

# Teaching Management Plan

## Romania



### OVERVIEW

#### Company Mission

Our mission is to encourage young people to volunteer for worthwhile work in developing countries. We expect that doing this kind of voluntary work will in time become the norm. As more and more people join us, we aim to create a multi-national community with a passion to serve, to learn, to understand, to teach, to inspire, and to be inspired.

#### Teaching Programme Mission

Our Teaching programme mission is to provide sustainable educational support within disadvantaged schools and communities to reduce inequality in education. Through our volunteers, we aim to empower underprivileged students by improving their future prospects and equipping them with the skills needed to actively engage in a multi-national community.

#### Background Information

After the 1989 Revolution which ended communism in Romania, the country faced an education crisis that has yet to be fully tackled<sup>i</sup>. Despite a series of reforms<sup>ii</sup>, OECD figures indicate that education attainment has actually fallen since the Soviet era. Reading skills have declined and Romania ranks amongst the worst performing countries in the EU for reading, maths and science<sup>iii</sup>. A Program for International Students Assessment study ranked Romania 32<sup>nd</sup> out of 42 countries in the EU for student attainment<sup>iv</sup>. One of the greatest problems is that education in Romania has never been properly financed and that corruption within the system remains commonplace<sup>v</sup>.

Budget cuts caused the closure of rural schools and poverty means that drop-out rates remain high (the number of children dropping out of school tripled between 2000 and 2007)<sup>vi</sup>. Low salaries and low esteem for teaching jobs often prevent high quality graduates from applying for the position.

Training for teachers is very basic, often consisting of a basic 6-month course in pedagogy, which does not include any practical teaching experience<sup>vii</sup>, meaning teachers are often underqualified and poorly motivated. Traditional teaching methods dominate, with students typically learning by rote. Creativity, imagination and real world application of what you have learnt is rarely focused on. This seems to be affecting students' results as one in two students failed their Bacalaureate exam at the end of secondary school in Romania in 2012, thus affecting employment prospects<sup>viii</sup>.

#### Partners

Projects Abroad Romania partners with primary and secondary schools in and around Brasov.

### GOALS

In order to work towards our Teaching programme mission, we have set the following goals to achieve in the placements where we send our volunteers:

#### 1. Improve English

English has undeniably become the global language for business. It is vital for countries, businesses and individuals to improve their level of English to become true participants in international trade. In line with this, the English language is of increasing importance in Romania. Having a greater understanding of English will greatly enhance a person's employment opportunities, helping them develop on an international basis and become economically successful. Volunteers, in particular native speakers, can offer invaluable help in improving the students' and also the teachers' phonetics, pronunciation and grammar. We also set up conversation classes to improve the student's oral skills and capacity to participate in "real life" conversations.

## 2. Encourage learning through creativity

Problem-solving and creative thinking have become essential skills for entrepreneurs to master to be able to run successful, innovative businesses. Building up these skills during a child's education will increase their likelihood of becoming academically successful and economically productive. Students are not given the chance to develop their creativity, imagination or ability to think critically. Our volunteers can enable children to develop these skills by running creative activities that will motivate students in their learning as well as encourage them to think for themselves and become more innovative. Original teaching methods and activities help increase students' concentration as well as their participation in class.

## 3. Improve teaching technique

Teachers often lack adequate training in Romania. Schools in Romania continue to focus on more traditional teaching methods including memorisation, learning by rote. Volunteers are able to bring variety to the teaching and learning techniques used.

## RESOURCES

<b>Human Resources</b>	Average 5 volunteers per year Projects Abroad global staff teams Placement staff support
<b>Physical Resources</b>	Projects Abroad offices Placement materials
<b>Online Resources</b>	Volunteer Resources Database Myprojectsabroad webpages
<b>Financial Resources</b>	Monthly budgets for overall operations Donations to specific projects or placements
<b>Intangible Resources</b>	Reputation in destination communities Goodwill; genuine desire to help Expertise

Projects Abroad provides a range of resources for each of our programmes. These fall into four interdependent categories:

**Human:** Volunteers themselves are our most crucial asset in achieving our goals. Through their creativity and energy, all of our ambitions can be realised. Another central support team is our extensive network of Projects Abroad staff worldwide, dedicated to supporting volunteers and achieving our company mission. We also depend greatly on the staff in all of our placements; whose support guides volunteers through their daily activities.

**Physical:** Projects Abroad has offices in all of our destinations, where volunteers can come to speak to staff or attend workshops. There are also office materials and placement supplies available to volunteers.

**Online:** The Volunteers Resources Database and myprojectsabroad webpages all provide vital support before, during and after their placements.

**Financial:** Funds for all of Projects Abroad's work come solely from volunteer placement fees. These are distributed via monthly budgets, to ensure fair allocation of funds for each destination. Occasionally volunteers may also send donations directly for a specific placement or project.

**Intangible:** The good reputation of volunteers in local communities is what makes our work possible. This reputation has been earned over years of dedicated volunteer contribution. This is supported by the combined knowledge of our extensive staff network. With over 700 staff across every continent, we are proud to be a diverse and accomplished team.

## MONITORING & EVALUATION

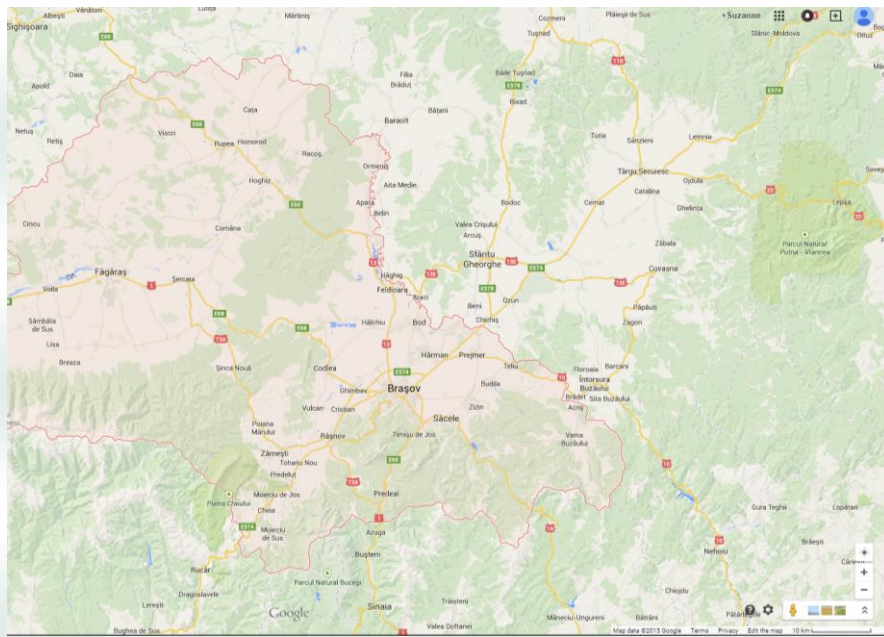
Placement visits Volunteer workshop sessions Staff meetings Volunteer Resources Database Feedback evaluation
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**Physical monitoring:** Through placement visits and volunteer workshops, volunteers are in frequent contact with staff members, who will observe and advise volunteers in action. Staff participate in regular meetings to discuss best practices within and between destinations.

**Online monitoring:** The Volunteer Resource Database is platform for staff and volunteers to share and develop ideas.

**Feedback evaluation:** Feedback from placement staff, Projects Abroad staff and volunteers is continuously gathered and used to inform future plans.

# LOCATION OF PLACEMENTS



		INDICATORS	MONITORING (MEANS OF VERIFICATION)	ASSUMPTIONS
<b>Company Mission: (the change we want to see in greater society)</b>				
Our company mission is to make it the norm for men and women from developed countries to live and work as volunteers in a developing country; they should work on projects which have a clearly favourable impact on host-communities. In this way, we will continue to create a multi-national community with a passion to serve and to inspire.				
<b>Teaching Programme Mission: (the change we want to see for the target group)</b>				
Our Teaching programme mission is to provide sustainable educational support within disadvantaged schools and communities to reduce inequality in education. Through our volunteers, we aim to empower underprivileged students by improving their future prospects and equipping them with the skills needed to actively engage in a multi-national community.			1. Onsite visits 2. Placement staff feedback 3. Projects Abroad staff feedback 4. Volunteer feedback (DQs & EOPF) 5. Children feedback 6. Test results	1. Number of volunteers does not drop considerably 2. Number of volunteers with a good grasp of English does not drop considerably 3. Political and civil stability in the countries we work 4. No natural disasters that could affect our work
<b>Goal 1: (what we want to achieve)</b>				
<b>Improve English</b>				
	<b>Actions: (the tasks that need to take place to achieve the goal)</b>			
1.1	Create and manage a Projects Abroad Library of English language story books. Volunteers can sign books in and out for when they use them.			
1.2	Create a resource centre of flash-cards and other English learning materials			
1.3	Establish a weekly after school English club. 1 hour small group sessions on a chosen topic each week.			
1.4	Allow a regulated time-period per week to implement spelling tests/pronunciation exercises/reading practice in the classroom.			
1.5	Introduce 2 SOLE (Self Organized Learning Environment) sessions each month to emphasise / strengthen topics in the curriculum			
1.6	Use creative techniques to help improve the listening and speaking skills of student's e.g. role plays, acting and drama, games.			
1.70	Introduce realistic daily role plays to focus on 'real life' conversational English.			
<b>Goal 2:</b>				
<b>Encourage learning through creativity</b>				

	<b>Actions:</b>			
2.1	For a minimum of 1 hour per week research and document new teaching aids			
2.2	Volunteers to work with the placements to make learning environments visually appealing and educational to the students e.g. “word of the day wall” –whereby the volunteer displays a new word each day along with a definition and the students are tested on it the following morning			
2.3	Initiate story writing competitions/ poem writing which can then be presented to the class			
2.4	In break times engage children in regular games and activities to improve their attention span, stimulate their brains and encourage team work.			
2.5	Volunteers to do a presentation to their class on their home country, and divide class into groups to prepare a presentation on a topic of their choice.			
<b>Goal 3:</b>				
<b>Improve teaching techniques</b>				
	<b>Actions:</b>			
2.1	Volunteers to carry out informal workshops or discussions on teaching methods with other volunteers and teachers to share ideas			
2.2	Research and document new learning and teaching techniques for the school			

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2012/08/education-romania>  
<sup>ii</sup> Romanian Education Policy Note, World Bank 2007  
<sup>iii</sup> [www.unicef.org/romania/children\\_1602.html](http://www.unicef.org/romania/children_1602.html)  
<sup>iv</sup> World Bank  
<sup>v</sup> <http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2012/08/education-romania>  
<sup>vi</sup> <http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2012/08/education-romania>  
<sup>vii</sup> Unicef  
<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2012/08/education-romania>