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Ministerul Educației, Cercetării,  
Tineretului și Sportului



**Study on the necessity of the  
implementation of the Integrated  
National Strategy for the  
Formation and Development of  
Parenting Skills**

București, 2011

UNICEF ROMANIA      OUR CHILDREN FOUNDATION

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH,  
YOUTH AND SPORT

**RESEARCH STUDY**  
*on the Need to Implement  
the National Integrated Strategy for the  
Training and Development of Parenting  
Competencies*



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**on the Need to Implement the**  
***National Integrated Strategy for the***  
***Training and Development of***  
***Parenting Competencies***

Bucharest, 2011

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Fast-moving social life changes call for a lifelong renewal of knowledge, skills and values, with parents being the largest group in need of such upgrading.

In systematic terms, parent education emerges as a component of the education system as well as a lifelong learning dimension.

Except for some career upgrading programmes, adult education cannot be made compulsory; it needs to be tailored to the needs of various adult groups and to offer learners more liberal conditions for self-education and self-assessment, for choosing learning contents and methods, place and time. In this context, parents and future parents, as target groups, need a highly flexible, dynamic and adjustable education system, which will have to meet parents' requirements and needs.

**'Parenting'** means fulfilling parental responsibilities and taking related actions. It changes with society, which decides its scope and content.

In the past decades, parental status and role – with physical, psychological, social, cultural and economic facets – have experienced a rapid evolution under the influence of worldwide technological and informational developments and family and educational pattern diversification, constantly adding new competencies and skills.

One thing is certain: "the art of being a parent" is something one has to learn. Thus, according to one of the definitions coined by specialised literature, **parent education** is "*a formal attempt to enhance parental conscience and to use parenting practices*" for child

education.<sup>1</sup> David Chamberlain mentions parenting as a feature of parent-child interaction (**Treatise on Psychiatry**, PUF 1996).

**Parent education** comprises two aspects:

1. *parent information and training related to educational activities with children* – following “general” rules and norms which have been devised based on research and educational practices, providing a positive learning environment (to make the child feel secure, wanted and loved; to teach the child how to be independent and responsible; to avoid conflicts and know how to overcome them; to show consideration for the child’s feelings, needs, duties; to take an interest in what the child is doing, to address his or her difficulties; to choose growth and development over perfection);
2. *parent information and empowerment so that the “job” as a spouse and parent can be learnt within the family* (Ionescu, Negreanu 2006).

Nonetheless, successful education does not depend entirely on parents and their capacity to put these multiple competencies into practice, but also on the will of institutions called upon to validate and value parental responsibilities and authority, to be close to parents and support them in their educational mission in the context of lifelong learning.

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[http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/36/bd/18.pdf](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/36/bd/18.pdf)



Giving support for the initiation, training, and development of parenting competencies turns out to be one of the missions that the State must embark on if we want child and youth education to become a coherent, efficient action granting equal opportunities to all.

Supporting parents for the child's best interest means creating a whole new family culture based on dialogue, knowledge and participation, on the one hand, and facilitating cooperation between professionals, parents and public authorities contributing to child education and development, on the other hand.

## II. BRIEF HISTORY OF PARENT EDUCATION

There have always been excellent educators and loving parents who have probably not asked themselves so many questions and yet have managed to do a very good job; but that may have been easier in a very stable world where tradition had the final word (Osterrieth, P., 1973, p.70).

The very first parent education interventions took place in the United States of America at the *beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century*<sup>2</sup>, as **informal meetings** where child-rearing discussions would be held and mothers would share from their experience.

At the *beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century* emerged the **first structured parenting programmes**, aimed at training parents in child development<sup>3</sup>, but they started to grow only after World War II.

Other initiatives focused on disadvantaged families, whose children would fail at school or drop out completely. **Head Start** is such a programme, making its debut in the *mid 1960's*.

Similarly, in Europe, parent education started to develop in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Western European countries, although solitary attempts had been previously made.

**The first parenting magazines** were released in Europe between 1830 and 1850 – *Mother's Magazine*, *Mother's Assistant*, and *Parent's Magazine*.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://dspace.lib.iup.edu:8080/dspace/bitstream/2069/48/1/Darla+Clayton.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content\\_storage\\_01/0000019b/80/36/bd/18.pdf](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/36/bd/18.pdf)

In the *early 60's*, Thomas Gordon designed the parenting course called ***Parent Effectiveness Training*** (P.E.T). Based on the model he had developed, Gordon taught parents, teachers, educators and leaders for over 50 years how to build efficient relationships. His model is built on the belief that the use of power in a relationship is destructive, all the more in the parent-child relationship.

*In this millennium*, the importance of parenting has been recognised in different European Union documents:

- “***The Lisbon Declaration***” (2005) reads that the economic development of contemporary societies depends on their populations’ education, too; “the human capital” becomes just as important for societal development as natural resources or physical capital. Moreover, it is theoretically unlimited, and the individual can overcome his or her limitations through progress and can thus become a major factor for achieving sustainable economic and social development, with parent education included in each nation’s strategies to reach this desideratum.
- In *April 2006*, at the Monaco Conference, the Council of Europe launched the three-year programme “***Building a Europe for and with Children***”, aimed at ensuring an integrated approach to child rights promotion in the Member States.
- In *December 2006*, the Committee of Ministers of the **Council of Europe** adopted ***Recommendation Rec(2006)19***<sup>4</sup> recognising the importance of

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[https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=Rec\(2006\)19&Language=lanEnglish&Site=CO](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=Rec(2006)19&Language=lanEnglish&Site=CO)

parenting and recommending measures for Member States to develop special parenting support policies.

Given that parent education is a mission that the State must embark on, we believe that it should be looked at in close correlation and interdependence with the education system.

Thus, a Report on School-Family Relations in the Countries of the European Community (Macbeth, Al., 1984), based on comparative, documentary and empirical research, lists four reasons why school and family should try to establish a relationship:

- a. Parents are legally responsible for their children's education;
- b. School is just one component of child education; a great portion of education is received outside school;
- c. Research highlights the influence that parents' attitude has on learners' educational attainment, especially on school motivation, and the fact that communication with school may advance certain parenting behaviours;
- d. Social groups involved in the institution of school (mainly parents and teachers) have the right to influence school management.

Therefore, with existing research, it has been increasingly recognised that **intervening at small and very small ages is an efficient method to cut down grade failure**, especially in primary school, and **early**

**school leaving.** In addition, the belief is that early childhood education may be an essential means to reduce social inequalities. And, by getting the family closer to school from a child's early age, we can also 'educate' the family and we can properly intervene in deficient areas such as: infant mortality, child separation from family, family desertion and drop-out, information on child rearing and care, the rights of the child.

Therefore, **building a parent education system** – centred not only on child education, but also on child care and protection, on raising the interest for a new family culture and on the idea of social inclusion – open to youngsters as potential future parents and to the parents of children aged 0-18 years, **looks like an urgent need.**

### III. NATIONAL CONTEXT

Although until not long ago parent education was not an educational policy priority in Romania, in recent years countless discussions have revolved around the fact that giving support for the initiation, training and development of parenting competencies has turned out to be one of the missions that the State must embark on if we want child and youth education to become a coherent, efficient action granting equal opportunities to all.

Examples from other states show that policies on the initiation, training and development of parenting competencies must start from current family and educational models, without imposing single patterns as ideal. At the same time, these policies must encourage parents to analyse, to understand and even to suggest alternatives or to transform models according to the needs of the child and family.

***In Romania***, until 1989, parent involvement was relatively limited. With its politics, the communist regime encouraged child education and development responsibilities to be transferred to education and child protection professionals, who had multiple child development and education competencies and responsibilities.

After 1989, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health (of that time) recognised the need to support the work of all types of professionals involved in child rearing and child education from birth to 7 years (orderlies, nurses, kindergarten teachers), as well as of parents. Ever more emphasis has been placed on

promoting the 'early childhood development' concept and on enhancing the means to reach and stimulate such development.

In this respect, all preschool education programmes and projects run by the Ministry of Education and various partners have highlighted three main aspects:

- The need to intervene in order to cut back grade repetition, especially in primary education, and early school leaving, as well as to reduce social inequalities;
- Get families close to school and educate them from a child's early age, thus ensuring proper intervention alongside public institutions in deficient areas such as: infant mortality, child separation from family, family desertion and drop-out, information about child rearing and care, the rights of the child;
- Create a parent education system, centred not only on child education, but also on child care and protection, on raising the interest for a new family culture and on the idea of social inclusion, open to youngsters as potential future parents.

Hence, we believe that a **brief history of parent education in Romania** is most welcome, given the issues that face contemporary world and, hence, education:

1. In 1992, with UNICEF support, a pilot early childhood education programme – ECEPSA (Early Childhood Education Programme Based on Stimulation Areas) – kicked off, including a parent education component, in which Parent Resource

Centres (PRC) were set up. The programme yielded significant results in the preschool education system and by the time of its completion in 1998 it had reached national coverage with the support of county school inspectorates and local authorities which, in most cases, helped set up and equip new resource centres and outfit kindergarten group rooms in line with early childhood education principles.

2. As part of the Step by Step educational alternative, after 1994, when Step by Step groups were included in public kindergartens, activities were run to individualise the educational process and hence parent education, similar to those from the ECEPSA Programme.
3. In 2000, Holt Romania, in partnership with NACRP<sup>5</sup> and with UNICEF support, carried out the programme aimed at building GDSACP capacity to deliver parent education to parents of children aged 0-3 years, which was actually a 'pioneer' programme in the area of parent education and early childhood education. After 2000, together with UNICEF, Holt continued to run campaigns promoting parenting and the importance of the first three years of life in 27 Romanian counties, in partnership with county directorates for child protection and with financial support from UNICEF.
4. Since 2000, the Ministry of Education, in partnership with Our Children Foundation (OCF) with financial support from UNICEF Romania, has been running the National Parenting Programme,

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<sup>5</sup> Currently the "General Directorate for Child Protection"; specialised directorate under the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection



based on the “Educate This Way” method, developed and tested by the Netherlands Institute for Care and Welfare at the University of Utrecht.

5. In addition, since 2004, another educational partnership established between the Romanian Association for Education and Development (RAED) from Târgoviște, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) and the County School Inspectorates from 17 counties made it possible to run, with UNICEF support, the pilot project “Future Parents’ Education”. This included the development of a curriculum and support materials for the optional subject “Future Parents’ Education” for the 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades, and the development and publication of the teacher’s guide and student’s guide.
6. Starting with the 2006-2007 school year, the Centre ‘Partnership for Equality’ concluded a partnership agreement with the Ministry of Education, enabling it to start, with support from UNICEF Romania, training sessions held by the parent educators in the “Educate This Way” programme, with a view to tackling gender-based education at parent meetings.

These are the most relevant parent education programmes, completed by a series of studies conducted over the same period.

Moreover, the need for parent education clearly came out from the survey “Parenting Knowledge,

Attitudes and Practices in Romania”<sup>6</sup>, highlighting a multitude of aspects – some of them new – regarding parenting competencies, values, educational prospects and actions of the parents who in 2005 had children aged 8 years or less, as follows:

1. Very few parents are truly concerned with getting trained in child care, child rearing, education, health and protection, as less than 1% of the sample declared to have read child education books and few of them (nearly 25%) to have watched TV shows that tackled such topics.
2. Parents consider some parental concerns as major, such as child health concerns (over 90% of parents, both from urban and rural areas, go to the doctor if the child is sick; approximately 98% of preschool children are vaccinated, reflecting parents’ child health concern, although only 70% of the interviewed parents knew the real meaning of vaccination).
3. Traumatizing methods that embody physical or psychological child abuse are not considered as such by parents, who think these are normal attitudes.
4. A considerable share of families understands and appreciates the importance of play for child development and, in most cases, pays special attention to this aspect (parents participate in child’s playing according to his or her age, which also confirms parents’ certain degree of knowledge of the child’s developmental stage

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<sup>6</sup> “Parenting Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices in Romania”, UNICEF, Our Children Foundation and the Step by Step Centre for Education and Professional Training - Bucharest, 2005

relative to his or her age, as well as some flexibility as regards the needs and demands expressed by the child in this respect).

5. A child's life is harsher and more exposed to the risk of getting sick in rural areas; rural children work from an early age (carrying water, feeding the cattle, helping out in the garden, etc.), while parents' child education expectations usually go as far as high school.
6. Parents' knowledge and practices are still strongly marked by the family 'culture', customs and practices inherited from past generations. Hence, traditional practices continue to be widely used (baby swaddling *for fear of crooked legs*, hat-wearing *for fear of catching a cold*, etc.).

Moreover, in Romania, despite numerous laws and regulations on child education and children's rights protection (see Annex 1), none of them sets down the need for parent education, nor does it make it compulsory.

On the other hand, Romanian society continues to deal with a series of issues in the areas of child rearing, child care, health and education that numerous official documents, studies and specialised publications analyse and present as being greatly determined by full or partial lack of parenting competencies (high infant mortality rate due to failure of going to the doctor right away, relatively high drop-out rates, low level of parenting knowledge, especially in rural communities, the still strong influence of impactful traditions).

In this context, with UNICEF support, a proposal was drawn up in 2008 for a **National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies**.

The strategic document considers lifelong learning a focal point and is primarily aimed at individuals' lifelong personal, social and professional development, with a view to improving the quality of life both for individuals and for their collectivity. For this reason, the **credo** on which it is founded is: *All parents and youth as potential future parents **must get** support for quality, non-discriminatory, participatory and internationalised parent education, for **gaining** parenting skills and the capacity to communicate efficiently.*

Thus, as an important step forward for relevant policies, **the objectives of the National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies** – defined as a process of facilitating parents' awareness and expression of parental and educational roles for their optimisation – are promoted both by the *National Strategy for Development* (2009 – 2014), where parent education is cited as a priority, and by a series of campaigns advertising and raising awareness of its importance, initiated by various governmental and nongovernmental agencies.

Moreover, the new *Law on National Education* No 1/2011 promotes and supports the objectives of this strategy, both by stating the governing principles of pre-university and higher education and lifelong learning in Romania (Article 3) and by describing how pre-university education centres on beneficiaries (Article 80).

Hence, among the principles specified in Article 3 of the *Law on National Education*, which are directly connected to the **National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies**, we find:

- *The principle of equity — based on which access to learning is granted without discrimination;*

- *The principle of quality — based on which educational activities are linked to reference standards and to national and international good practices;*
- *The principle of relevance — based on which education meets the need for personal, social and economic development;*
- *The principle of efficiency — based on which the best educational outputs are achieved by managing existing resources;*
- *The principle of decentralisation — based on which major decisions are made by the stakeholders who are directly involved in the process;*
- *The principle of equal opportunities;*
- *The principle of transparency — ensuring full visibility of decisions and results through their regular and adequate communication;*
- *The principle of social inclusion;*
- *The principle of learner-centred education;*
- *The principle of parent participation and accountability;*
- *The principle of basing decisions on dialogue and consultation.*

As regards learner-centred pre-university education, Article 80 of the **Law on National Education** makes it *compulsory to consult with secondary and tertiary beneficiaries' representatives, parent associative structures, business environment representatives, local governments and civil society*, as an important effort to ensure secondary and tertiary education beneficiaries' participation and accountability.

## IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### ***IV.1. Research Goal and Objectives***

All children need and are entitled to be taken care of and raised by their parents in a competent manner.

The data gathered in this research will help redefine, promote and implement the **National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies**.

Therefore, this research aims at the following specific objectives:

- ✓ Analyse decision makers' opinions about the implementation of the *National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies*;
- ✓ Analyse parents' opinions about the need and opportunity for parent education, information sources available in the field and their expectations;
- ✓ Draw up a set of proposals for improving the *National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies*, with a view to redefining, promoting and implementing it.

### ***IV.2. Investigation Methods and Techniques***

The research has made use of a complex methodology in order to capture as many perspectives and aspects related to the development of the parent education concept in Romania.

To this end, we used the following research methods:

- ✓ Documentary analysis;
- ✓ Questionnaire-based enquiry (online and printout questionnaires for decision makers and parents);
- ✓ Individual interviews.

At the same time, the list of instruments that were used comprised *cover letters*, with a major role in raising the interest for this study and increasing collected data accuracy.

**Documentary analysis** meant examining papers and studies regarding parent education around the world and in Romania, as well as related regulatory acts with a view to setting the general framework and laying the foundations for this investigative endeavour.

**Questionnaire-based enquiry** was used in order to get information from decision makers (mayors, county council members, local council members, GDSACP managers, family doctors, school principals, kindergarten principals, general inspectors at county school inspectorates, specialist inspectors for different educational stages) and from parents.

For both target groups a questionnaire was drawn up, in electronic and printout versions, comprising 25 questions each, grouped under two chapters:

- 18 background questions referring to the need for and the means to implement the *National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies*;
- A set of 7 sociological questions.

Nearly 40% of all background questions, thought for each questionnaire specific to one target group category or another, are open multiple-answer questions and approximately 60% are closed-ended.

Both questionnaires comprise at least three aspects on which this research focuses, namely:

1. Importance of and need for parent education;
2. Authorities/institutions/persons with potential parent education roles;
3. The most appropriate channels to publicise parent education-specific information.

Electronic questionnaires were sent to mayoralties, local councils, county councils, general directorates for social assistance and child protection (GDSACP), county public health directorates, county school inspectorates and to the parents attending Our Children Foundation's online parenting course.

Online questionnaires addressed to decision makers were advertised through two local administration organisations (namely the Association of Romanian Communes and the Association of Romanian Towns).

Printout questionnaires (see Annexes 1 and 2) were used for interviews and direct discussions with decision makers and parents from the 11 counties included in the sample.

Parent questionnaires were accompanied by a brief explanation, and those for decision makers were preceded by an explanatory letter (see Annex 3).

**Individual interviews** were addressed to both decision makers and parents from the 11 counties selected in the sample. The questions were the same as the ones that we find in the questionnaires designed for the two categories of the target group.



### **IV.3. Units/Institutions Involved. Investigated Population**

The research aims at investigating the perspectives and aspects related to the development of the parent education concept in Romania and, hence, to the *National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies*, resorting to a nationally representative sample selected based on the main features of the units/institutions or persons responsible for parent education.

Hence, the main features we looked at were:

- Geographic and ethnic representation;
- Area of residence (urban – with two choices: municipal city/county capital and small town, and rural – mostly communes).

To ensure diversified geographic and ethnic representation, the following counties were randomly selected: Alba, Bacău, Bistrița-Năsăud, Călărași, Harghita, Ilfov, Maramureș, Mehedinți, Olt, Suceava, Timiș.

In each county, the municipal city/county capital, two small towns and two communes (a total of 5 locations per county) were selected for interviews.

Thus, research was carried out in the following localities:

- County of Alba: Alba-Iulia, Sebeș, Blaj, Ighiu, Stremț;
- County of Bacău: Bacău, Onești, Comănești, Blagești, Gârleni;
- County of Bistrița-Năsăud: Bistrița, Năsăud, Beclean, Toaca, Salva;
- County of Călărași: Călărași, Oltenița, Fundulea, Ștefan cel Mare, Lehliu Village;

- County of Harghita: Miercurea Ciuc, Toplița, Bălan, Tulgheș, Bilbor;
- County of Ilfov: Buftea, Măgurele, Bragadiru, Berceni;
- County of Maramureș: Baia Mare, Vișeu de Sus, Târgul Lăpuș, Farcașa, Moisei;
- County of Mehedinți: Drobeta Turnu-Severin, Orșova, Strehaia, Eșelnița, Cujmir;
- County of Olt: Slatina, Dragasani, Bals, Seaca, Falcoiu
- County of Suceava: Suceava, Rădăuți, Gura Humorului, Ipotești, Vicovu de Jos;
- County of Timiș: Timișoara, Lugoj, Făget, Știuca, Racovița;
- The City of Bucharest.

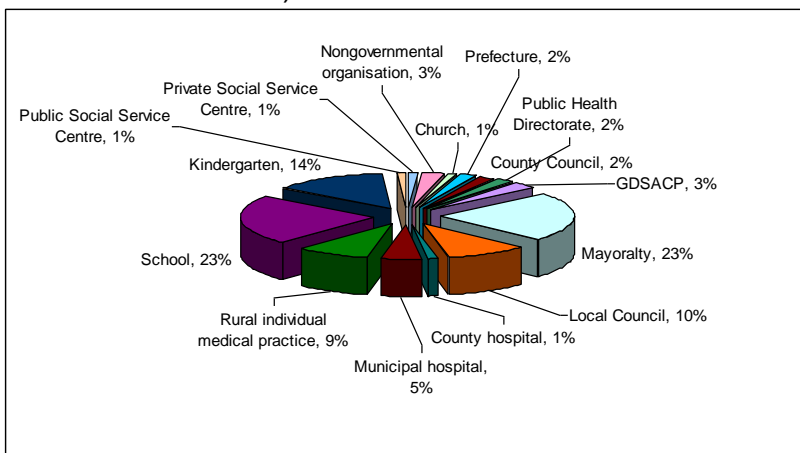
Outside these counties, electronic questionnaires were sent via e-mail in order to collect as many opinions from decision makers.

At least 15 types of units/institutions (from the 11 selected counties) were involved in this research and 276 persons from these establishments were interviewed, as resulting from the following table:

No	Unit/Institution involved	Number of interviewed persons
1	Prefecture	5
2	County Council	6
3	Public Health Directorate	6
4	GDSACP	7
5	Mayoralty	63
6	Local Council	28
7	County hospital	3

No	Unit/Institution involved	Number of interviewed persons
8	Municipal hospital	13
9	Rural individual medical practice	25
10	School	63
11	Kindergarten	39
12	Public Social Service Centre	3
13	Private Social Service Centre	3
14	Nongovernmental organisation	8
15	Church	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>276</b>

A significant percentage of the answers (37%) came from educational establishments: school inspectorates, kindergartens and schools, as well as from local administration institutions: mayoralities and local councils (43%). Moreover, a surprising portion of the information was offered by medical facilities: municipal hospital and individual medical practice (over 4% each and 14% cumulated).



At the same time, as regards the second target group (parents), we see that 1,012 parents from the 11 counties selected in the sample provided an answer to the questions included in the specific questionnaire – 96.08% of them were interviewed face-to-face and 3.92% responded to the online questionnaire.

The number of answers by county and target group category (excluding online respondents) is presented below:

<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>Number of answers from decision makers</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number of answers from parents</b>	<b>%</b>
AB	22	7.97	94	
BC	32	11.59	99	
BN	30	10.87	100	
CL	33	11.96	99	
HR	34	12.32	99	
IF	20	7.25	73	
MM	30	10.87	100	
OT	16	5.80	40	
SV	30	10.87	97	
TM	29	10.51	92	
<b>Total</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>981</b>	

The representative sample, comprised of 276 decision makers (mayors, county council members, local council members, GDSACP managers, family doctors, school principals, kindergarten principals, general inspectors at county school inspectorates, specialist inspectors for different educational stages) and 1,012 parents from 11 counties across the country, showed important features that are relevant for research findings

and conclusions and therefore we present them hereafter:

- A significant share of both decision makers and parents from the sample, were:
  - 1 – Women;
  - 2 – Over 30;
  - 3 – Living in urban area;
  - 4 – Employed;
  - 5 – With one or two children.
- Urban parents' average age was 31-35 years, whereas rural parents' was 25-30 years;
- Most respondent parents were married (88.64%);
- Educational attainment as declared by respondent decision makers is higher education for 58.70% of them and even post-graduate studies for 19.57%;
- Educational attainment as declared by respondent parents reaches relatively equal shares: higher education (30.23%) and high school (31.73%);
- Most decision makers come from mayoralties (23%) or schools (23%).

#### ***IV.4. Research Implementation***

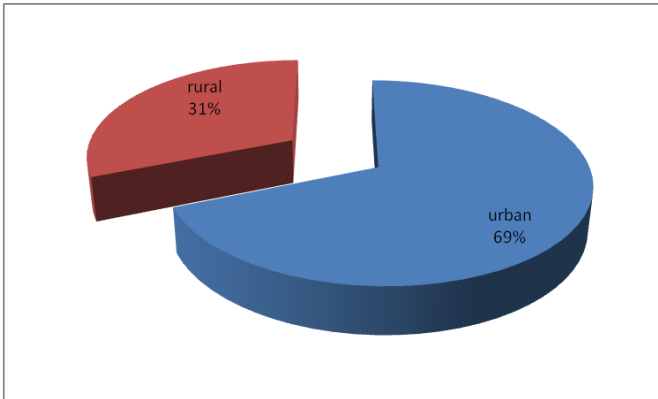
After designing the instruments and selecting the counties, the localities respectively, the two types of questionnaires were sent to all counties and interviews were conducted.

Hence, in each of the 11 selected counties, the following decision makers were invited to give interviews:

- In municipal cities: GDSACP manager, mayor or deputy mayor, County Council secretary with child protection responsibilities, the manager of the Public Health Directorate, general school inspector

- and the strategy and programme development inspector, the principals of two schools and of two kindergartens (around 10 decision makers in total);
- In small towns and rural areas (in the two communes): mayor, a local council representative, family doctor, a school/kindergarten principal (around 4 decision makers).

Based on this arrangement, we received answers from 190 decision makers in urban area and from nearly 86 decision makers in rural area.



Besides the printout questionnaire-based interviews, electronic questionnaires were sent to both decision makers and parents.

Only 40 parents filled in the e-questionnaire and solely 8 decision makers managed to answer to all the questions in the electronic questionnaire.

Interviews with parents were carried out in the localities selected from each county, with a maximum of 10 parents from one school and one kindergarten/locality.

Hence, 559 urban parents and 462 rural parents answered the questions, as seen in the table below:

<b>Area of residence</b>	<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>%</b>
urban	559	54.75
rural	462	45.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,021</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The questionnaires were later introduced in databases and processed with the SPSS programme.

#### ***IV.5. Research Limitations and Setbacks***

We also have to mention that the information collection process stumbled upon a series of setbacks caused by the following issues:

- ✓ Incomplete answers to questionnaires, especially to the electronic ones addressed to decision makers. Eleven answers to the online questionnaire could not be used because respondents had given up ticking the answers after the first 3 or 4 questions.
- ✓ The data collection period overlapped with the election campaign from the autumn of 2009 and the units/institutions involved in the research underwent a series of structural fluctuations and changes. This slowed down the data collection process and reduced decision makers' interest in filling out the questionnaire by themselves or via interview.
- ✓ Difficult statistical interpretation and processing of the data contained in the open-ended questions.

## V. FINDINGS

As mentioned in the previous chapter, both questionnaires contain at least three aspects on which this research focuses, namely:

1. Importance of and need for parent education;
2. Authorities/institutions/persons with potential parent education roles;
3. The most appropriate channels to publicise parent education-specific information.

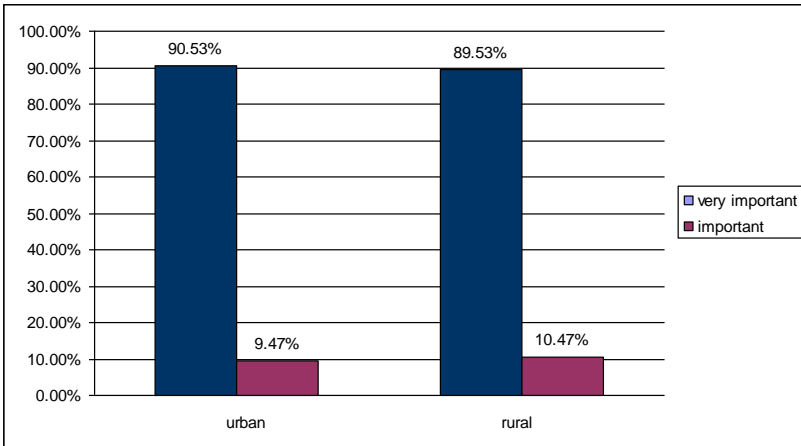
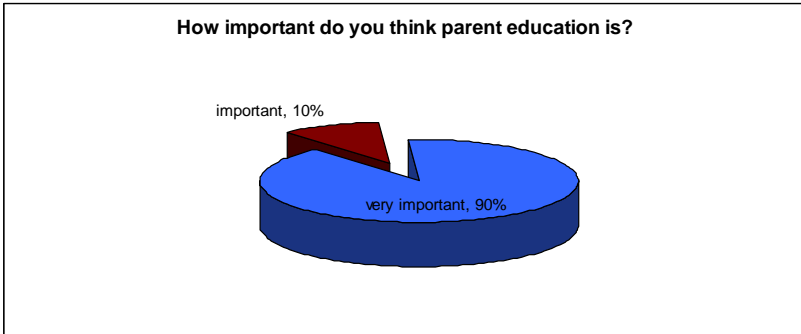
Thus, as far as findings are concerned, we will try to present and analyse them by structuring relevant research information based on these aspects.

### ***V.1. Importance of and need for parent education***

Both decision makers and parents think that parent education is a crucial matter and thus recognise that we need it in our life, regardless whether we are parents or not, decision makers or young people still in training.

Consequently, to the question posed to decision makers about the importance of parent education, 90% of them have declared that it is *very important* and 10% that it is *important*. Obviously, the answer variants of *little importance* and *not important* have not been ticked.

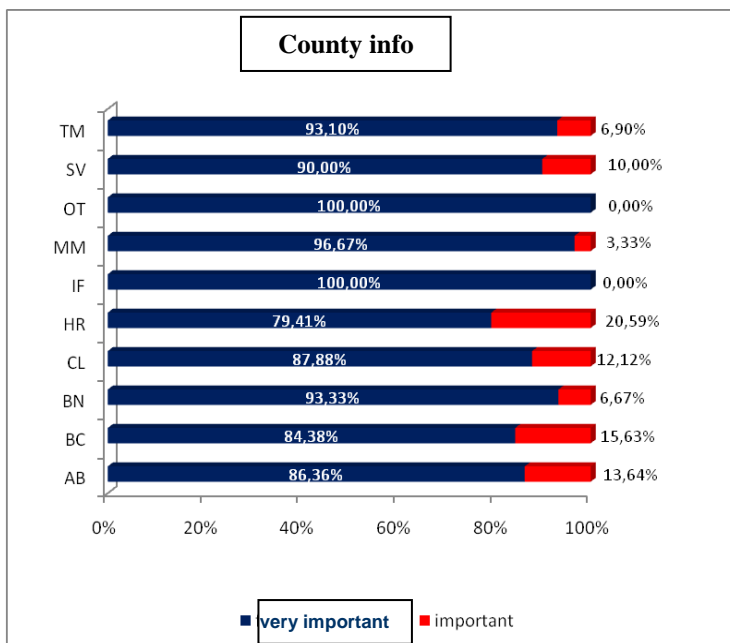




Moreover, as concerns the answers received in rural and urban areas, we find that the shares are very close, namely: 89.53% of rural decision makers and 90.53% of urban decision makers have declared that parent education is *very important*.

An even more profound interpretation, looking at the number of respondents and the county where they come from, points us to the idea that in the counties where organised, structured and concerted efforts have been made in the field, decision makers have been

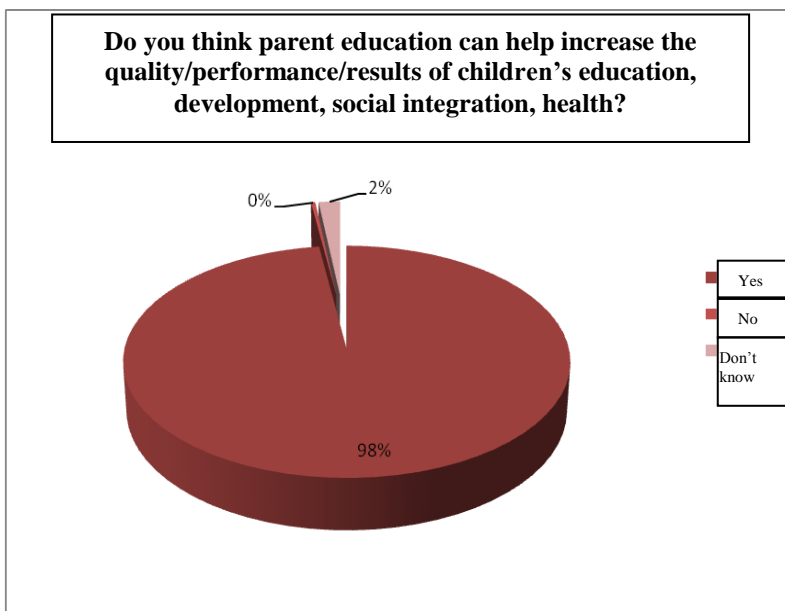
sensitised and have become more informed about and more open to this matter.



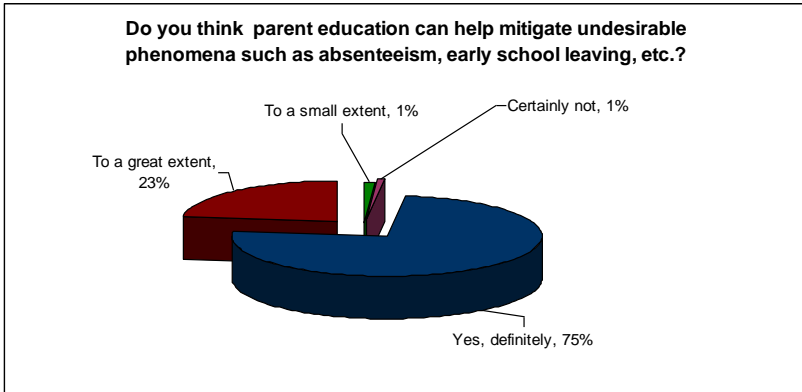
Therefore, in counties like Bistrița-Năsăud, Călărași, Maramureș and Suceava, where the parent education programme “Educate This Way” has been running with remarkable results for at least 8-9 years, most decision makers find parent education *very important*. At the same time, just as surprising, in the counties of Olt and Ilfov, which have recently started to implement the parenting programme “*Educate This Way*”, all decision makers who have been interviewed consider that parent education is very important for enhancing parenting competencies.

In addition, decision makers' opinions about the special importance of parent education highlight the effects parenting has on two social life matters in particular:

1. Increasing the quality/performance/results of children's education, development, social integration, health (97.83%);



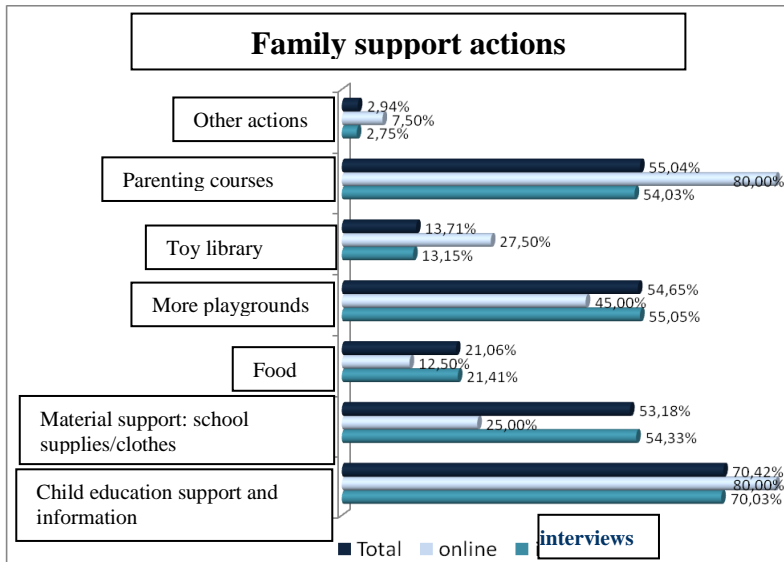
2. mitigating undesirable phenomena such as: absenteeism, early school leaving, etc. (75%).



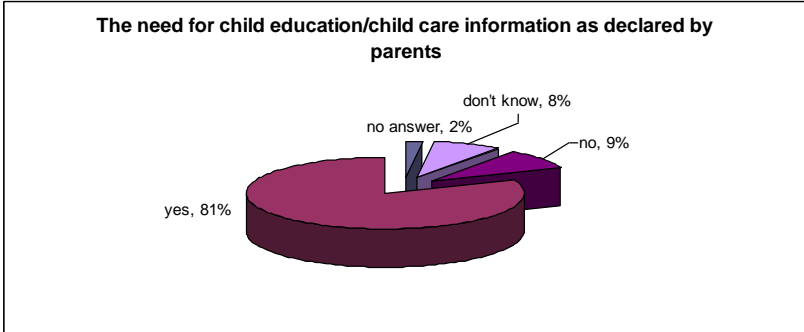
Correlated to decision makers' answers to similar questions, parents' answers to questions like:

- ✓ *What actions do you think should be taken to support families?*
- ✓ *Do you think that you need more information in order to be able to offer your child proper education and care?*
- ✓ *How often do you seek child care/education information?*

highlight the fact that parent education is particularly important for this target group, too.

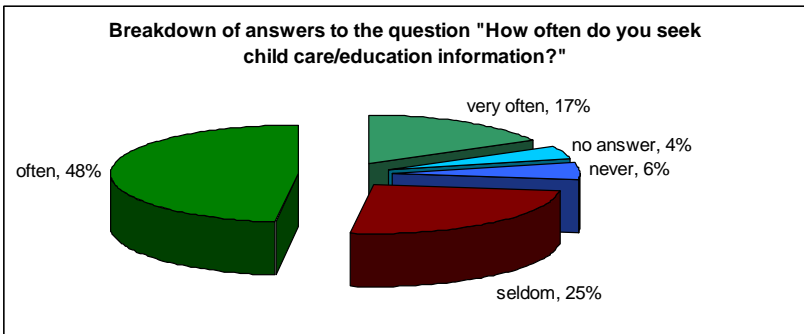


So, we find from their answers that they consider parenting classes to be an important family support action (55.04% of respondents), coming second after child education information, which is ranked first (70.42% of respondents). The very same thing is also emphasised by parents' answers to the second question, regarding the need for relevant information in order to be able to offer their children proper education and care. Hence, 81% of parents answer affirmatively and only 9% don't see the importance of such information for proper child education and care.



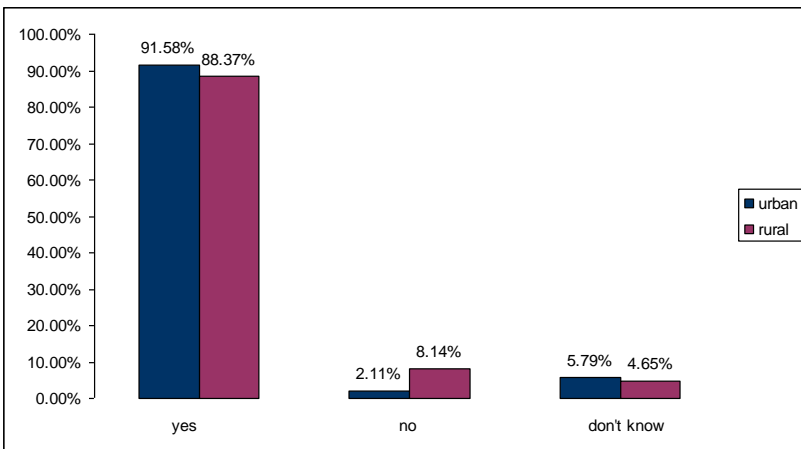
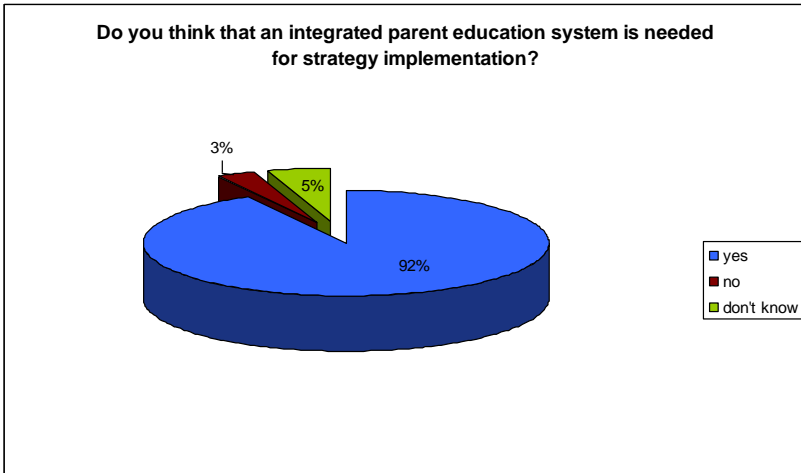
As far as parents are concerned, similar to decision makers, in the counties where the parent education programme “Educate This Way” has managed to change the way in which parents and children communicate, where parenting skills and knowledge have been updated and have even yielded effects (e.g.: the counties of Alba, Călărași, Harghita, Suceava), the number of affirmative answers is very high.

The fact that information is very important to parents is also confirmed and reaffirmed by the answer to the question about how often they seek child care/education information.



Thus, we find that 65% of respondents *often* and *very often* seek information about child care/education and 25% do it *seldom*. Moreover, the same counties referred to above report the highest number of *often* answers, proving the fact that as you get to know more about how to educate your child and you start to improve your parenting skills, an intrinsic motivation is triggered to find out as much as possible about the matter. This may explain why only half of the parents from the county of Olt have answered '*often*' to this question.

In the context where most decision makers' and parents' answers prove to us that parent education is very important and necessary for our social existence, it is obvious that the answers to the question posed to decision makers about the need for a national integrated strategy to enhance parenting competencies reflects this research target group's concern with and openness for building and developing such a system at national level. So, 91% of decision makers recognise that a national integrated strategy is needed to enhance parenting competencies, while rural and urban figures vary by nearly 5 percent points, with a prevalence of urban answers.



At the same time, it is important to have another look at the answers given by decision makers in the counties of Olt and Ilfov, which, as we have said, have recently started to run the parenting programme “*Educate This Way*” and where we may not yet see the effects of decision makers’ sensitisation on parent education. Thus, we notice the fact that all of them are open to the idea of

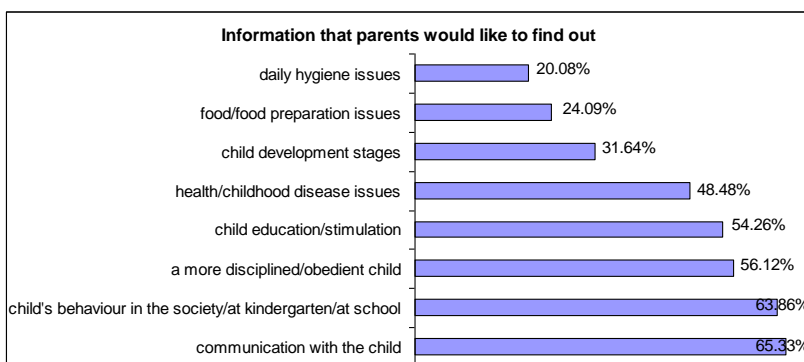


developing a relevant national integrated strategy, so I think we should recognise the fact that intrinsic motivation works even when you don't know much about a certain matter but you are greatly interested in it, either we refer to the individual or to the community.

Decision makers' answer to the question above may be correlated to parents' answer to a series of relatively similar questions, such as:

- ✓ *Do you think organised/structured parent education programmes are needed?*
- ✓ *How important do you think it is to have parenting classes in place?*
- ✓ *Would you like to attend parenting classes?*

Their answers, including online respondents', show a clear desire to attend parenting classes, the fact that it is important to them to have parenting classes in place and that organised/structured parent education programmes are needed.



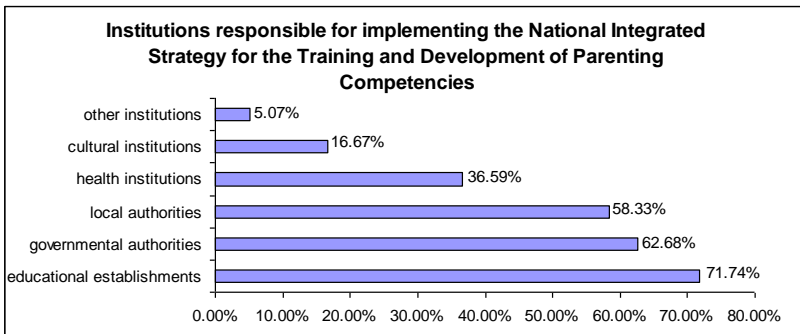
Moreover, as regards the topics of parenting courses, parents say they are especially drawn to those that could provide information about communication with

the child (65.33%) followed by those tackling the issue of how to behave in the society/at kindergarten/at school (63.86%) and those regarding child education/stimulation (54.26%). Moreover, in half of the counties in the sample, parents' answers regarding the importance of communication with the child and his or her behaviour in the society/at kindergarten/at school are relatively close in figures.

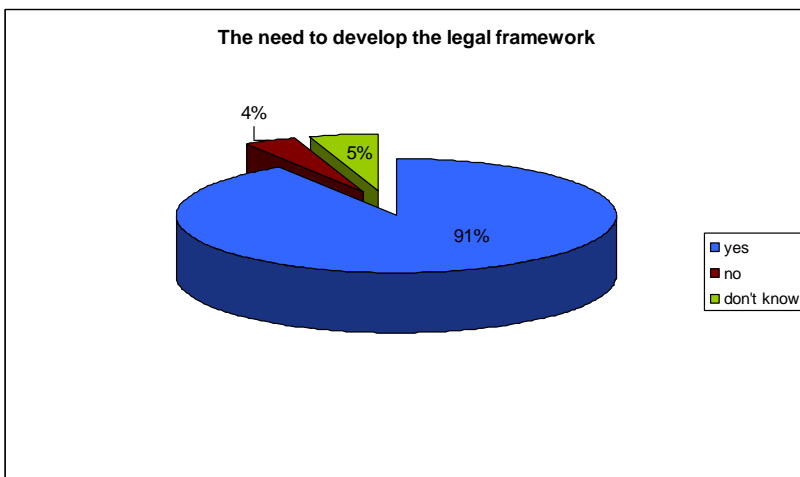
As regards the parents who answered online, we notice the fact that they have a highly different interest than the others as they don't mention child education/stimulation and communication with the child at all, but their top preferences are how to behave in the society (31 of 40 respondent parents) and how to discipline the child/make him or her more obedient (24 of 40 respondent parents).

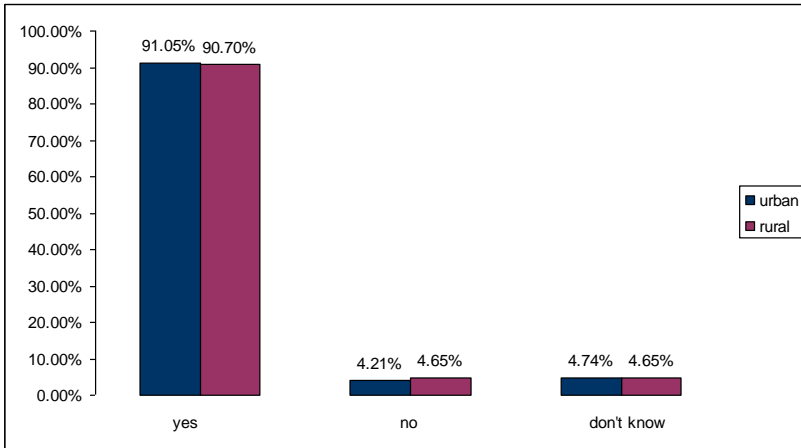
## ***V.2. Authorities/Institutions/Persons with Potential Parent Education Roles***

As regards parent education responsibilities, decision makers asked about who should be responsible for implementing the national integrated parent education strategy rank educational establishments (71.74%) first and then governmental authorities (62.68%) and local governments (58.33%).



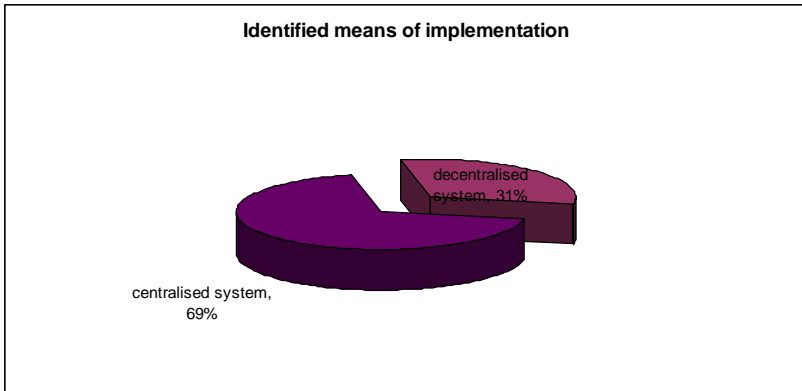
They also consider in great numbers (91%) and in relatively equal urban and rural shares (91.05% - urban and 90.70% - rural) that it is necessary to build the needed legal framework to implement the mentioned strategy.





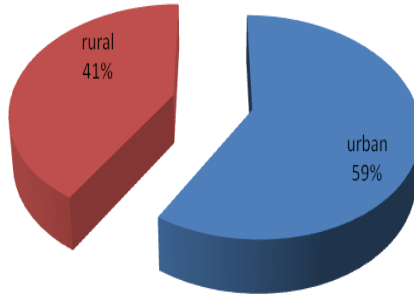
Thus, the solution they choose from the variants they are given is very interesting:

- ✓ Variant 1 – a decentralised system, leaving it up to local decision makers from each administrative unit (county/town/commune) to decide whether parent education is necessary and to choose the most appropriate means to deliver it;
- ✓ Variant 2 – developing a national integrated parent education system as part of lifelong adult education (for parents) that can provide information about health, nutrition, education, social protection;
- ✓ Variant 3 – other solution suggested by decision makers.

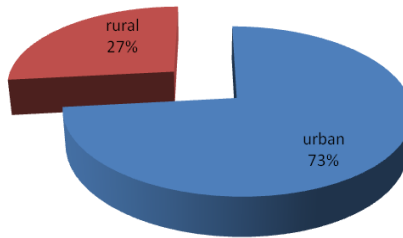


Analysing decision makers' answers, we find that decision makers prefer variant 2 – a centralised system – (69%), especially in urban area (73% - urban versus 27% - rural). Just as surprising is the fact that the first variant – a decentralised system – though it has reached lower overall values than the second one (31%), is preferred mostly by the very same urban decision makers (59% - urban versus 41% - rural).

### Decentralised system

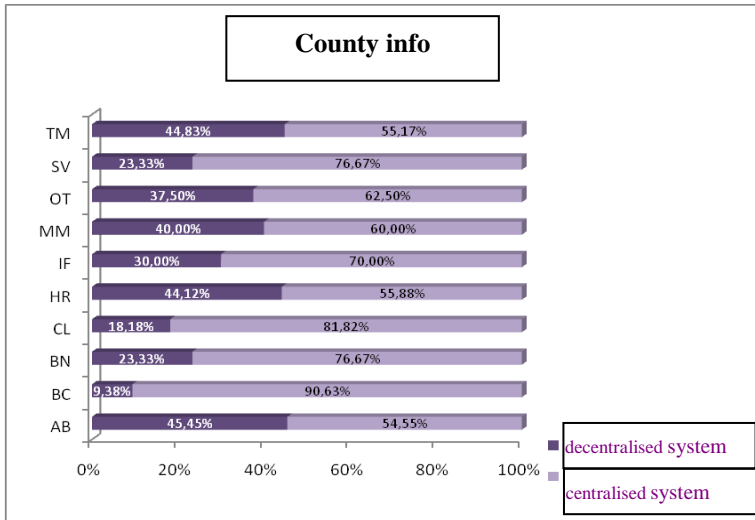


### Centralised system



Analysing decision makers' answers by county, we notice that those from Transylvania (the counties of Maramureş, Timiş, Alba, Harghita) are more open to decentralisation, whereas those from the South and Moldova (the counties of Bacău, Călăraşi, Suceava) prefer centralisation. Actually, the decentralisation topic is not new to the public, especially to the public political

arena, and the prevalence of centralisation among decision makers' opinions in this research fits into the current Romanian societal patterns.

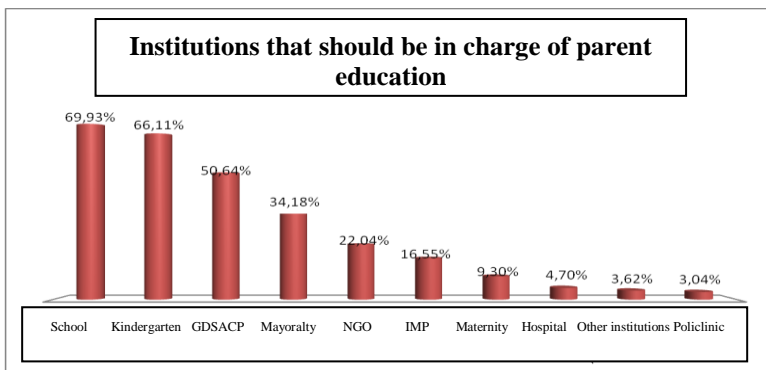


As regards the authority that should monitor and evaluate strategy implementation, decision makers entrust this task with the Ministry of Education (62%), as an institution which has probably been more visible in promoting and developing efficient parenting programmes and policies, followed by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection (17%) and the National Authority for Child Rights Protection<sup>7</sup> (11%), two other institutions with national concerns in the field. The questionnaire suggests another interesting idea, endorsed by 4% of decision makers: a newly created institution answering to the government. This shows very

<sup>7</sup> Currently the “General Directorate for Child Protection”; specialised directorate under the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection

clearly, on the one hand, that parent education is a broad area, requiring even some institutional independence, as well as resources tailored to its needs and attributions (just as it needs a national integrated strategy) and, on the other hand, the fact that only a governmental institution could monitor and evaluate strategy implementation – a strong institution thanks to the authority it answers to and to the managing area, in the context of lifelong learning.

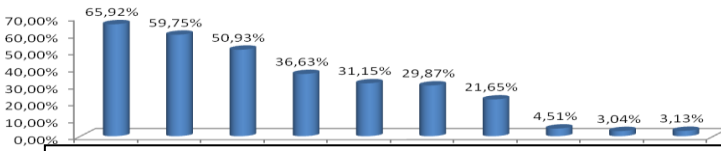
As far as parents are concerned, their answers (including of those who responded online) show clearly that parent education should fall primarily under the responsibility of schools (69.93%) and kindergartens respectively (66.11%), and then of GDSACP (50.64%) and mayoralties (34.18%).



Obviously, their answers seem justified to us as more than half of them, namely 60.27% (including those who responded online), declare that they have received their current child education knowledge from school/kindergarten.

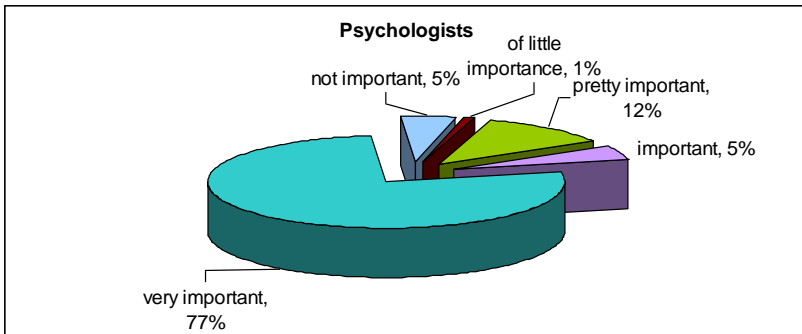


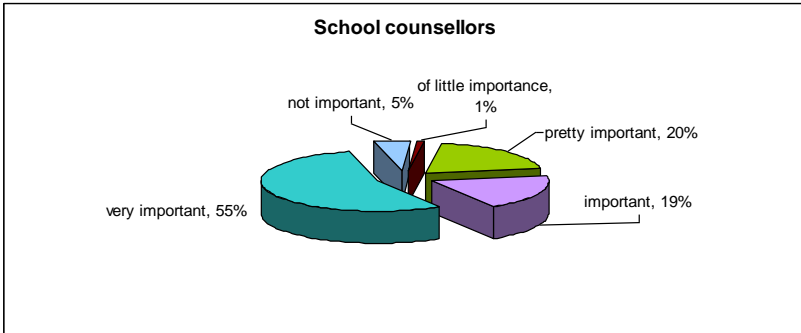
**Where have you got your current child education knowledge from?**



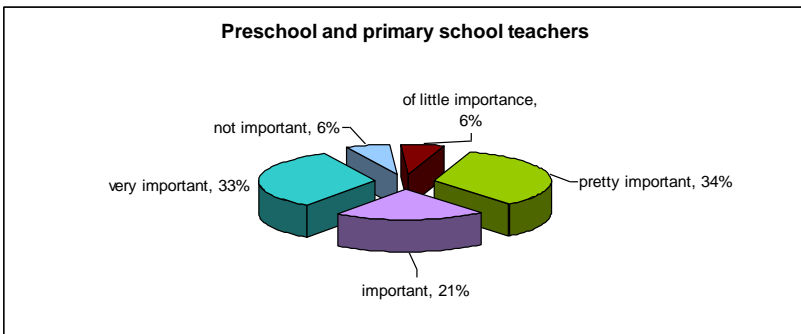
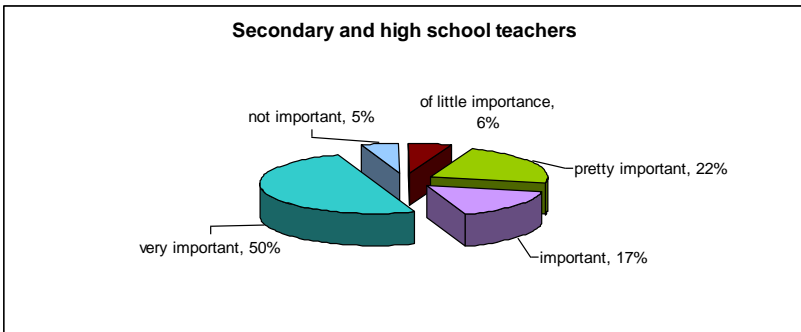
1. Mother; 2. Kindergarten/school; 3. Books/magazines; 4. Parenting courses; 5. Grandmother/other relatives; 6. TV; 7. Maternity/family doctor; 8. Community nurse; 9. Social worker; 10. Other

As concerns the persons that should be in charge of parent education, decision makers' opinions show almost unanimously that such persons should be specialists (91% of respondents), that they should be trained mostly through continuous training courses (68.12%), without ruling out higher education (31.16%), and that it is very important for these experts to be either psychologists (77%) or school counsellors (55%).

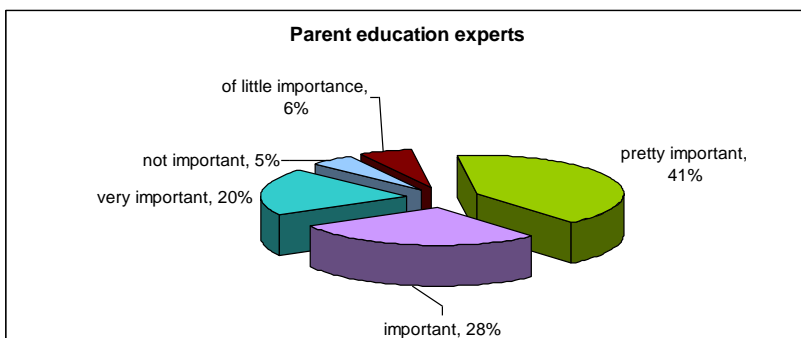
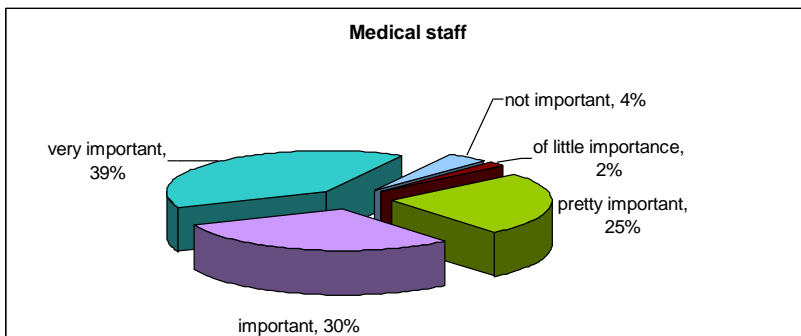




Smaller or relatively close shares (as it is the case with secondary or high school teachers) are assigned to teachers in terms of preferences (especially preschool and primary school teachers).



Last come dedicated experts as only 28% of decision makers consider that it is important for the persons in charge of parent education to have such narrow specialisation.



Parents however have a slightly different opinion about the expert that should be in charge of parent education and hold parenting courses.

Who should hold parent education courses	%		
	urban	rural	Total
Nurse	4.20	7.39	5.68
Social workers at GDSACP	15.20	12.01	13.72

Family doctor	18.40	23.79	<b>20.90</b>
Psychologist	61.40	45.50	<b>54.02</b>
Teaching staff	69.80	60.97	<b>65.70</b>
Parent education expert	75.80	68.13	<b>72.24</b>

Thus, 72.24% of respondents, with a decisive prevalence of urban answers (75.80% versus 68.13%) think that parenting courses should be held by a parent education expert. This is closely followed by teaching staff: kindergarten teacher, schoolteacher, homeroom teacher (65.70%), and psychologist (54.02%).

### ***V.3. Most Appropriate Channels to Publicise Parent Education-Specific Information***

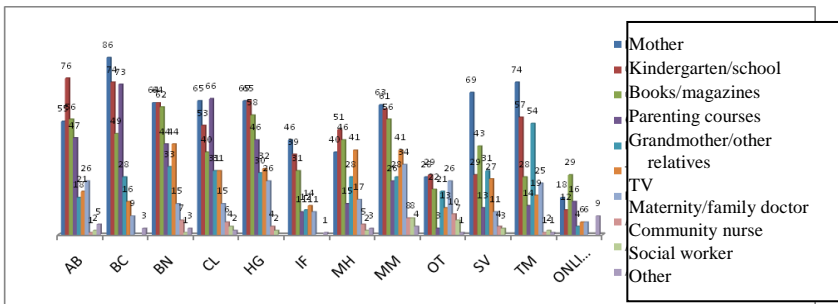
We can start the analysis on the most appropriate and relevant channels to publicise parent education-specific information from a previously tackled question, namely the one regarding the way in which parents think that they have gained their current child education knowledge.

The mother comes first, with a share of 66.50%, followed by kindergarten/school with 60.27%, books/magazines with 51.38% and finally parenting classes with 36.95%.

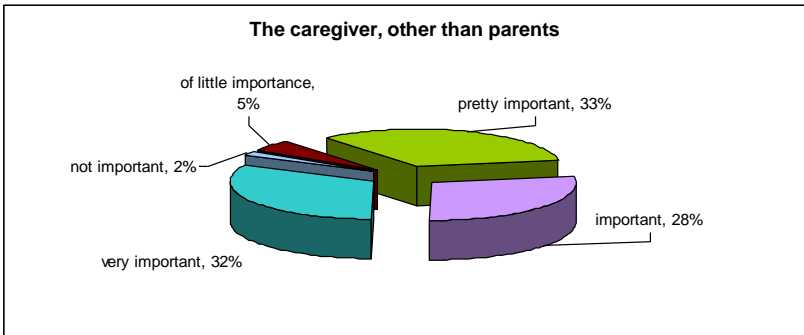
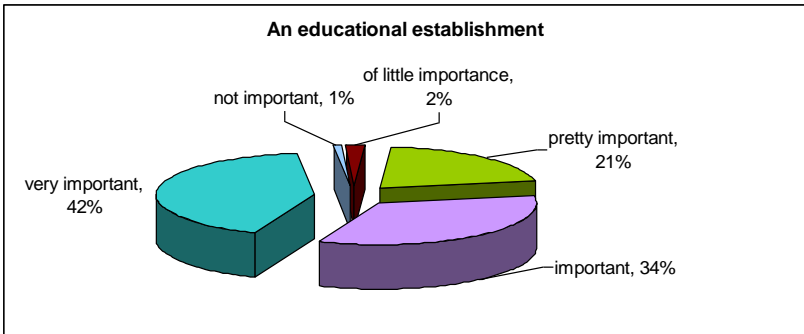
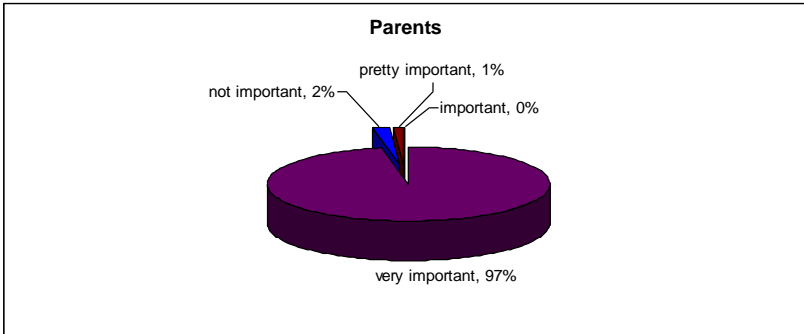
<b>Where have you got your current child education knowledge from?</b>	<b>Number of answers</b>	<b>% (of a total of 1,021 answers)</b>
Mother	673	65.92
Kindergarten/ school	610	59.75
Books/magazines	520	50.93
Parenting classes	374	36.63

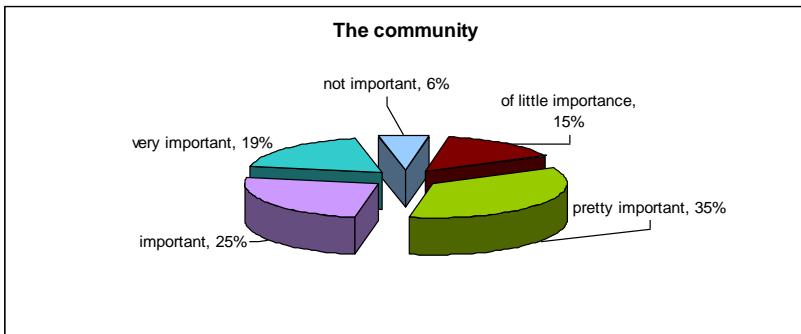
Grandmother/other relatives	318	31.15
Television	305	29.87
Maternity/family doctor	221	21.65
Community nurse	46	4.51
Social worker	31	3.04
Other (practice/self-information)	32	3.13

It is also interesting how in some counties the numbers are relatively equal for ‘mother’ and ‘books/magazines’ (the counties of Alba and Bistrița-Năsăud) and even for ‘mother’ and ‘kindergarten/school’ (the counties of Harghita, Maramureș and Olt). Anyhow, I think this comes to highlight the fact that especially in Transylvania the mother and family are central, so are books and school.



Parents’ opinions resonate with decision makers’ who consider that parent education falls under the responsibility of parents (97%) and, in smaller percentages, of an educational establishment (42%) and the community respectively (19%).





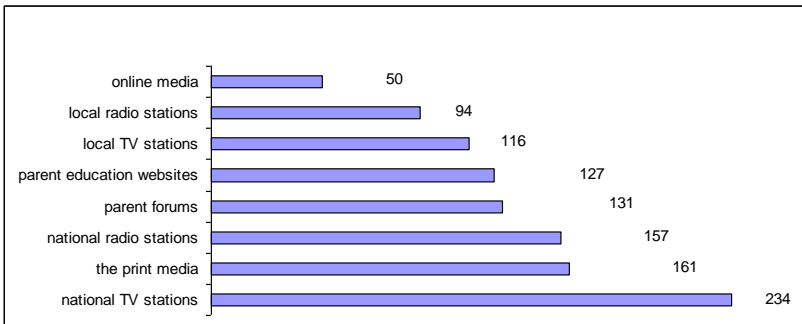
The research also poses the question of the most trustworthy information sources. As far as this is concerned, parents' position is quite surprising for their top preference goes to teaching staff and kindergarten/school respectively (62.29%) and they keep away from the top position, placing it sixth, a category related to the number one holder (the mother): grandparents (27.52%).

But we are not just as surprised by the opinion of the parents who responded online. They place the Internet (70.00%) first as a trustworthy source and then books (55.00%) and grandparents (45%).

Decision makers consider mass media a very important parent education promotion channel (87%). However, interesting enough, a significant percentage of those who declare that mass media play *little importance* in parent education promotion comes from Transylvanian counties, mostly the county of Timiș (10 of 29 respondents) and the county of Harghita (8 of 34 respondents). Their answer may reflect either the fact that in this region, as previously shown, the mother and school/book respectively are preponderant parent education sources of information or that Romanian mass

media haven't managed to resonate with the expectations of most audiences in multiethnic regions.

Nonetheless, among the most appropriate media for promoting parent education named by decision makers, we recall: national TV stations (84.78%), followed by the print media (58.33%) and national radio stations (56.88%).



#### ***V.4. Other Relevant Issues for Building a National Integrated Parent Education System***

Among the aspects that may provide relevant information for building a national integrated parent education system, we can mention:

- ✓ Parent education debut and hence the need for parent education in the case of populations who don't have children yet;
- ✓ The need to set up parent education centres;
- ✓ Parenting course costs that parents could cover, as well as their possibility and availability to attend online parent education courses;
- ✓ The best time for parenting classes.



Thus, the information provided by decision makers about the perfect time to start parent education ranks prenatal period first (32.97%), while reserving a special place for preschool period (22.83%).

Moreover, decision makers think that parent education is also needed for populations who don't have children yet, and as regards the categories respondents have had to choose from (senior high school students, young people, parents-to-be), they have primarily chosen parents-to-be (88.04%), placing senior high school students among the least interested by the matter from their point of view (40.58%). This makes us believe that decision makers and Romanian communities are not aware yet of the results achieved by some educational programmes for future parents implemented in high schools or by special research and examples of good practice from other states.

As for setting up parent education centres, 76.30% of parents find it necessary.

Setting up parent education centres (Answer variant)	Number of answers			%		
	urban	rural	Total	urban	rural	Total
Yes	434	345	779	77.64	74.68	76.30
No	25	20	45	4.47	4.33	4.41
Don't know	97	97	194	17.35	21.00	19.00
No answer	3		3	0.54	0.00	0.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>1021</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Urban parents' affirmative answers are more numerous than rural parents' and in our opinion this is mostly due to the fact that such centres are more frequent in urban areas and that, consequently, they

have been more present in the life of the urban population with children than in that of rural population.

Finally, where parents show an interest in parenting classes, they state, regardless of their area of residence, that they would have the means to attend them and that the most appropriate cost for such a session, irrespective of the area of residence, would be RON 15.

The amount they would be willing to pay for classes	Number of answers			%		
	urban	rural	Total	urban	rural	Total
RON 15	307	274	581	54.92	59.31	56.90
RON 25	78	52	130	13.95	11.26	12.73
RON 50	25	15	40	4.47	3.25	3.92
RON 75	12	2	14	2.15	0.43	1.37
No answer	137	119	256	24.51	25.76	25.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>1021</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As far as online courses are concerned, parents are prepared to attend them, 62.29% of them stating that they have access to a computer. We should also notice the fact that, irrespective of the living area, affirmative answer shares are higher than negative ones even if, as expected, the shares of YES and NO answers are quite close in rural area.

As regards the best time for holding parenting classes, irrespective of the area of residence, parents rank afternoons first, after work and then Saturdays or Sundays.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

This research has managed to gather opinions about the need for parent education in Romania, while aiming at supporting the redefinition, promotion and application of the already drafted **National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies**.

Consequently, research data analysis points to the urgent need for structuring and building a national integrated parent education system, based on a relevant national strategy.

The monitoring and evaluation of its implementation are entrusted with the Ministry of Education, without excluding though the possibility of setting up a new institution, answering to the Government. This shows very clearly, on the one hand, the fact that parent education is a broad area, requiring even some institutional independence, as well as resources tailored to its needs and attributions ((just as it needs a national integrated strategy) and, on the other hand, the fact that only a governmental institution could monitor and evaluate strategy implementation – a strong institution thanks to the authority it answers to and to the managing area, in the context of lifelong learning.

As far as its implementation goes, decision makers consider that educational establishments and even governmental authorities are the most appropriate for it. Decision makers almost predictably choose centralised implementation, namely the creation of a national

integrated parent education system as part of lifelong adult education (for parents) that can provide information about health, nutrition, education, social protection.

Actually, the decentralization topic is not new to the public, especially to the public political arena, and the prevalence of centralisation among decision makers' opinions in this research fits into the current Romanian societal patterns.

As far as parents are concerned, their answers (including of those who responded online) show clearly that parent education implementation should primarily fall under the responsibility of school/kindergarten. And this comes to reaffirm and support decision makers' opinion on the matter.

Obviously, their answers seem justified to us as more than half of parents declare that they have received their current child education knowledge from school/kindergarten.

The research offers us information about the persons who should be responsible for parent education and the type and level of their education. Thus, decision makers' opinions show almost unanimously that such persons should be specialists trained mostly through continuous training courses and that it is very important for these experts to be either psychologists or school counsellors. Moreover, smaller or relatively close shares are assigned to teachers in terms of preferences (especially preschool and primary school teachers).

Parents however have a slightly different opinion about the expert that should be in charge of parent education and hold parent education courses. They rank teachers first – kindergarten teacher, schoolteacher, homeroom teacher – and parent education experts last.

In this wide context of redefining and implementing a national integrated parent education strategy, we should take into account the special importance of parent education and its effects on two social life matters in particular:

- increasing the quality/performance/results of children's education, development, social integration, health;
- mitigating undesirable phenomena such as: absenteeism, early school leaving, etc.

At the same time, we should not overlook the importance of successful endeavours and good practices for what will become a parent education system. For this reason, we should notice that in the counties where the parent education programme "Educate This Way" has managed to change the way in which parents and children communicate, where parenting skills and knowledge have been updated and have even yielded effects, decision makers and even most local community members support and are quite open to such endeavours.

As any strategy needs promotion, the role of mass media and of other information channels cannot be left aside. So, decision makers' answers, very different than parents', point to the following mass media as some of the most appropriate outlets to promote parent education: national TV stations, the print media and national radio stations. We think that these outlets could be targeted by the strategy for disseminating parent education information.

At the same time, we should continue to take an interest in the key elements of the parent education

process, namely family and school. They are mentioned by both parents and decision makers. Thus, it is important how we will take up ideas from the already implemented parenting programmes and how we will attune them to the requirements and needs identified in this research.

Consequently, we can say that when reviewing the ***National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies***, it is important to keep the following aspects in mind:

- encourage local authorities and lend legal support for them to act in a decentralised manner so that they can decide whether the respective community needs parent education and what would be the most adequate means to cover this need;
- set up parent education centres in as many localities;
- hold parenting courses centred on information about communication with the child, child's behaviour in the society/at kindergarten/at school and child education/stimulation;
- encourage parent education debut during the child's prenatal period and even the education of future parents;
- stimulate universities and other institutions as training providers to grant accreditation for specific courses addressing those who want to activate in the area of parent education at community level;
- the fact that, according to parents, the best time for parenting classes is in the afternoon, after work and even Saturdays or Sundays, as well as that such courses should cost somewhere around RON 15.

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Dear parents,

Knowing that many of you need support as regards your children's education, the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport, with Our Children Foundation and UNICEF Romania, is ready to promote a National Parent Education Strategy, whereby the Romanian state shall initiate and support an integrated parent education mechanism, including a series of parent information, education and support programmes for the benefit of children.

To this end, we intend to get your opinions and suggestions about the forms of parental support you need in your daily "parenting mission".

The questionnaire is comprised of two parts: one containing questions used to collect relevant data in order to support and reshape measures in the above-mentioned strategy; and another one in which we ask for a series of personal data (which we assure you will be kept confidential), needed for a sociological analysis on the parent education concept in Romania. *For this reason, we kindly ask you to give us maximum 10 minutes of your time and to answer to the 25 questions in the questionnaire.*

*Your contribution is extremely valuable to us and we thank you for your cooperation and involvement.*



<p><b>1. Do you think families with children need more support from authorities in order to offer their children proper education? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>2. Which authorities/institutions do you think should be responsible for parent education? (multiple answers possible)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mayoralty</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Maternity</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hospital</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Polyclinic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual medical practice</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nongovernmental organisations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other institutions/organisations.....(please specify)</p>
<p><b>3. What actions should be taken to support families? (multiple answers possible)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child education support and information</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Material support: school supplies/clothes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Food</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More playgrounds</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Toy libraries</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parenting courses</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other..... please specify</p>	<p><b>4. Do you think that you need more information in order to be able to offer your child proper education and care? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>

<p><b>5. How often do you seek child care/education information? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> never</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> seldom</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> often</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> very often</p>	<p><b>6. Which source of information do you trust the most? (multiple answers possible)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Books                      <input type="checkbox"/> Medical staff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Magazines                <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> TV                            <input type="checkbox"/> Friends/relatives</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Internet                    <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Forum                      <input type="checkbox"/> Parenting courses</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other.....</p>
<p><b>7. Where have you got your current child education knowledge from? (multiple answers possible)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Maternity/family doctor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mother</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother/other relatives</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten/school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Television</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Books/magazines</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Social worker</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Community nurse</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parenting courses</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other.....</p>	<p><b>8. Do you think organised/structured parent education programmes are needed? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>
<p><b>9. How important do you think it is to have parenting courses in place? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very important</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Important</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Of little importance</p>	<p><b>10. Would you like to attend parenting classes? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>

<input type="checkbox"/> Not important	
<p>11. What would you like to find out in particular about your child's development and education? (multiple answers possible)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Daily hygiene issues <input type="checkbox"/> Food/food preparation issues <input type="checkbox"/> Health/childhood disease issues <input type="checkbox"/> Child's behaviour in the society/at kindergarten/at school <input type="checkbox"/> A more disciplined/obedient child <input type="checkbox"/> Child development stages <input type="checkbox"/> Child education/stimulation <input type="checkbox"/> Communication with the child	<p>12. Who do you think should organise/hold parent education courses? ( multiple answers possible)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Nurse <input type="checkbox"/> Family doctor <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff: kindergarten teacher/schoolteacher/homeroom teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Social workers at GDSACP <input type="checkbox"/> Psychologist <input type="checkbox"/> Parent education expert (someone of this profession)
<p>13. If parent education courses were available only for a fee, could you afford them? (only one answer)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> don't know	<p>14. What amount would you be willing to pay for one session? (only one answer)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> RON 15 <input type="checkbox"/> RON 25 <input type="checkbox"/> RON 50 <input type="checkbox"/> RON 75

<p><b>15. Do you have access to a computer, would you have the possibility to attend an online course? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><b>16. Which do you think is the best time to hold parenting courses? What would you choose? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In the morning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> After kindergarten/ school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In the afternoon, after work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Saturdays or Sundays</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any time</p>
<p><b>17. Do you think parent education centres should be set up in every community (in your town/village) where you could get information any time you need? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>18. Other comments/suggestions?</b></p>
<p><b>19. Age .....years</b></p>	<p><b>20. Sex</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> male    <input type="checkbox"/> female</p>
<p><b>21. What is your occupational status?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> employed/I have a job</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> on maternity leave</p>	<p><b>22. How many children do you have?</b></p> <p>.....</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> retired on ill-health grounds</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> unemployed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> no job/occasional jobs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> other.....</li> </ul>	<p><b>23. Where do you live?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Urban area</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rural area</li> </ul>
<p><b>24. Last school completed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> No schooling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Primary school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Middle school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vocational school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> High school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> University/college</li> </ul>	<p><b>25. At present, you are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Married</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In a common law relationship</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Divorced/ separated/widow(er)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Single, never been married</li> </ul>

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DECISION MAKERS** regarding  
**the implementation of the National Integrated  
Strategy for the Training and Development of  
Parenting Competencies**

Questionnaire code.....

Date of completion.....

Thank you!

<p><b>1. How important do you think parent education is for enhancing parenting competencies? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very important</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Quite important</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Of little importance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not important</p>	<p><b>2. Do you think a national integrated strategy is needed to enhance parenting competencies? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>
<p><b>3. Do you think a national integrated parent education system is needed for strategy implementation? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>4. Who do you think should be responsible for implementing the national integrated strategy for the training and development of parenting competencies? (multiple answers possible)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Governmental authorities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Local governments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Educational establishments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Health institutions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cultural institutions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other institutions (please specify).....</p>
<p><b>5. Do you think that a specific legal framework should be designed for the implementation of the national integrated strategy for the training and development of parenting competencies? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p>	<p><b>6. Which of the following solutions would be the best? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Variant 1: a decentralised system leaving it up to local decision makers from each administrative unit (county/town/commune) to decide whether parent education is needed and to choose the most adequate means to deliver it?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Variant 2: creating a national integrated parent education system as part of lifelong adult education (for parents) that can provide</p>

	<p>information about health, nutrition, education, social protection?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:.....</p>																				
<p><b>7. Which authority should be in charge of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the integrated parent education system? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ministry of Health</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ministry of Administration and Interior</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> National Agency for Child Rights Protection</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A newly created agency under the Government</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Another institution (please specify).....</p>	<p><b>8. Do you think parent education is needed for populations that don't have children yet (potential future parents)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>yes</th> <th>no</th> <th>don't know</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Senior high school students</td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Young people</td> <td><input checked="" type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parents-to-be</td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		yes	no	don't know	Senior high school students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Young people	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Parents-to-be	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
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Senior high school students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>																		
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Parents-to-be	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>																		
<p><b>9. Do you think that, in order to ensure parent education, professionals should be specialised through:</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>yes</th> <th>no</th> <th>don't know</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		yes	no	don't know					<p><b>10. Which are the categories of experts that should be responsible for parent education? Please tick according to the importance you give to each (5= very important, 1= not important )</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>1</th> <th>2</th> <th>3</th> <th>4</th> <th>5</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Social workers</td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		1	2	3	4	5	Social workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	yes	no	don't know																		
	1	2	3	4	5																
Social workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>																



Initial training through higher education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preschool and primary school teaching staff: kindergarten teacher, schoolteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous training through different training courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Secondary and high school teaching staff: homeroom teachers, other teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Short-term professional development courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical staff: medical doctors, nurses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent education experts (persons of this profession)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Psychologists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				School counsellors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>11. Do you think is it necessary to hold parenting classes starting with:</b>  <b>(only one answer )</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prenatal period</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nursery/parents of children aged 0-3 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Preschool age</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Primary school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Secondary school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High school</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any time</p>				<p><b>12. What role should mass media play in parent education promotion? (only one answer)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very important</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Of little importance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not important</p>					

<p><b>13. Which do you think are the most appropriate media channels for promoting parent education? (multiple answers possible)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> National TV stations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local TV stations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> National radio stations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local radio stations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Online radio stations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent education websites</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent forums</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The print media</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Online media</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify).....</li> </ul>	<p><b>14. Please suggest the most appropriate means to publicise parent education in the media: (multiple answers possible)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> TV spots</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Radio spots</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent education TV shows</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent education radio shows</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specialised documentary movies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Televised parent-expert debates</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify).....</li> </ul>																		
<p><b>15. Who do you think should be responsible for child education? Please check according to the importance you give to each, from 5 - very important to 1 – of little importance:</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 20%;"></th> <th style="width: 10%;">5</th> <th style="width: 10%;">4</th> <th style="width: 10%;">3</th> <th style="width: 10%;">2</th> <th style="width: 10%;">1</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;">parents</td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>an educational establishment</td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> <td><input type="radio"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		5	4	3	2	1	parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	an educational establishment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<p><b>16. Do you think parent education can help increase the quality/performance/results of children’s education, development, social integration, health? (only one answer)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> No</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</li> </ul>
	5	4	3	2	1														
parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>														
an educational establishment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>														

the caregiver, other than parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
<b>17. Do you think parent education can help mitigate undesirable phenomena, such as absenteeism, early school leaving, etc.? (only one answer)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, definitely <input type="checkbox"/> To a great extent <input type="checkbox"/> To a small extent <input type="checkbox"/> Certainly not						<b>18. Other comments/suggestions?</b>
<b>19. Age</b> .....years						<b>20. Sex</b> <input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female
<b>21. How many children do you have?</b> .....						<b>22. Where do you live?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Urban area <input type="checkbox"/> Rural area
<b>23. Last school completed:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Post-graduate school <input type="checkbox"/> University <input type="checkbox"/> Post-secondary school <input type="checkbox"/> High school						<b>24. You represent the following institution:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Prefecture <input type="checkbox"/> County Council <input type="checkbox"/> Public Health Directorate <input type="checkbox"/> General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection

<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational school <input type="checkbox"/> Middle school <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Mayoralty <input type="checkbox"/> Local Council <input type="checkbox"/> County Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Rural individual medical practice <input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten <input type="checkbox"/> Public Social Service Centre <input type="checkbox"/> Private Social Service Centre <input type="checkbox"/> Nongovernmental organisation
<b>25. County</b> .....	<b>26. Locality</b> .....

## ANNEX 3



MINISTERUL  
EDUCAȚIEI  
CERCETĂRII  
TINERETULUI  
ȘI SPORTULUI



OUR CHILDREN  
FOUNDATION

Dear Madam/Dear Sir,

Parent education is considered a priority for the Strategy Development Programmes of the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport and of the General Directorate for Child Protection under the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection.

Identifying parents' need for support as regards their children's education, in the 2008/2009 school year a group of relevant experts, coordinated by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport and Our Children Foundation, with financial support from UNICEF Romania, drew up the *National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies*.

At the moment, with a view to promoting and applying this flagship document, with support from UNICEF Romania, research has been started to help correlate and harmonise the most efficient mechanisms that can ease the implementation of the *National Integrated Strategy for the Training and Development of Parenting Competencies*.

In this endeavour, we aim at also collecting a series of data reflecting the knowledge and experience of decision makers, professionals and parents from 12 counties across the country, including your county, regarding types of parental support, the means to apply them, required resources, etc. For this reason, we ask you kindly to give us maximum 10 minutes of your time and to fill out the attached questionnaire.

Your contribution is extremely valuable to us and we thank you for your promptitude and cooperation.

Ministry of Education,  
Research, Youth and Sport

Inspector General,  
Viorica Preda

Our Children Foundation

President,  
Martha Iliescu