



The Transfer of the Approach

Technical High School
for the Hearing-Impaired
Cluj-Napoca



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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Cluj-Napoca**



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Open Educational Resources

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Overview

The Media + ERASMUS+ KA202 project (identification number: 2019-1-FR01-KA202-063197) is based on the transfer of innovation in addressing associated disabilities in line with the Erasmus+ priority axis on strategies to support people with special needs.

The aim of the Media + project is to transfer good practices based on the therapeutic approach developed at the GAPAS Centre National de Ressources Handicaps Rares Robert Laplane (CNRHR), 33 Rue Daviel, Paris, to pilot institutions in Cluj-Napoca, Madrid and Stockholm.

The grant was obtained based on a preliminary stage of prospecting to address the associated deficiencies, as well as the psycho-pedagogical resources of educational intervention for language development of children with severe communication disorders in the three pilot institutions.

The central objective of the project was to implement in the therapeutic intervention the innovative communication methods / tools specific to the CNRHR's approach, hereafter referred shortly as the "Daviel approach".

In the main body of this report, we will describe the transfer of this approach at the Technical High School for the Hearing-Impaired at Cluj-Napoca, Romania. In two annexes we will present our institution and the evolution of Romania's legal framework of its policies towards persons with disabilities.

Presentation of the Transfer Process

During the first meeting, organized by our school in February 2020, two French specialists from the GAPAS Centre National de Ressources Handicaps Rares Robert Laplane in Paris, together with the members of the Romanian team, visited the classes of students with hearing impairments and associated troubles. On this occasion, the complex individual situations were analysed, the difficulties they face in terms of language and communication acquisition were identified and the children's profiles were recorded to form a receptive group to the implementation of the Daviel approach, further establishing, the implementation strategy, which, unfortunately, was changed along the way due to the special conditions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Thus, the transfer stages of the Daviel approach consisted of organising training courses in our school and internships for mediated practice, for teachers selected to participate in the project, and took place, both online (during the pandemic) and physically (after the elimination of pandemic-related restrictions), under the guidance and coordination of the two French trainers and the Canadian expert. With the start of the



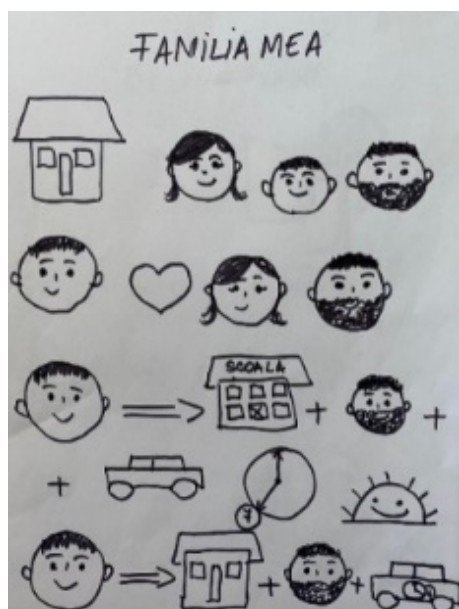
2020–2021 school year, the training meetings were resumed according to the initial calendar.

The Daviel approach is different from other methods that approach communication, being an approach to access to conceptualisation and language through situational drawings and pictographic code. It is a visual aid made either by the child or



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with the therapist. The situational drawing is a schematic drawing that mobilises the child's attention (conjugated attention), with a focus on "something", without effort, which starts from the child's interests and from a context suggested by the therapist.



The drawing represents both the presence of the child and other known people, with certain features, objects, etc. Throughout the drawing, the teacher communicates with the student in the language known / preferred by him. Thus, the situational drawing allows the child access to understanding, helps him to visualise time, certain situations, to recall lived events, to anticipate others, to facilitate questions, to dramatise an anxious situation, etc., contributing, as the case may be, together with other therapeutic methods / instruments, to the development of the language and functional communication of the child with multiple / associated severe disabilities.

After selecting the two key elements (the team of teachers and students in the target group), which set in motion the transfer of innovation, the intellectual products to be made were reviewed: five brochures, which record faithfully, step by step, implementation in Romanian practice of the experience of French colleagues. The first contains the presentation of the institution, the next three record the data and results of each stage of work (presentation of the four students, the results of assessment using the PASS-PAR evaluation grid, and cutting the area with developmental potential in the psycho-social and emo-

tional profile of each student), and the last is a testimonial of the transfer of innovation, presenting in narrative form all the stages and events.

During the second meeting, in October 2020, the French specialists started the actual training, presenting the evaluation grid in order to prepare the transfer of the Daviel therapeutic approach. On this occasion, the most important details were discussed, regarding the case studies: the ways of evaluating students (physically or online), included in the target group, with the help of the psychosocial skills assessment grid for young people, based on the conceptual framework PASS-PAR; data of the participants in the target group; details related to the involvement of parents and specialists in the application of the grid; strategies / intervention plans built around the Daviel approach; details related to some items in the evaluation grid; the procedures for conducting the evaluation of the selected students.

Lacramioara URSACHE,
special education teacher and member of the Média + project team

For me, the Daviel approach was an innovative alternative to proceed towards, from a therapeutic-recovery point of view, the developmental disorders identified in students with hearing and / or associated disabilities.

Compared to other methods used in therapeutic practice, the Daviel's approach has proved to be a much easier way to access conceptualization and language and it can be presented both simultaneously and alternatively with other methods to stimulate communication, facilitate understanding and learning for these children.

The concrete visual support used in the specific approach of communication helped the child to see and better understand the world around him, to mobilize attentively, effortlessly, to express his needs, to make sense of situations, to have a good orientation in space and time etc.

On the other hand, the training with the mentors from France and Canada provided me an opportunity for quality professional training, which I will apply in future therapeutic activities with children with hearing and / or associated disabilities.

I would also like to share with my colleagues, during the specialized meetings, this innovative approach as a model of good practices that can be used successfully in therapeutic interventions.

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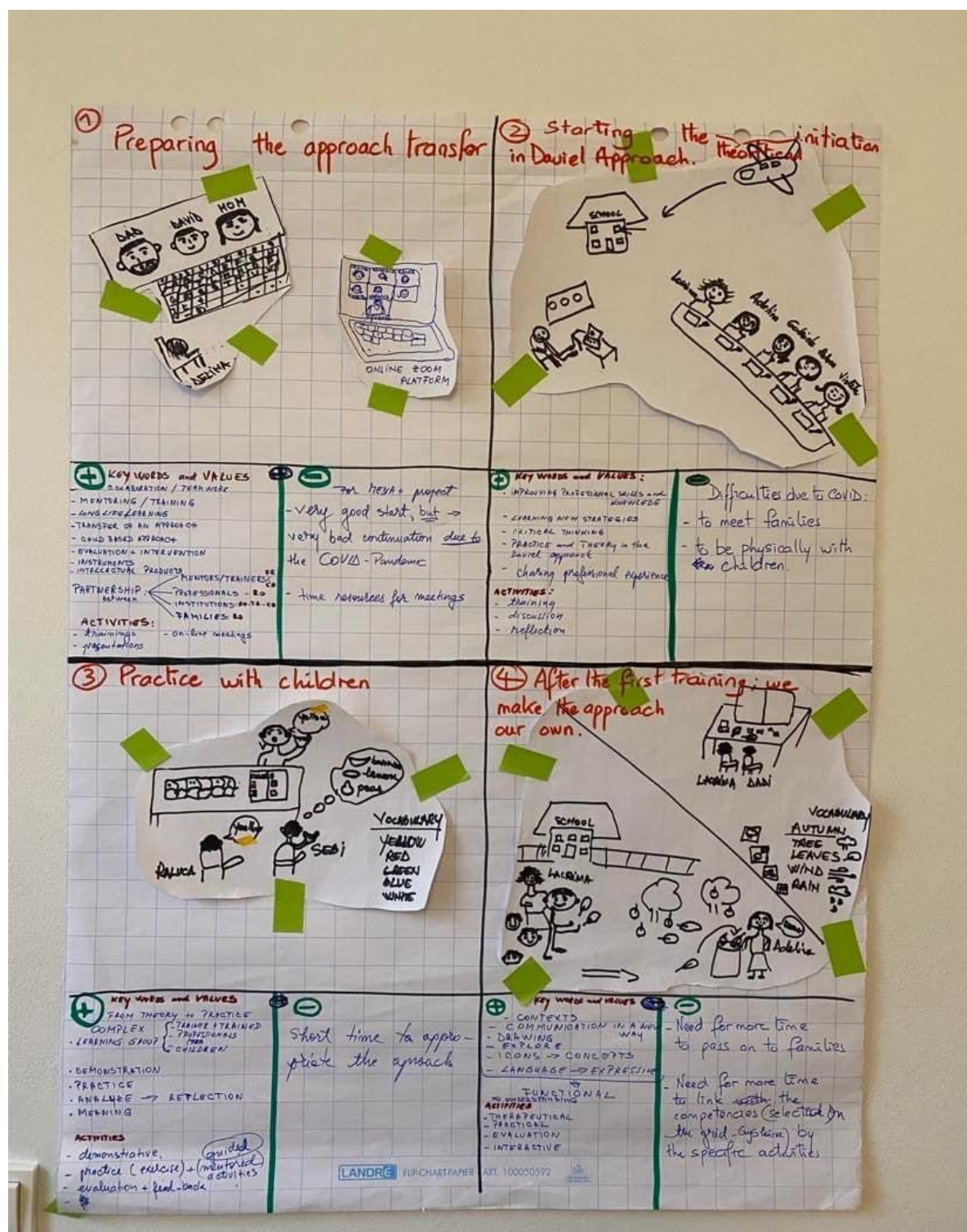
The third meeting took place in November 2020 and aimed to prepare the transfer of the Daviel approach. During the meetings, the Romanian specialists, under the guidance of the French trainers and the Canadian expert from the Center Spécialisé pour Sourds Raymond DEWAR from Québec, Canada performed the first evaluation of one of the participating children. On this occasion, the key aspects of the evaluation procedure were discussed, taking into account the psycho-individual characteristics of the children selected in the target group. The aspect that the specialists from France and Canada insisted on was the one related to the adaptation of the grid to the individual profile of each child, as well as its personalized application.

The members of the project team met online with the Canadian expert and the French trainers several times, even outside the official calendar, to discuss the case studies of the students in the target group and to finalize their preliminary assessment, using the PASS-PAR evaluation grid. Thus, during November, the binational, Romanian-French videoconference took place, the purpose of which was to complete the information for the production of the first brochure.

In March 2021, also online, the fourth transnational meeting of the Media + project was organized, attended by all five project partners, each presenting the stage in which they are applying the grid, while also providing feedback. trainers on how this type of complex evaluation was experienced, but also on the difficulties in collecting data.

The fifth transnational online meeting, in May 2021, was attended by team members and trainers from France and Canada. On this occasion, each case was discussed and analysed with the trainers, the matrix of skills / abilities that have development potential for students co-opted in the project was prepared and our team presented a tool for investigating parents' options regarding the choice skills to be developed / stimulated through the Daviel approach.

The sixth meeting, held in October 2021, online, brought together members of the Media + team and trainers from Canada and France. The purpose of the meeting was: reviewing the content of brochure number 4, intellectual product related to objective 1 of the project, analysing the skills selected for each child in the target group and establishing a strategy for monitoring the manifestation of selected skills in life situations; discussing the content of the monitoring grid (objective matrix) and evaluation criteria (performance descriptors); presentation of the products (portfolios and filmed sequences with activities



Visualisation of the transfer process elaborated by the project team at the international Média + training in Berlin, November 2021

performed according to the Daviel method), carried out for and together with the students from the target group.

In November, in Berlin, during the seventh transnational meeting, the partners of the Media + project put together the experiences they went through, thus describing a complex cross-border process, very heterogeneous, but even more interesting. The activities provided in the program aimed at the transfer of Daviel's approach to the three pilot centres and the presentation of the intellectual products of each partner (the four brochures); Achieving the matrix of competencies specific to teachers and caregivers who work with people with rare disabilities; elaboration of a manual with work instructions for teachers working with children with multiple / associated severe disabilities.

Adelina NICOLAE-ȘTEFAN,
special education teacher and member of the Media + project team

With the help of the DAVIEL approach, we brought improvements in the instructive-educational process of the student. We also had the opportunity to deepen the relationship with both the student and the other teachers in the class.

The DAVIEL approach involved a series of interactive activities with the student, activities in which other methods were used - imitation learning. Learning and applying new techniques in the learning process were a support for the student in the integration process.

DAVIEL's approach meant the development of some skills of the student: communication, language, emotions, friendship, free time, cognitive field, etc. Thus, through the drawings, the student learned to express and manage emotions, to communicate needs, to be understood in different contexts, to actively participate in different games, to respect rules, to socialize with other children, to manage conflict situations.

There will also be a diary (in pictures / drawings) with which the student will update what he has learned. Working skills were developed in the classroom, creating a collaborative experience.

By learning the DAVIEL approach, I will continue to make improvements in the student's instructional and educational process.

The eighth Romania-France binational meeting took place in February 2022. Encouraged by the joy of physical reunion, the psycho-educational teachers from the project team

of our institution and two representatives from GAPAS Paris, continued to deepen Daviel's approach, expanding the field of intervention and alternating theory with practice. Taking advantage of the presence of the trainer specialized in this method of intervention, the Romanian team provided, in extra time of the training, an extensive dissemination activity, organized within the methodical circle, in partnership with the Cluj Teaching Staff House, attended by 131 teachers from all over the country. On this occasion, theoretical information was presented about Daviel's approach, about the innovative evaluation strategies and therapeutic intervention with the students co-opted in the project, as well as about the intellectual products obtained.

The project team met in the same international formula, during the ninth Romania-France binational meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to complete the transfer process of Daviel's approach, as provided in the project schedule. Thus, the approach to developmental disorders, identified in students in the target group ended with the completion of the final assessment. During the three days of intense work, the activities of differentiated therapeutic intervention with the students co-opted in the project were continued, using in a personalized way the situational drawing and the pictographic code. The training course is over with the final assessment, ie the re-assessment of the five competencies selected for each student in the target group, with the help of the grid descriptors, the skills initially identified at.

The tenth binational meeting Romania-France took place between 02-04.05.2022, at the headquarters of our educational institution, attended by members of the project team of our institution and two specialists from the University of Paris Cite / Laboratoire de Psychologie Appliquée et d'Ergonomie, France.

The purpose of the meeting was to present a number of 17 metacompetences, included in the matrix of skills specific to professionals working with children with multiple severe disabilities / rare disabilities, developed by the French team.

At the working meeting, the members of the project team selected 5 (five) professional skills that were subjected to analysis within the International Workshop "Professional skills for a quality education in the field of multiple sensory disabilities", held on 03.05.2022, by members of the project team under the guidance of ISJ Cluj, staff of the Inspector General of School and of the Department of Special Psychopedagogy, Babeş-Bolyai University.

Gabriela CHIRTEȘ,
special education teacher, coordinator of the Romanian Media + team

Media+ was the second transfer of innovation Erasmus+ project implemented in our institution. Both grants have been approved by the French agency, which seems to encourage this type of transnational collaboration. Thus I had the opportunity to improve at the same time, in parallel, both my professional skills and those related to the management of this type of project.

As coordinator, but also as a member of the Romanian project implementation team, I am extremely satisfied with everything we have managed to achieve together: professional experiences and skills, intellectual products, success in dissemination. We managed to make known all the working tools, material resources, working methods, but also our results and last but not least the professionalism of our trainers at La Plane Centre.

At professional level, the most valuable thing I learned was the new approach to assessing and developing the hidden potential of children with disabilities and severe communication disorders. I was captivated by the gentleness and patience that this method requires, the confidence it gives to a child in terrible difficulty.

My biggest regret is that we were not able to organize all the meetings face to face. Due to the Covid pandemic, we continued to implement almost exclusively online, which changed everything: communication with children, parents, the project team. but not only that. the whole project schedule has changed, which has put us in trouble countless times.

The most pleasant memory I have is from the first visit of the French trainers to our institution. I was amazed by the way they interacted with the children, but especially by the way they managed to get information from them.

I would like to say A Big And Grateful Thank You to our fellow trainers, Veronique, Elizabeth and Gyslaine, who very patiently managed to initiate us in this educational therapeutic approach. I also hope that our collaboration will not stop here, for the benefit of the children and young people we work with.

Media + was a beautiful and complex project, sometimes difficult to manage, but which offered many professional satisfactions, as well as the opportunity to innovate our personal style of educational therapeutic approach. It has enriched our professional experience and only by putting together, in addition to the Daviel approach, many other good practices from four countries and two continents.

The workshop analysed and validated this set of professional meta-competencies, developed by French academics, based on extensive research conducted among teachers in France. The intention of the two French specialists was to compare and adapt them to the realities and needs of Romanian education. The five professional skills needed in the educational approach of students with sensory and / or multiple disabilities, used in contextualized, complex situations, were selected by the members of the project team after a thorough analysis of the material proposed by the French. During the workshop, which was also attended by teachers from all over the country, real matrices of sub-competencies were developed, thus proving the professionalism and seriousness of all those involved: psycho-educational teachers, speech therapists, clinical psychologists and psychotherapists in Cluj County, but also from kindergartens and special and public schools in the country, private offices or resource centres.

Although the Media + project ended in June 2022, the collaboration continues through its multiplier effects, but especially through the sharing of the experience gained. Thus, we can say with certainty that Daviel's approach will meet the training needs of many teachers in specialized education, as an innovative alternative approach to educational intervention for the development of the language of children with severe communication disorders.

Annexes

The Technical High School for the Hearing-Impaired

The Special Technological High School for the Hearing Impaired, Cluj-Napoca, is an institution with more than 130 years of experience in the field of education and rehabilitation of children with hearing impairments. Our institution offers educational services to 180 students with hearing and related disabilities from 22 counties in Romania. It was founded in 1888 by the city authorities. The premises were built in 1893 thanks to the support of the city officer and various donations. At the time, 60 students attended the school, and the educational training lasted seven years. The number of students increased over time, and today there are 22 classes, 3 nursery school classes and 3 groups of integrated children. From the beginning, the school was equipped with a boarding school for children coming from other departments in Romania.

The Center for Family Support and Early Recovery of Children with Hearing and / or Associated Disabilities was founded in 2003. A new level of education was created in 2007, the Technical High School.

Our Vision

The Special Technological High School for the Hearing Impaired, Cluj-Napoca, a school with a long tradition in Transylvania and Romania, aims at shaping the personality of the hearing-impaired child in all coordinates, with a view to rapid social integration. Starting from the idea that each child is unique and represents the most important value of the school, we try to optimise the role of the school through an adequate curriculum adapted to the individual needs and potentialities in order to equalise the chances of the hearing impaired students in the local community.

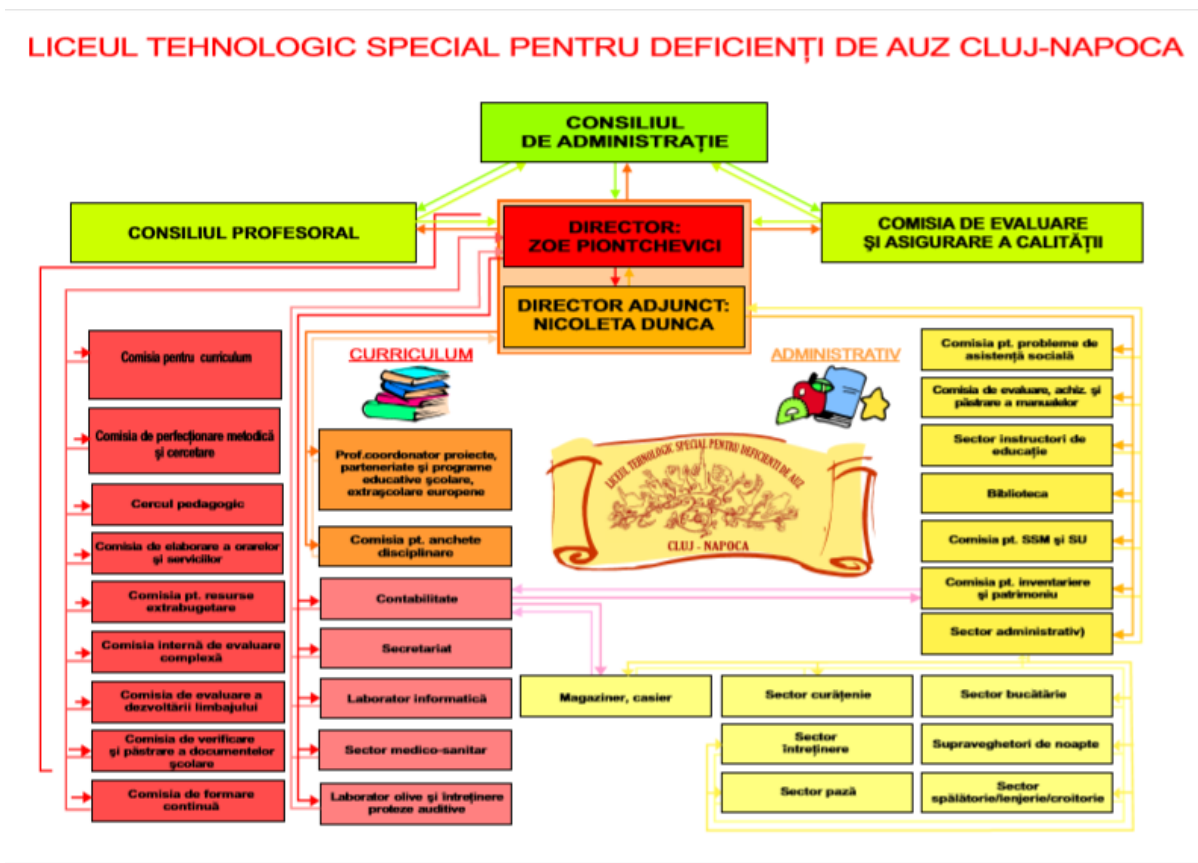
Our mission

The Special Technological High School for the Hearing Impaired, Cluj-Napoca offers equal opportunities for development and education by adapting the school curriculum to the spe-

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Departments

The school comprises four main departments and several services:



The Family Support and Early Recovery Centre for children with hearing and/or speech impairments was created through a Phare project (Access 2000). Its objectives are to ensure

- the early inclusion of children with hearing or associated disabilities in individual or group therapeutic programmes;

- individualised education, auditory training and speech therapy programmes for children integrated into regular school classes (nursery, primary and high school);
- the involvement of the family as a partner in the educational process to support the development of children with disabilities.

Beneficiaries are 35 to 40 children with hearing or associated disabilities under the age of 18, 15 children with cochlear implants, parents of children with hearing or associated disabilities and teachers in the regular educational system who work with children with hearing or associated impairments. Activities at the centre include speech therapy, auditory training, activities promoting cognitive development and sensory stimulation, as well as educational and family support.

The Hearing and Language Rehabilitation Centre, founded in 1968 as a department of the school, aims at promoting the integration of children with hearing impairments into regular classes, if they are endowed with adequate abilities. Its beneficiaries are 15 to 20 students from age 3 to 6 or 7. Its teachers and educators have received special training. Activities focus on verbal communication and lip-reading designed to develop auditory, communication and practical skills, as well as the ability of the children to express themselves in oral or sign language. Individual activities consist of auditory training, exercises for rhythm education, correction of language disorders, and the development of sensory, verbal and cognitive functions, as well as of lip-reading skills. Group activities are aimed at stimulating and developing language and communication skills, promoting knowledge of the environment, and developing arithmetic concepts, spatial and temporal representations, memorising and attention, sensory and mobility skills.

The Primary and Secondary Special Education, attended by 90 children with hearing or associated disabilities, implements the regular school curriculum but adapted to their specific needs. Therapeutic compensatory activities include speech therapy, auditory training, lip-reading activities, psychomotor education, rhythm stimulation, physical therapy, and complex and integrated therapy (personal autonomy training, sensory and cognitive stimulation, socialization, play therapy). Extracurricular activities include competitions, festivals, traditional and modern dance groups, various projects in partnership with other institutions. The *Secondary School*, inaugurated on 1 September 2007, offers a regular curriculum with the possibility of obtaining a certificate of a PC operator technician.

In addition the school has an audiology service, equipped with a sound-proof room and special instruments for assessing hearing capability and diagnosing hearing loss, a service for psychological assessment, a career counseling service and a social assistance service. It also runs a boarding school and a canteen.

Partnerships with Deaf associations and Parents' Associations

Our institution works in partnership with families, the local and national community, and with the hearing-impaired community. The latter is made up of people with varying degrees of hearing loss and hearing people, that is their family members and those who work with the hearing impaired. Hearing-impaired people have their own culture: drama, songs, jokes, transmitted through mime-gestural language. Schools for the hearing impaired are a link in the transmission of mime-gestural language. The National Association of the Hearing Impaired has branches in each county and runs clubs with regular meetings for cultural leisure and sports activities. In several Romanian cities, churches organise masses in mime-gestural language. Romania also has a National Association of Interpreters in Mimic-Gestural Language.

Romania's Public Policies for Persons with Disabilities

The concept of “disability” is defined in Law No. 448/2006 on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a generic term for insufficiencies/deficiencies, activity limitations and participation restrictions, defined in accordance with the International Classification of Functioning, Impairment and Health, adopted and approved by the World Health Organisation and which shows the negative aspect of the individual-context interaction.

In 2019, there were 206,839 people with physical disabilities, including 4,458 children; 162,480 people with somatic disabilities, including 14,395 children; 23,487 people with hearing disabilities, including 1,884 children; 94,303 people with visual disabilities, including 2,712 children; 122,103 people with mental disabilities, including 10,100 children; 88,745 persons with psychiatric disabilities, including 15,443 children; 106,303 persons with associated disabilities, including 16,068 children; 7,840 persons with HIV/AIDS, including 198 children; 3,369 persons with rare diseases, including 1,448 children; and 84 deaf-blind persons. In 2016, the distribution of people with disabilities was 52% in urban areas and 48% in rural areas.

About half of the total number of people with disabilities live in the countryside, which shows that there is a problem with the opportunities for these people in rural areas. If in urban areas they have some possibility of finding work, in rural areas they have difficulty in overcoming their condition, especially social exclusion.

The legal framework for children with disabilities is based on the principles and rights established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Romania has ratified both conventions.

The legal principles regarding the protection of persons with disabilities and the protection of children are provided for in the Romanian Constitution. The Constitution stipulates the rights of children and young people and mainly the obligation of the State to provide allowances for the care of disabled children. It recognizes the need to provide special protection to disabled persons and obliges the State to promote national policies that

ensure them equal opportunities and a good participation in the social life of the community.

Law no. 448/2006 on the protection and defense of persons with disabilities constitutes the general national legal framework for persons with disabilities. This law explicitly states that its provisions are to be applied to both adults and children with disabilities (Art. 2). It establishes different forms of special education that can be offered to persons with disabilities (Art. 16): a) special education units; b) individual integration in the mass education system; c) special groups or classes integrated in pre-school units; d) educational services offered by teachers outside of schools; e) home schooling until the end of secondary education, but not beyond the age of 26; education in hospital, during hospitalization; g) educational alternatives (Law no. 448 does not specify this).

The Law no. 95/2006 on health reform stipulates that minors with disabilities benefit from insurance in the national public health system, even if they had not contributed to it (and they could not have done so).

Law no. 19/2000 on the public pension system and other social insurance rights tangentially concerns social assistance and compensation for children with disabilities. Law 19 provides that insured persons who care for a disabled child are entitled to medical leave and compensation until the child reaches the age of 18.

Law 1/2011 establishes that integration is a fundamental principle for children with disabilities, but it also provides for the option of special educational training. The Ministry of National Education has the general competence for the implementation of a special education program, both at the institutional and curricular levels.

Order no. 725/2002 of the Ministry of Health and Family regarding the criteria used to establish the degree of disability of children is a technical regulation that specifies the medical (or other) criteria used to establish the degree of disability of the child.

At the national level, the main competent authorities are: the National Authority for Persons with Disabilities and the General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection, organised within the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection and the Elderly; they are the authorities that coordinate the activities of special protection and defense of the rights of persons with disabilities, respectively children with disabilities. They have

the role of general coordinator, have a strategic function and have competences in the legislative process of the field.

The Ministry of National Education has a general role in the organization of the educational system in Romania, including the special education system (or integrated system) for children with disabilities. The Ministry is obliged to elaborate the methodology for the special education system, but it has not done so so far.

The Ministry of Health has general coordinating competences for the medical assistance system, including special health services for disabled persons.

Integrated special and special education is an integral part of the Romanian national education system and offers all children/students/youths educational programmes adapted to the degree of disability and their developmental needs.

It is organised at all levels of pre-university education, according to the type and degree of the disability: mental, auditory, visual, locomotor, associated.

Inclusive education has been adopted in Romania since the 1990s and it translates into respect for diversity, initiation and practical realisation of access and participation in education and social life for all categories of children. Nowadays, about half of the children with disabilities are enrolled in mass education.

The legislation in the field of special education has been designed to respond to a wide and varied spectrum of special situations. Taking into account this reality, special, integrated special and inclusive education has been organised at all levels of pre-university education, depending on the type and degree of the disability.

The special education units for students with sensory disabilities apply the teaching plan of the mass school. These units maintain only the structure and organisational form of the special education system, but the content, academic training and specialisation are similar to mass education. Special technological high schools, high school classes and special post-secondary classes are organised according to the mass school model (content, profiles, specialisations, aims, objectives and/or skills). The strategies, modalities and teaching/learning methods are specific to them.

At the end of their studies, the students of these special education units take national exams (tests, baccalaureate or final exams) just like other students of mass education.

They benefit from facilities and adaptations regarding the methodologies of organisation and conduct of examinations.

A generalised and personalised intervention plan is elaborated by the regional evaluation committee for each student with serious, severe, profound or associated disabilities, containing objectives specific to their needs and possibilities of psycho-individual development. This regional committee is multidisciplinary, composed of psychologists, pedagogues, a pediatrician and a social worker. The committee is the one that establishes the axes set up and the periodicity of the evaluation. This period depends on the case: one, two or four years. These students benefit from adapted procedures of examination and current evaluation.