

# SUSTAINABLE TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

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## Abstract:

*The development of the different regions of Europe throughout history has known different phases and evolutions according to the conditions which they have gone through. The aim of this article is to present an analysis of European regions depending on three essential elements of a unitary development including: concentration of resources, connecting regions and cooperation, highlighting a number of directions for a sustainable development.*

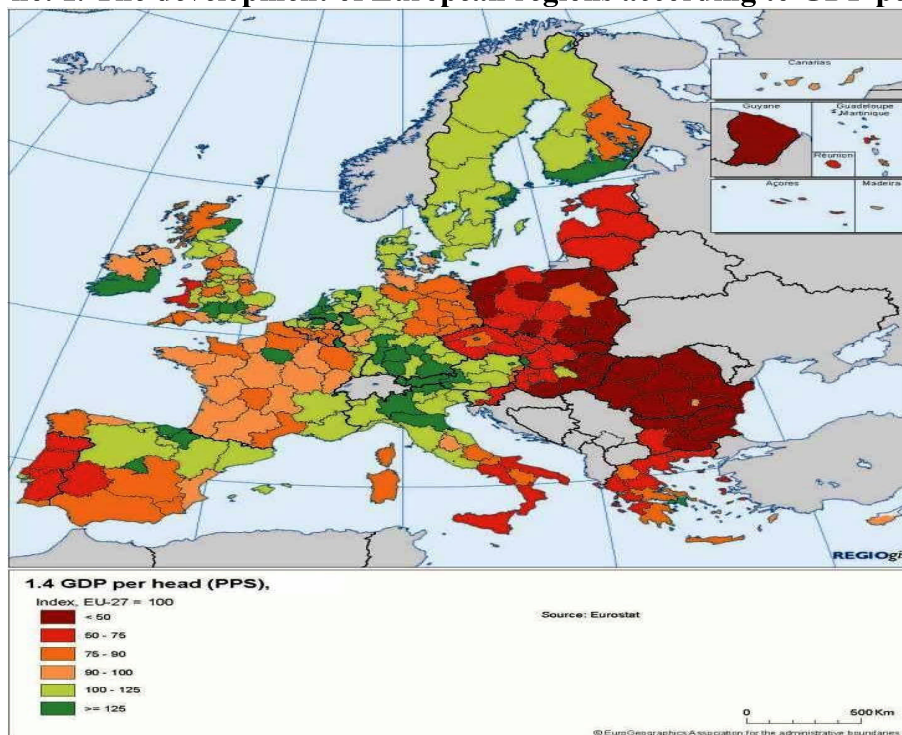
*From this perspective in the EU financial period 2014-2020, national targets and regional funding should take into account varied issues, focusing on the structure and the concentration of population for the necessary conditions of housing and living (infrastructure, utilities, public services, education, health and social services) to be satisfied.*

**Key words:** sustainable development, territorial agenda 2020, connectivity

## 1. Introduction

From east to west and from north to south there are major differences of culture, civilization, resources, temperament, way of action, economic power, etc. although parts of a single country, there are major differences between regions easily recognized that at both national and European level must be taken into account. Moreover, discussing the conditions of classification of regions, according to EU development objectives, we easily notice it (by color differences), representing the degree of development of the regions concerned, it is obvious.

**Figure no. 1. The development of European regions according to GDP per capita**



Source: Eurostat

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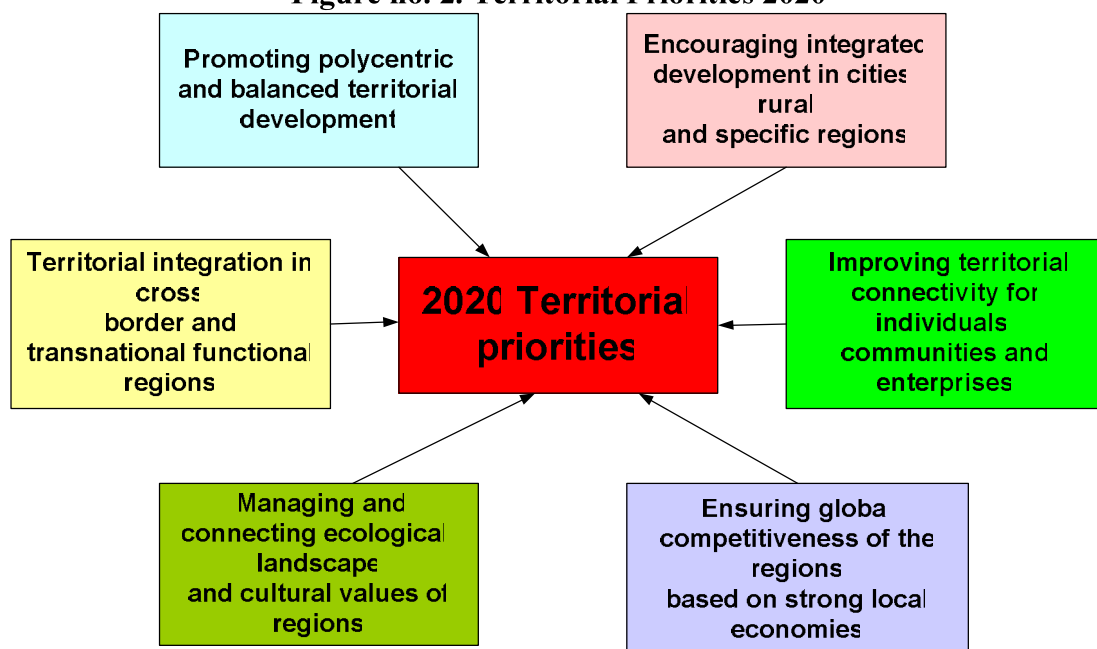
Considering this issue at EU level has been observed the need to develop a document that provides the framework for better policies at the local level and their coherent assembly for a unified development in Europe.

Territorial Agenda of the European Union - "Towards an Inclusive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Diverse Regions ", agreed upon the ministerial meeting in Gödöllő in Hungary - May 2011, points out that in Europe there is an increase of the importance of the territorial dimension of policies. This dimension was added to social and economic dimensions and constitutes a political objective committed in the EU.

"We believe that the EU targets defined in 2020 Europe strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth can be achieved only if it's taken into account the territorial dimension of the strategy whereas the development opportunities vary from one region to another." (European Commission, 2010)

Territorial Agenda 2020 sets out six territorial priorities for development:

**Figure no. 2. Territorial Priorities 2020**



- **Promoting polycentric and balanced territorial development** underlining the need for more developed regions to cooperate in generation of more extensive development areas to include small and medium cities that can play an important role in regional development

- **Encouraging integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions** emphasizing that the objectives and concerns arising from a number of other documents aimed at urban development (Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities, statements from Marseille and from Toledo on development urban) must be taken into account in the decision making process at all levels. "The transformation of cities in engines of smart, sustainable and inclusive development and attractive places to live, work, visit and invest in" remains a constant concern in the EU. Also for a balanced territorial development some priority objectives should be taken into account such as developing and supporting the diversity of rural areas using all available resources at this level, increased accessibility, promoting entrepreneurship, increasing attention given to the poor peripheral areas.

- **Territorial integration in cross-border and transnational functional regions** which can ensure better use of the natural, economic, cultural potential available to each region. It is pointed out that cooperation projects at this level can deliver progress and good

results using participant's experience. The integration of these projects into national and regional development strategies can contribute to a better international cooperation to a better understanding and getting better results at the regional level in a world from becoming globalized.

- **Ensuring global competitiveness of the regions based on strong local economies.** A good cooperation of different territories, the development of strong economic sectors, globally integrated would generate a strong local and regional economies, competitive, to be able to support each other and the existing competitive environment,

- "integration of heritage, characteristics and local traditions in the global economy it is important to strengthen local responses and to reduce vulnerability to external forces" it's assessed in the Territorial Agenda 2020

- **Improving territorial connectivity for individuals, communities and enterprises** From this point of view, equitable and affordable services of general interest to information, knowledge and mobility seems to be fundamental for territorial cohesion.

The need to ensure optimal conditions for rail, air, road, water, electricity and gas transport networks for efficient intermodal transport, development of trans-European networks and secondary networks is particularly important at regional and local level.

- **Managing and connecting ecological, landscape and cultural values of regions.** Territorial Agenda 2020 underlines the fact that the proper functioning of ecological systems, protection and improvement of cultural and natural heritage are important conditions for long-term sustainable development. Shared accountability is needed for mitigation and risk taking that everything we do now affects the future. (Territorial Agenda 2020, 2011)

We appreciate that at this moment discussions aimed at territorial development agreement focuses on several directions of action with the following nuances:

- The harmonious development of the territory
- Harnessing the competitive advantages that every region has
- Public policy orientation around a few basic principles:
  - The concentration of human, material and financial resources with irradiance effects in larger areas
  - Connecting territories by "shortening" distances, time to go through and the quality of relationships in transport
  - Cooperation - understanding the need to promote and develop relations and actions that unite us to be stronger in a highly competitive world (European Commission, 2010b)

## **2. Concentration of human resources**

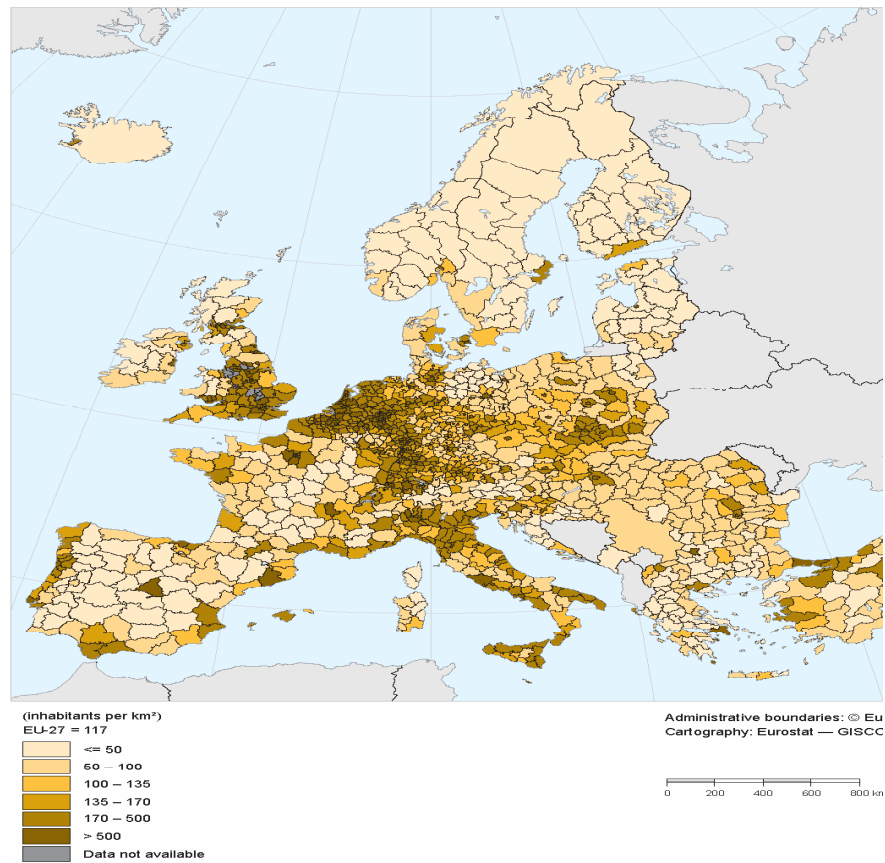
Thus, in terms of human resources concentrations we naturally conclude that public service needs and those jobs largely depend on the number of inhabitants in these areas. The pressure put on local authorities by population is proportional to the density of people living in cities or regions.

If we analyze the density of the population in different regions of the EU, significant differences can be observed.

Even if there are some exceptions like the situation in Monaco (16403 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>) or Gibraltar (4697 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>), a high concentration of population is observed in some regions of England (244.2 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>), Netherlands (393 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>) Belgium (336.8 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>), Germany (233.2 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>) compared with significantly lower concentration observed in the Nordic countries (36.6 inhab/km<sup>2</sup> Latvia, Estonia inhab/km<sup>2</sup> 31.3, Finland 15.3 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>, Sweden 19.7 inhab/km<sup>2</sup> and a density between 60-150 inhab/km<sup>2</sup> in Eastern European countries (68.7 Bulgaria inhab/km<sup>2</sup>, 130.1 inhab/km<sup>2</sup> Czech Republic, Romania 89.6 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>, 111 inhab/km<sup>2</sup> Slovakia, Hungary 108.3 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>, Slovenia 95.3 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>).

**Figure no. 3. Population densities by NUTS 3 regions**

Population density, by NUTS 3 regions, 2011 (\*)  
(inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>)



Source Eurostat – GISCO, 05/2013

Obviously, resources and consumption have a different distribution, a significant importance having also the geographical position (relief, climate) and the percent of urban / rural population. (European Commission, 2011a).

We observe that there are significant differences between the countries of Northern and Western Europe with a urban-rural ratio of 80-20% and those from Southern and Eastern Europe with a ratio of 70-30%, with a high concentration in those countries capitals and big cities, where the concentration exceeding 10-15% of the population. In these circumstances seems natural the need for differentiated approaches to specific issues facing each region, with a strong agricultural areas in Spain, central France, southern Italy, Eastern Europe that need policies other than Northern Italy, Bavaria from Germany or center of England.

**Table no .1. Urban / rural population in Europe**

Country	The urban population	% urban	The rural population	% rural
Europe	533,295,008	72.80%	199,463,538	27.20%
Belarus	7,161,731	74.70%	2,426,209	25.30%
Bulgaria	5,357,409	71.50%	2,139,873	28.50%
Czech Republic	7,656,181	73.50%	2,754,605	26.50%
Hungary	6,791,244	68.10%	3,181,897	31.90%
Moldavia	1,678,733	47.00%	1,896,841	53.00%

Country	The urban population	% urban	The rural population	% rural
Poland	23,187,195	61.00%	14,850,899	39.00%
Romania	12,177,262	57.50%	9,012,892	42.50%
Russia	102,701,802	73.20%	37,664,759	26.80%
Slovakia	2,974,631	55.00%	2,437,009	45.00%
Ukraine	31,252,239	68.80%	14,181,176	31.20%
Denmark	4,761,345	86.90%	719,938	13.10%
Estonia	930,752	69.50%	408,707	30.50%
Finland	4,548,742	85.10%	797,084	14.90%
Iceland	307,598	93.40%	21,681	6.60%
Ireland	2,842,493	61.90%	1,746,509	38.10%
Latvia	1,517,111	67.70%	723,154	32.30%
Lithuania	2,180,558	67.00%	1,074,766	33.00%
Norway	3,855,657	79.40%	999,658	20.60%
Sweden	7,869,504	84.70%	1,423,522	15.30%
United Kingdom	49,295,437	79.60%	12,603,835	20.40%
Albania	1,645,097	51.90%	1,523,990	48.10%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,827,955	48.60%	1,931,678	51.40%
Croatia	2,546,069	57.70%	1,863,590	42.30%
Greece	6,868,158	61.40%	4,315,235	38.60%
Italy	41,082,995	68.40%	19,014,569	31.60%
Macedonia	1,211,976	59.30%	831,384	40.70%
Malta	388,139	94.70%	21,860	5.30%
Montenegro	384,431	61.50%	241,085	38.50%
Portugal	6,514,856	60.70%	4,217,501	39.30%
Serbia	5,525,249	56.10%	4,330,608	43.90%
Slovenia	1,002,440	49.50%	1,022,472	50.50%
Spain	35,073,326	77.40%	10,243,260	22.60%
Austria	5,665,972	67.60%	2,721,519	32.40%
Belgium	10,420,648	97.40%	276,940	2.60%
France	53,398,202	85.30%	9,238,378	14.70%
Germany	60,598,356	73.80%	21,458,419	26.20%
Luxembourg	418,923	85.20%	72,849	14.80%
Netherlands	13,799,187	82.90%	2,854,159	17.10%
Switzerland	5,591,372	73.60%	2,003,189	26.40%

Source: [http://www.geohive.com/earth/pop\\_urban.aspx](http://www.geohive.com/earth/pop_urban.aspx)

Analyzing the situation in Romania, the sustainable territorial development with different dimensions in each of these regions is as follows.

We note, as we have pointed out that, there is a strong concentration of population in the area Bucharest (13.8 times the national average) and a minimum density (59.6 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>) in the Western region, this one being the most developed in Romania unlike North - East with a double density (100.3 inhab/km<sup>2</sup>) than West region but with a lower economic development. This conclusion shows that the number of inhabitants, as human resource, is an important factor for the economic development of an area, but not enough to cause development and territorial competitiveness.

**Table no. 2. Urban / rural population in Romania**

Development Region County	Total (inhabitants)	Urban	Rural	As a percentage of total		Inhabitants / km <sup>2</sup>
				Urban	Rural	
Total	21354396	11727153	9627243	54.9	45.1	89.6
North - West	2711016	1440177	1270839	53.1	46.9	79.4
Center	2520540	1491569	1028971	59.2	40.8	73.9
North - East	3695831	1587203	2108628	42.9	57.1	100.3
South - Muntenia	3243268	1342035	1901233	41.4	58.6	94.1
Bucharest - Ilfov	2253827	2064235	189592	91.6	8.4	1237.7
South - West Oltenia	2225108	1068281	1156827	48.0	52.0	76.2
West	1910469	1197596	712873	62.7	37.3	59.6
South - East	2794337	1536057	1258280	55.0	45.0	78.1
Brăila	355173	230536	124637	64.9	35.1	74.5
Buzău	477215	195772	281443	41.0	59.0	78.2
Constanța	724276	502835	221441	69.4	30.6	102.4
Galați	604627	339932	264695	56.2	43.8	135.4
Tulcea	244103	120461	123642	49.3	50.7	28.7
Vrancea	388943	146521	242422	37.7	62.3	80.1

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Romania, NIS, Bucharest - 2012 edition

Certainly the EU financial 2014-2020 allocations at European level, but also funding lines for the focused objectives will have to take account of varied issues, focusing on the structure and the density of population in order that ensuring the necessary conditions for housing and living (infrastructure, utilities, public services, education, health and social services).

### 3. Connectivity relationships

Analysis of different connectivity relationships show that they are following the needs expressed by the concentration of population and economic development. Again the center zone, England, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany and the European capitals are significantly more developed than other regions and Eastern Europe remains substantially at a lower level even if we speak about the road network or the railway.

Of course one cannot deny a certain historical reality, a development of the West compared to the East. In a world increasingly connected but mostly by economic and social relations, freedom of movement of goods, services and people, quality and quantity of transport services is essential for sustainable territorial development.

Analyzing the situation from Romania, we observe a relatively balanced distribution across regions, with a concentration in the capital for roads and railways and differences within regions that are determined by economic conditions (for example access to Black Sea resulted in increasing road density in Constanta) and by landscape conditions (the existence of the Danube Delta from Tulcea, an area less accessible both by road and especially rail). (Regional Development Agency, 2013).

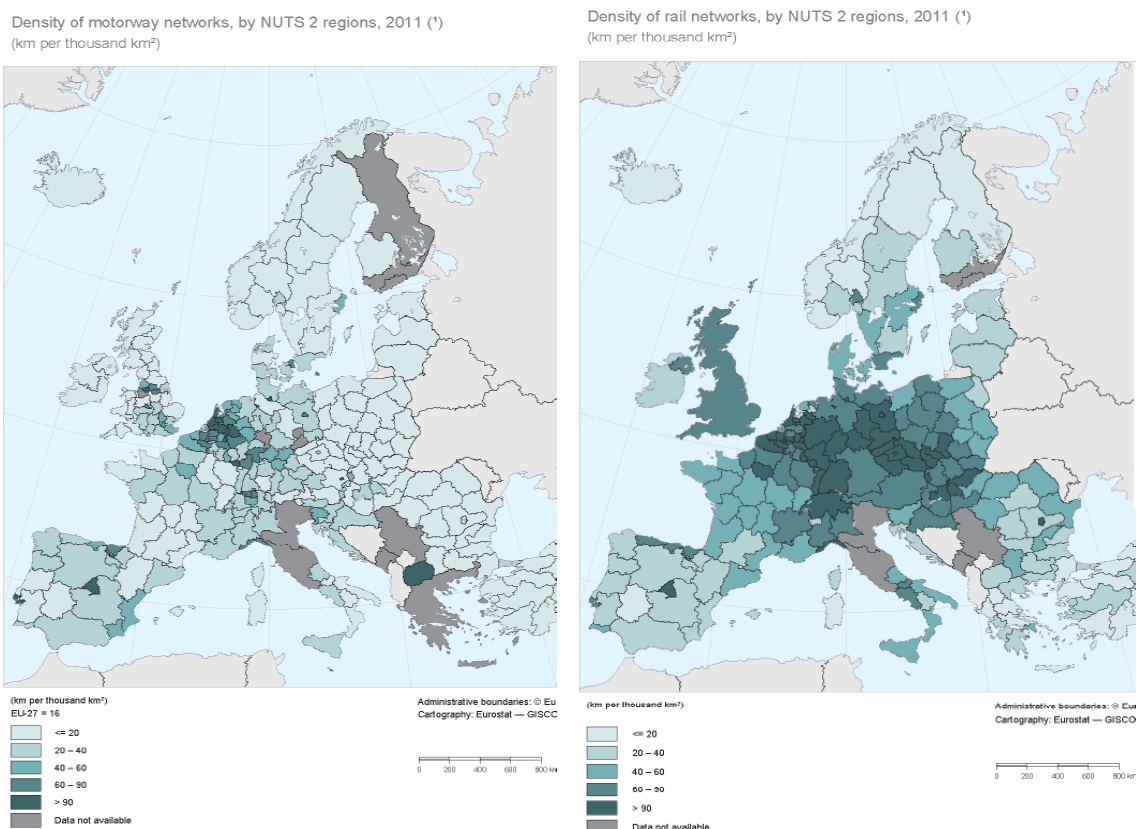
The issue of infrastructure in Romania is not necessarily related to quantity but especially to quality. The low number of km of highway, national road quality, reduced railway speed, outdated port infrastructure, are the main problems that our country is facing, and often causes a low attractiveness for economic area, but also for the tourist and services. So certainly this will require the existence of national and regional policies, especially related to development of motorways and high-speed railways, many of the today's highways could become of regional interest and managed much better at this level.

Certainly it will be difficult from the very beginning to conceive and accept the major regional projects. Discussions about where will be the capital of the region and who will be



president of region occupied the foreground in public space while analyzes of common projects, financial support, cooperation institutions, etc. should have been the dominant issue.

**Figure no. 4. Density of motorways (left) and density of railway network (right)**



Source: Eurostat GISCO, 05/2013 GISCO, 05/2013

**Table no. 3. Public roads, in territorial, 31 December 2011**

Development Region County	The public roads - total	The national roads	The counties and communal roads	The public roads density per 100 km <sup>2</sup> area
Total	83703	16690	67013	35.1
North - West	12459	2302	10157	36.5
Center	11057	2294	8763	32.4
South - Muntenia	12707	2791	9916	36.9
Bucharest - Ilfov	890	309	581	48.9
South - West Oltenia	11001	2177	8824	37.7
West	10452	1914	8538	32.6
North - East	14239	2688	11551	38.6
South - East	10898	2215	8683	30,5
Brăila	1187	263	924	24,9
Buzău	2651	322	2329	43,4
Constanța	2425	484	1941	34,3
Galați	1524	314	1210	34,1
Tulcea	1330	326	1004	15,6
Vrancea	1781	506	1275	36,7

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Romania, NIS, Bucharest - 2012 edition

**Table no. 4. Railway operating in territorial, 31 December 2011**

<b>Development Region County</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>of which: electrified</b>	<b>Density of railway tracks per 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> territory</b>
Total	10777	4020	45.2
North - West	1668	312	48.8
Center	1332	669	39.1
North - East	1620	663	44.0
South - Muntenia	1251	439	36.3
Bucharest - Ilfov	279	259	153.2
South - West Oltenia	988	507	33.8
West	1894	649	59.1
South - East	1745	522	48.8
Brăila	158	124	33.2
Buzău	244	113	40.0
Constanța	776	85	109.7
Galați	303	102	67.8
Tulcea	103	-	12.1
Vrancea	161	98	33.1

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Romania, NIS, Bucharest - 2012 edition

In this context it should be noted that the EU has launched the concept of integrated territorial investment as a tool for regional development which imply the existence of integrated territorial development strategies relating to a designated area, a set of actions that can be implemented to achieving the objectives of the integrated territorial development strategy, and the governance mechanisms for integrated territorial investment management. Basically, ITI are subprograms that comprise integrated multi-dimensional measures. (European Commission, 2013),

This would involve the existence of an integrated development strategy, territorial features, but the lack of any dependence on administrative limits and would allocate 5% of ERDF funds from nationwide.

We consider that further concentrated intervention is required for the national level and for the regions to establish those coordination structures which to ensure a formula acceptable for the cooperation between counties, micro-regional, regional or interregional.

Should be noted that, now, there is the legal framework that ensures the possibility for counties and municipalities to join the development of projects of common interest.

A close look on the overall needs of the population reveals that the transport situation presented is not unique. It is associated with problems of public services particularly because once inside the EU, European citizens of Romania, but also those visiting Romania they claim to have services at European level. Moreover, diversification and multiplication of extreme events (storms, floods, droughts) in recent years determined the need for major interventions with high expense of existing resources that current counties or municipalities don't have. So in many cases population necessities defeated personal or group egos and territorial administrative units joined together to solve common problems they had.

According to the local public administration legislation, two or more administrative territorial units have the right, within the limits of their deliberative and executive competences to cooperate and associate according to the law, forming intercommunity development associations with legal personality of private law and the public benefit. The intercommunity development associations are public utility, by the effect of this law.



We already have regional institutions functioning (Public finance, Environmental protection agencies, Statistics Agency, Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture, forestry inspectorates) and public regional services (railway, Electrica, Distrigaz). Discussions have been going on for a long time about regional hospitals. Regional Development Agencies is operating from 1998. This framework should be used and developed going over various local interests.

### **Conclusions**

Focusing on our main issues and valuing opportunities and potential of our regions, developing the communication on all levels and using technical, scientific and economic information and knowledge, cooperating at local, regional and interregional level we can achieve territorial development and by adding at national and European level.

In the end the principle that united we can be strong should be understood and applied. With strong regions we can build on wide areas, sustainable actions, we can generate the development to be competitive in an Europe of cohesion, cooperation but competitive.

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