school)
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**Costs related to the event/events**

a. Individual support for event/events participants

Individual support for participants at the event - unit cost (subsistence during the event) - inclusively for accompanying persons for participants with special needs (if applicable)	<b>150 Euro / day</b> for each participant who needs accommodation  For the experts / trainers from DS, it could be allocated (if necessary) subsistence for another 2 days of travel (one before and one after the activity period).  <b>50 Euro / day</b> for each participant from Romania who does not require accommodation
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**b. Transport:** the grant is awarded at the application stage in accordance with the distance band calculated with the distance calculator available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources\\_en#tab-1-4](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en#tab-1-4).

<p>Contribution to the travel costs of the participants, from the place of origin to the place of activity and return.</p>	<p>Maximum of the grant required in the application:</p> <p>Distances between 10-99 km: 20 EUR / participant</p> <p>Distances between 100-499 km: 180 EUR / participant</p> <p>Distances between 500-1999 km: 275 EUR / participant</p> <p>Distances between 2000-2999 km: 360 EUR / participant</p> <p>Distances between 3000-3999 km: 530 EUR / participant</p> <p>Distances between 4000-7999 km: 820 EUR / participant</p> <p><b>Note: For the Romanian participants, the reimbursement of the travel costs will be done as real costs, based on the travel documents.</b></p>
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**c. Designing / training and conducting activities during the event (s)**

<p>Fees for organising and running the event</p>	<p>There are allocated fees for 2 days of preparation +no. of days corresponding to the duration of the event (maximum 4 days for 2-day events and maximum 5 days for 3-day events).</p> <p>The maximum number of trainers:</p> <p>For events with 21-29 participants, 1 trainer / expert is funded</p> <p>For events with 30 -44 participants, 2 trainers / experts are funded.</p> <p>For events with 35-60 participants, 3 trainers / experts are funded.</p> <p>For events with more than 60 participants, 4 trainers / experts are funded.</p> <p>The fees are as following:</p> <p>74 Euro / day for each Romanian trainer / expert</p> <p>241 Euro / day for each trainer / expert from DS</p>
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**d. Special needs support**

<p>Additional costs related to participants with special needs</p>	<p>Up to 100% of eligible costs-real costs</p>
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	Conditions: financial support for special needs must be motivated in application.
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**Financing mechanism and rule of allocation**

For Project management and implementation, Individual support, Transport and Designing / training and conducting activities during the event: scale of unit costs, automatic allocation.  
 For Special needs support: real costs, covering 100% of the eligible costs if they were approved by PO.

**Payments**

First advance payment : 80% of the approved financing.

The first advance will be paid to the PP within 30 days from the signing of the project contract.

The second installment in advance, up to the remaining 20% of the funds will be paid within 60 days from the receipt of the interim project report, provided that the project promoter has already spent at least 70% of the first installment.

After the evaluation and approval of the final report, within 60 days from its receipt, the final grant will be established and, if appropriate, the PO will issue a debit note for the remaining unspent funds.

**4. EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

**4.1 Cooperation and mobility projects in the field of VET**

**Eligibility rules :**

- The application and all annexes are submitted by the application deadline (as announced in the Call for Proposals 2020);
- The application is submitted by a body which is a legal entity;
- The declaration of honour bears the signature of the person legally authorised to sign on behalf of the applicant institution/organisation.
- The Applicant is an eligible institution for this action.
- The Host institution is located in one of the DSs or Switzerland<sup>2</sup> or a Beneficiary State.
- The Host institution is a similar institution as the applicant institution or other entity connected to VET systems.
- All the supplementary documents (annexes) required in the Call for Proposals 2020 are attached.
- The candidate institution is not in the case of double funding.

**Note: if one or more of the eligibility rules is not / are not met by the applicant, the application is declared by the PO as ineligible and will be not included in the qualitative evaluation process.**

**Grant awarding criteria** Projects will be assessed against the following criteria:

Relevance (30 points);

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<sup>2</sup> VET-institutions in Switzerland, with a specific cooperation agreement with Liechtenstein

Design and implementation (25 points);  
Quality of the partnership and cooperation (25 points);  
Impact and dissemination (20 points).

**Note: applications submitted by VET schools situated in rural and/or disadvantaged areas, VET schools for pupils with special needs, VET schools enrolling Roma students amounting to at least 10% of their students or applications that propose a study visit in one DS will be considered as a priority and they will receive bonus points (10 points for each category).**

## 4.2 National projects in the VET field

### Eligibility rules

- The application and all annexes are submitted by the application deadline (as announced in the Call for Proposals 2020);
- The application is submitted by a body which is a legal entity;
- The declaration of honour bears the signature of the person legally authorised to sign on behalf of the applicant institution/organisation.
- The Applicant is an eligible institution for this action.
- The CVs and letters of intent of the experts / trainers for which funding has been requested are attached to the application form.
- The candidate institution is not in the case of double funding.

**Note: if one or more of the eligibility rules is not / are not met by the applicant, the application is declared by the PO as ineligible and will be not included in the qualitative evaluation process.**

### Grant awarding criteria

The projects will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Relevance (40 points);  
Design and implementation (30 points);  
Impact and dissemination (30 points).

**Note: The applications in which a part of the participants is composed of staff teaching in VET schools situated in rural and/or disadvantaged areas, in VET schools for pupils with special needs, in VET schools enrolling Roma students amounting to at least 10% of their students or in which one expert/trainer from a DS will take part, will be considered as a priority and they will receive bonus points (10 points for each category).**

An application can receive a maximum of 100 points for quality.

An application may be approved if it scores at least 60 points.

Priority points are awarded only for applications that have received at least 60 points for quality.

## **5. CONTRACTUAL PROCEDURES**

**Estimated date of sending preliminary information about selection results**

**02.08.2021**

**Partnership agreements** In the case of cooperation and mobility projects, the project promoter must sign partnership agreements / contracts, both with the partner company and with the host institution. They must also sign contracts with each participant at the study visit.

In the case of national projects, the project promoters must sign agreements with the trainers / experts for whom they request funding.

The models of these agreements / contracts can be found at: [http://eea4edu.ro/contracte\\_ro\\_vet\\_2020/](http://eea4edu.ro/contracte_ro_vet_2020/) and they are annexes to the financing contract.

**Contracting** The Project Promoter will receive the electronic version of the financing contract after the publication of the selection results and shall send to the Programme Operator, within 10 working days, two original copies of the contract signed by the legal representative of the institution.

**Reporting** The project promoter (PP) submits an intermediate report by the middle of the contractual period, including information on: the progress of the project, the implementation of the planned activities and the achievement of the results, and a financial statement. After the approval of the Interim Report of the project, the second installment will be paid in advance, provided that the project promoter has already spent at least 70% of the previous advance payment.

The final report shall be sent by the project promoter within 2 months from the completion of the project. After the evaluation and approval of the final report, within 60 days of its receipt, the final grant will be established and, if appropriate, the PO will issue a debit note for the remaining unspent funds.

## **6. SELECTION OF THE APPLICATIONS**

The PO has the entire responsibility for organising the selection process and for taking the grant award decision.

The selection process consists of an administrative/ eligibility check and a qualitative assessment.

The administrative/eligibility check is performed by the PO's experts, members of the programme implementation unit, using specific check-lists.

After finalising this stage, a list of eligible projects will be drafted and the eligible applications will be assessed by external experts. Each application will be assessed by two external evaluation experts, in a fully transparent way, guaranteeing impartiality and equal treatment of all applicants.

The list of projects proposed for funding, projects on the reserve lists and projects rejected will be drafted and submitted to the Selection Committee for review.

The final proposal of the Selection Committee is submitted to the PO director, who takes the grant award decision.

For the administrative/eligibility check the elements mentioned in Chapter 4 as “Eligibility rules” will be verified.

For the quality assessment, the elements mentioned in chapter 4 as “Grant awarding criteria” will be taken into account.

In the case where clerical errors are detected, the applicants will be notified and may make corrections in a period of up to 5 working days from the receipt of the notification.

**Note: For the national projects in the field of VET, the selection process will be organised only if funds remain available after the selection of the cooperation and mobility projects in the field of VET.**

## **7. PROCEDURES FOR APPEAL**

### **a. Eligibility check**

Applicants rejected as a result of the administrative or eligibility check can submit a motivated appeal against this decision within 5 working days from the publication of results; the appeal should be sent by e-mail to [contestatie@anpcdefp.ro](mailto:contestatie@anpcdefp.ro) using the specific form.

The appeal will be analysed in two stages: The PO is the first instance analysing the appeal and

if the appeal is rejected, NFP is the second instance where the applicant can submit an appeal in up to 5 working days from the announcement of the rejection..

If the NFP also rejects the appeal, the decision to reject the application is deemed final.

If the appeal is accepted by one of the two instances, then the application is deemed approved and passed on for a qualitative assessment.

The applicant who submits the appeal will be notified of the result by email within maximum 15 working days from the receipt of the appeal.

### **b. Qualitative assessment**

All applications declared approved following the administrative or eligibility check, will undergo a qualitative assessment, according to the criteria described under paragraph 4.

Rejected applicants can appeal, with arguments, within maximum 5 working days from the publication of the results; the appeal should be sent by e-mail to [contestatie@anpcdefp.ro](mailto:contestatie@anpcdefp.ro) using the specific form.

The appeal will be analysed in 2 stages: The PO is the first instance analysing the appeal and, if the appeal is rejected, NFP is the 2nd instance where the applicant can submit an appeal in up to 5 working days from the announcement of the rejection.

During the analysis of the appeal, there will be reviewed the conformity and regularity of the qualitative assessment process (conformity to internal assessment procedures) but PO and the NFP will not redo the qualitative assessment and will not give a different score to the applicant. If the NFP also rejects the appeal, the decision to reject the application is deemed final.

The applicant who submits the appeal will be notified of the result by email within maximum 15 working days from the receipt of the appeal.