Innovation and regional development in the North-East of Romania

Ovidiu Savu,
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MISSION STATEMENT

The North-East RDA is a generator of economic and social development in the North-East Region. North-East RDA develops strategies, attracts resources, identifies and implements financing programmes and offers services for stimulating sustainable economic development, partnerships and entrepreneurial spirit.
Strategies and programmes developed

Period 2000-2006

- Objectives: **Creation of business support physical infrastructure, direct investments into productive sector**
- Pre-accession funds attracted: **Euro 120 million**
- Over **750 projects** - financed from Phare ESC and special Programmes of Romanian Government
- Role of North-East RDA: **Implementing Authority, coordinator** of Regional Partnership for Strategic Planning, **developer** of administrative capacity for CBC, HRD and Regional development

Strategies and programmes developed

- Programming period: **2007-2013** – elaboration of Regional Development Strategy and providing input for Regional Operational Programme
- Objectives: mainly **rehabilitation and modernization of public urban infrastructure, business support infrastructure, creation of new SMEs**;
- Indicative regional funding allocation: **Euro 724.09 mil. /16.32%**
- **1,160 project proposals** registered on January 1st, 2013, **95%** contracted, **40%** absorption rate at the level of ROP MA;
- Role of North-East RDA: **Intermediate Body** for implementation of ROP North-East
Up-to-date status on March 2013

• North-East RDA – in progress on elaboration of RDP 2014-2020 (strategic scenarios issuing phase);
• North-East RDA – actively participates to the meetings of the national consultative structures for elaboration of NDP 2014-2020 and National Strategy for Smart Specialization;
• North-East RDA – participates to the national consultative meetings for substantiation of INTERREG 2020 and Danube Strategy Programmes;
• North-East RDA – will take over the role of Intermediate Body for implementation of the initiatives dedicated to small-medium enterprises funded under Priority Axis 1 of the Sectoral Operational Programme "Increase of Economic Competitiveness" 2007-2013 in the North-East Region.

Since 2002 – Support provided to business environment

Services:
• Collecting and dissemination of information within and outside the region;
• Creation, maintenance and updating related databases;
• Assessment of the needs of various target groups and economic sectors;
• Initiation of pilot projects;
• Participation to and organization of related events and exhibitions;
• Development and facilitation of regional economic partnerships and networks.
Resource: dedicated department – staff increase from 3 to 10 employees
Vision: *Innovation – basis of economic competitiveness in the North-East Region*
RIS North-East 2008-2013
Implementation Status

Analysis performed on funding attracted from:

- National Programme for Research-Development-Innovation
- Increased Competitiveness SOP (Priority Axes 1, 2, 3),
- Regional Operational Programme (Priority Axis 4),
- South-East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme (Priority Axis 1),
- INTEREG IV C (Axis 1),
- 7th Framework Programme (Cooperation, Ideas, People, Capacities, Euratom)

Total projects funded in the North-East Region: 230
Total funding attracted: approx. Euro 60 mil. (on March 1st, 2013)
Structure of the national and European innovation system

- European Commission, financial allocations, regulation framework
- Member State, financial programming, regulation framework
- National RDI Strategy and National Smart Specialization Strategy
- Regional Innovation Strategy
  Regional Smart Specialization Strategy
  (not mandatory)

The role of the North-East RDA

- **At strategic level:**
  - Elaboration of strategies and action plans;
  - Participation in consultative working groups for national strategies development;
  - Activation of partnership consultative structures;
  - Encouraging regional cooperation initiatives (ex. clusters, etc).

- **At operational level** (ROP and IC SOP):
  - Promotion of financing programmes (information & publicity);
  - Providing the permanent help-desk function;
  - Capacity of projects evaluation and selection;
  - Capacity to provide monitoring in decentralized manner/system;
  - Training capacity;
  - Development and management of cooperation projects.
Actual progress in elaboration of S3 North-East

- **Analysis of regional business environment** for identification of development needs and competitive advantages;
- Organization of **bilateral meetings with 12 very large companies**, organization of workshops structured on main activity fields;
- **Analysis of regional clusters** (textiles-knitting, tourism, agro-food, medical imaging, ITC)
- **Analysis of statistic data concerning the research-innovation activity**
- Elaboration of an **Application Form to be funded under TA OP for requiring the needed support in elaboration of S3** (activity not funded by other sources to RDAs)

Research – development – innovation & ICT

- The research & development activities are mostly carried out in the public sector (over 70%).
- In the region there are numerous research units: R&D units, higher education units, agricultural units and companies;
- During 2001-2006, in the North-East Region there were established 12 Centres of Excellence within the universities (Al.I. Cuza University of Iasi, Gh. Asachi Technical University of Iasi, Gr.T Popa Medicine and Pharmacy University of Iasi).
- During 2001-2006, CNSIS (National Council of Scientific Research and Higher Education) recognized 79 research centers in the North-East region located in the following universities: Al.I. Cuza Iasi, Gh. Asachi Iasi, Gr.T Popa Iasi, Univ.din Bacau and Stefan cel Mare Univ.of Suceava.
- Upward trend of the number of employees engaged in R&D (in 2003 there were only 2,926 employees, in 2008 the number increased to 4,172 employees).
- Since 2009, due to the economical-financial crisis, the activity of research units reduced, the number of employees being reduced to 3,376 until 2010.
Information Society

- **Permanent and sustained expansion of IT&C market** constitute an important factor contributing to the development of IT&C infrastructure and increased economic competitiveness;
- According to last EITO study (European Information Technology Observatory), **Romania shows one of the highest IT&C dynamics at regional level**;
- **North-East Region - annual increase of 5.4% of the percentage of population accessing Internet at least one/week – 2nd place in Romania after Center Region** and at middle level amongst the whole regions of the 27 Member States;
- **Increased number of companies supplying hardware & software** and involved in data and databases processing.

Potential areas for smart specialization based on R&D capacity

- **Agro-foodstuff sector**: agronomy, science of crops, foodstuff science, biotechnology;
- **Energy and environment sector**: pollution, management and monitoring, environment engineering, ecology and environment science, renewable energy and bio-fuels;
- **Engineering and technology sector**: electric and electronics engineering, nanotechnology, materials (electronics, optics, magnetic, metals and alloys, material sciences), mechanical engineering, transport;
- **IT&C sector**: networks of the future, internet services, software, integrated system design, personal and health systems, IT&C for energy efficiency, accessible IT&C, computer sciences and artificial intelligence.
Conclusions

1. The Regional Innovation System is recognized by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration (field of intervention in the future RDP North-East)

2. In the National Strategy for Smart Specialization (S3) will result an uniformization of the fields of intervention that is not going to be in the advantage of the regions (less developed ones)

3. S3 is not funded from the regional level – each individual region found its own funding solutions (there is the risk that these Regional S3s will not be used in any national or regional planning documents (similar to the elaboration of RIS – every region elaborated its own RIS without any support from national authorities)

Changing is a real challenge that offers additional chances only to prepared minds!

Schimbarea este o provocare, care ofera sanse numai mintilor pregatite!

Va multumesc!

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