

Towards Better Regional Strategic Planning and Innovation Support Services in Romania

What the project is for

The project contributes to regional growth and competitiveness through improved regional development that is rooted in place-based strategic planning and strengthened regional innovation ecosystems.

It seeks to increase the capacity of Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in two ways, by:

1. Strengthening their capacity to design, implement and monitor regional development plans
2. Helping regions build their capacity to design and implement regional innovation policies and support services

Implementing partners:

- [OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities](#) (CFE)
- [Association of Regional Development Agencies of Romania](#) (ROREG)
- Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) of the European Union

Financial support:

- European Union

Duration:

- 24 months: October 2021-October 2023

The project in context: regional development in Romania

High regional disparities in Romania are weighing on national and regional investment, productivity, competitiveness and employment (Eurostat, 2020), as well as citizen well-being. Innovation is one policy area that can help to bridge these gaps, but Romania is a modest innovator (Eurostat, 2018).

Better innovation outcomes depend on sufficient regional and local-level capacity to design and implement strategic planning, as well as effective regional structures dedicated to supporting innovation.

The need to improve planning and better identify innovation support opportunities is particularly urgent as Romania's RDAs take on new responsibilities as regional Managing Authorities for EU Cohesion Policy funds in the 2021-2027 period. They will also assume a role in implementing the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility.



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Asociația Agențiilor pentru Dezvoltare Regională din România



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What the OECD will deliver

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Regional Diagnostic Profiles | <p>A macro-level reflection for each region on their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Main socio-economic challenges, regional development strengths and opportunities.➤ Mechanisms and resources in place to build on the opportunities. |
| Regional Roadmaps and Action Plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Tailored roadmaps and action plans for each RDA to guide regional development planning and innovation support activities. |
| Educational Training Modules | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Training modules in strategic regional planning and innovation policy to be presented in train-the-trainer workshops for RDAs. |
| OECD Synthesis Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Synthesis of common findings across the RDAs,➤ Recommendations for national, regional and local actors to build strategic planning and innovation capacity, |

Why strategic planning matters for regional development

Strategic planning for regional development refers to the process through which national or subnational governments set long-term territorial objectives and priorities, define the actions needed to progress and determine how they will know if they are successful.

It provides relevant stakeholders with direction about what actions need to be taken and what resources need to be allocated to achieve specific territorial goals. These can include reducing territorial disparities, as well as fostering sustainable and inclusive growth and well-being.



Why innovation support matters for regional development

Innovation is one of the main drivers of regional development, transforming the “how” and “what” of goods and services offered, and making production processes more efficient and effective.

As regions and cities across the OECD and the EU grapple with global megatrends, such as demographic transitions, climate change, digitalisation and automation, local and regional policy-makers increasingly turn to innovation.

Creating and nurturing strong regional and local innovation ecosystems requires a good understanding of a region’s innovation context and its innovation challenges, as well as sufficient capacity to design and implement the right policy mix for regional innovation.