

The Classification of Occupations in Romania (COR) and Its Practical Significance

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The “Clasificarea Ocupațiilor din România” (COR) is Romania’s official national system for the classification of occupations in the labor market. It assigns a six-digit code to each job title. This system serves as a key point of reference for employers, HR service providers, and authorities, supporting the uniform collection of labor market data.

No educational requirements according to COR

The current version of the COR, based on Ordinance No. 1832/2011, no longer systematically assigns mandatory educational requirements to each occupation, unlike earlier versions. While previous editions prescribed minimum educational levels—such as a high school diploma or a university degree—for many jobs, the current version largely omits such specifications. A few exceptions explicitly mention educational requirements, for example:

- 226303 – Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator (University degree)
- 216611 – Graphic Designer (University degree)
- 216612 – Computer Graphics Specialist (High school diploma)
- 243101 – Advertising Director (High school diploma)

Some job titles even appear with different educational levels, such as:

- 216610 – Web Designer (University degree)
- 216613 – Web Designer (High school diploma).

Significance

It appears that the legislator no longer intends to mandate educational requirements in the COR catalog. Legally, this means that according to COR, there are generally no restrictions on hiring individuals without formal educational qualifications for many occupations. However, qualification expectations often arise from:

- internal company policies;
- Industry standards;
- Legal requirements in specific sectors (e.g., public service).

In fields such as IT, for instance, it is common for employers to prefer candidates with university degrees. Nonetheless, there is a growing number of professionals who qualify through alternative pathways such as coding bootcamps, vocational training, or self-study. The COR system supports this diversity in access paths and contributes to promoting a dynamic and inclusive labor market.

Of course, specific educational requirements governed by other legal regulations for certain professions (such as doctors or lawyers) must still be complied with. The legal bases for such requirements include Ordinance 4121/2016¹ and other profession-specific regulations (e.g. for doctors, lawyers, etc.).

Significance for companies

Companies should define educational and professional prerequisites logically and transparently based on the actual tasks and legal requirements. This should be done through:

- Job descriptions
- Job postings
- Internal HR policies.

This approach helps prevent discrimination and ensures compliance with legal requirements during audits or disputes. Transparency also helps applicants set realistic expectations regarding qualifications and career development opportunities.

When assigning a COR code, the decision should primarily be based on the actual tasks performed—not merely the job title or the assumed education level. This ensures the COR classification remains accurate and reflects the organizational structure of the company. Focusing on actual job content also enhances the comparability of occupations at the national level and supports labor market statistics.

It's also important to understand that the COR, as a classification system, does not in itself create legal obligations regarding employment contracts or salaries. These are primarily governed by the Romanian Labor Code, sector-specific regulations, and internal agreements. COR serves as a tool for systematically describing occupations, not for determining employment law conditions.

Conclusion

- COR is a standardized system for occupational coding that generally does not prescribe mandatory educational requirements.
- Specific regulations for certain professions remain unaffected.
- Employers may determine qualification requirements based on the actual responsibilities.
- COR codes should reflect real job duties.
- Transparent documentation strengthens legal certainty and equal treatment.

¹ on the approval of vocational education and training standards for vocational qualifications of levels 3 and 4 of the National Qualifications Framework for which training is guaranteed through vocational and technical education

The current COR framework offers a flexible basis that meets the needs of today's labor market. By shifting the focus from rigid educational requirements to actual skills and responsibilities, it enables open and inclusive HR strategies while maintaining legal compliance.

If you have questions or need support with the correct application of the COR classification in your company, we will be happy to assist you.

Contact and further information:



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