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## THE IMPORTANCE OF REGIONS IN THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

### ABSTRACT

The principles of the regional development policy at European level were taken into consideration even since 1957 with signing up the Treaty establishing the Economic European Community that stipulates that the Community mission is, among others, to promote throughout the Community a harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of the economic activities, a high labour and social protection, increase of the living standard, economic and social cohesion and solidarity among the Member States.

The requirement to ensure a harmonious and balanced development of the Community area by narrowing the gaps between certain regions, contributed to the considerable increase in importance of the EU regional development policy after 1990 and mainly after 2004, with EU enlargement by the 10 former communist countries and after 2007, when Romania and Bulgaria also joined the Union.

EU enlargement considerably increased the economic and social disparities both at regional and national level, and the support was focused on the less developed regions and Member States.

At present, the development regions have an important role in the budgetary allocations of the European Union.

The development regions in the Member States are considered a factor promoting the structural policies and they are the direct beneficiaries of the Structural Funds from which the development programs implemented at inter-regional level are funded.

In Romania, the present economic development regions delimited by the “Law no. 151/1998 on regional development” were established on an arbitrary basis, without taking into consideration the inter-county links based upon organic and sustainable development.

In this context, we consider that the analysis of the EU regional development policy and its implementation in Romania represents a subject on which great attention should be focused.

**Key words:** regional development, regionalization, policies, allocation.

**JEL Classification:** R11, R58.

### 1. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the specialty literature, the concept of **region** is used in the structural policy to describe the **territory** between the national and local level.

The principles of the regional development policy at European level were taken into consideration even since 1957 with the signing up of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (the Treaty of Rome); this document, under Art. 2 and 3, stipulates that the mission of the Community (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands) is, among others, “*to promote throughout the Community a harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of the economic activities, a high labour and social protection (...), increase of the living standard, economic and social cohesion and solidarity among the Member States*”. Furthermore, Art. 158–162 under title XVII, **Economic and Social Cohesion**, stipulates that the European Union has in view to narrow the gap between the development levels of certain regions. Title XVII presents the Commission’s participation to the cohesion effort, through its own efforts and through the structural funds. Even since 1957, the six founding members of the European Union agreed upon the need to bridge up the gaps between certain regions and to provide support to the less-favoured regions, in order to establish a solid, unitary and balanced economy throughout the Community. Yet, in the early years of the European Community, no adequate regional policy measure was adopted. The regional development policy as well and its budget were introduced only in the mid ’70s. Until the middle of the ninth decade, the allocated budgetary resources of the Community were very low; more recently, on the occasion of the proposals regarding the economic and monetary union, the EU regional development policy considerably grew in importance. Both inside and outside the European area, not all the regions benefit from the same economic, social and geographic conditions so as to develop under similar or equal conditions. Thus, the EU regional policy proves to be necessary, so as to encourage the harmonious and balanced development of the Community area.

The requirement to ensure a harmonious development, by bridging up the gaps between certain regions, prefigured in the Preamble to the Treaty of Rome (1957), provides for the establishment of the **European Social Fund (ESF)**, meant to promote labour employment and to encourage the labour force mobility on the Community territory, as well as of the **European Investment Bank (EIB)**. The other institutions (instruments) meant to provide financial support to the development of the Member States were established with the European construction and the EU enlargement by the accession of New Member States.

**The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)** was established in 1975, as a result of the accession of the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark to the EU (1973). In a first stage, this fund served for the reconversion of regions under industrial decline from Great Britain. After the accession of Greece (1981), followed by the accession of Spain and Portugal (1986), the prerogatives of this Fund were extended to all the regions with delayed or precarious development. The Single European Act introduced, for the first time, in the year 1987, a specific title to the economic and social cohesion and laid the bases of a **Solidary regional policy**.

**The regional development policy** aims at reaching a dynamic and sustainable economic growth, by the efficient use of the regional and local potential, in order to improve the living conditions.

The two reforms, of 1988 and 1992, resulted in great changes of the EU regional policy structure and functions. The Reform of Structural Funds in 1988 represented the shift from the support to individual projects to funding programs, the concerns being transferred to a better co-ordination of the three structural funds, as well as to the allocation of a larger budget, which prioritarily targeted the less-favoured regions in the European Union.

## 2. SHORT HISTORY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

The regionalism became a development favouring factor with the **Maastricht Treaty of 1992**, which stipulates that “*the European Union policy must attenuate the differences between regions, the opportunity differences due to delayed development, it must create the structural instruments and the national and Community economic policy instruments that are correlated in order to remove the significant regional differences and to coordinate the different EU financial sources in the interest of an efficient regional policy*” (Art. 130).

In 1992, the **Maastricht Treaty** on European Union, together with the creation of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and of the Single Market, made the **economic and social cohesion** a priority object of the Community. **Economic and budgetary convergence criteria** were set up for the Member States. For this purpose, EU established a special Solidarity Fund – **the Cohesion Fund**.

In the year 1997, the **Amsterdam Treaty** confirmed the strategic importance of the cohesion. For this purpose, the treaty included a specific title on the employment, in order to highlight the need to reduce unemployment.

In the **Berlin European Council**, of March 1999, the state and government officials concluded the political agreement on **Agenda 2000**, a program of action whose main objectives were the consolidation of the Community policies and to establish a new financial framework at EU level, for the period 2000–2006, which should take into consideration the EU enlargement by new Member States. Thus, a new legal framework was set up for the **Structural Fund** and the **Cohesion Fund**, which was valid until the end of 2006.

Considering the future EU enlargements to the East, Agenda 2000 provided for, among others, the creation of the **ISPA** and **SAPARD** financial instruments that should make it possible for the Candidate Countries to join the EU under good conditions and to get ready for a good management of the Community structural aids.

The regional policy reform, which received financial support from Agenda 2000, favoured both the concentration of support in the regions lagging behind, and

the enforcement of policies in a more simplified manner. Furthermore, the states and regions, with a good knowledge of the specificities and reality in the field, will directly administer the funds received from the Union, and this will intervene only to coordinate and control the conformity of EU funds utilization.

The Agenda 2000, published in 1997 and enforced in 1999, brought about significant changes in the regional, agro-structural and rural policies, focusing on the **decentralization and simplification in the management of the support provided to the regions in difficulty or lagging behind**. On the other hand, a clear division of responsibilities was established, as well as a stricter application of the subsidiarity principle.

The cohesion policy, together with its contributions to the fight against regional disparities, facilitates the establishment of partnerships between the **European Union – Member States – local authorities – private sector**, around the regional development strategies, defined together with the Community objectives. In this respect, tripartite contracts and conventions are stipulated between the European Union, the Member States and the regional authorities in order to define the role and competences of these three administrative levels in the future general policy.

The European regional policy is, first of all, a solidarity policy, stimulating, at Community level, the interventions that make it possible for the territories in difficulty to overcome their handicaps more easily.

In the period 2000–2006, a quarter of the Community budget (i.e., 213 billion EURO), coming from the Member States' contribution, was allocated to the **Regional policy** and redistributed to the regions that have the greatest need for these funds for development. Both the Member States, by their own regional policies, and the European Union, will continue their effort to narrow the development gaps, participating to the reconversion of the industrial zones in difficulty, to the development of rural areas and furthermore, adding value to the areas under crisis.

The new financial perspective that was debated and voted by the European Union Council in 2005 covers the period 2007–2013 and it includes 27 Member States (Romania and Bulgaria included).

According to **Chapter 1b** of the financial perspective for the period 2007–2013, the EU cohesion policy must reach its goal to reduce the disparities between the development levels of the different Member States and regions.

The cohesion policy actions will focus upon the investment in a limited number of priorities, concentrated around three objectives, namely: **Convergence**, **Regional competitiveness and employment** and **Territorial cooperation**.

1. The **Convergence** objective is focused upon the acceleration of the Convergence of less-developed regions and Member States. The eligible regions funded from the structural funds from the perspective of this objective are the NUTS 2 regions, whose Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, calculated on the basis of EU data for the period 2000–2002, is under 75% of the EU-25 average.

The eligible Member States for the allocation of funds from the Cohesion Fund will be those states whose Gross National Income per capita, calculated on the basis of the EU data for the period 2001–2003, is under 90% of the EU average and have a program to comply with the economic convergence conditions.

**2. The Regional Competitiveness and Employment** objective will focus both upon strengthening the region competitiveness and attractiveness and upon the employment. The entire EU territory is eligible, except for the regions eligible for the allocation of structural funds from the perspective of the Objective **Convergence and of regions covered by transition agreements**.

**3. The European Territorial Cooperation** objective aims at strengthening the cross-border, trans-national and trans-regional territorial cooperation, the establishment of the cooperation networks and the continuation of the exchange of experience at territorial level. The eligible regions for cross-border cooperation funding will be all the NUTS 3 regions, along the internal borders, certain NUTS 3 regions along the external borders and all the NUTS 3 regions along the separated sea borders with a maximum length of 150 km.

### 3. BASIC NOTIONS OF THE REGIONAL POLICY

The regional policy is equally a concrete, visible policy for all the Community citizens, **helping them to find jobs and to adapt more easily to the changes on the labour market, through professional training or reconversion**.

This policy makes it possible for each European citizen to have a better life in his/her region, with financial participation to the public authorities' efforts, thus contributing to infrastructure development, helping enterprises to be more competitive, through revamping, modernization and advanced technology introduction. From these funds, motorways, airports and high-speed trains are built or modernized through co-financing from the Structural funds, with the respect of the European environmental measures. At the same time, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are also established in the remote regions, so as to maintain the population in the region.

At the same time, the knowledge-based Information Society reaches the most isolated rural areas. The new educational, health and leisure services also reach the peripheral areas, contributing to their repopulation.

These regional policy characteristics have been presented for a better understanding of the role and importance of regions in the **complex and sustainable development of the rural area**.

At present, the EU regional policy is facing three great challenges:

**1. Competition**, which has greatly increased as a result of market liberalization, as the enterprises are located in the areas where they have conditions for increasing their competitiveness (infrastructure and quality services, qualified staff) and their profitability.

**2. Technological revolution and information society**, which involve a high adaptability of people, enterprises and territories. The citizens have access anywhere to advanced training and education, in conformity with the labour force market requirements.

**3. The enlargement** represents an unprecedented opportunity and challenge for the European Union. Most New Member States have economic and social conditions that are less favourable compared to those from the least-developed regions of the 15 Old Member States. This new characteristic of the European Union has imposed changes in the operation of the current cohesion policy since the month of January 2007. With the EU enlargement, the effects of the economic and social cohesion shift to the east, and new problems appear in the regional policy:

- The **development disparities (differences)** grow larger, as the EU area and population increased by one-third, while GDP increased by only 5%, by the accession of certain states whose income is less than 40% of the EU average;
- **The cohesion policy focus shifts to the east**, targeting the harmonious development of the Community area.

**The regional policy of the European Union** has three main characteristics:

- It is a support policy, **complementary** to the regional policies of the Member States and regions;
- **It integrates the regional development into the Community structural development policies**, by economic and social fields (agriculture, domestic market, research, etc.);
- It has a direct intervention through the **structural funds** as main financial instruments to increase the economic and social cohesion.

The European Union solidarity and cohesion policy is implemented by means of the **solidarity instruments or funds**, which are addressed mainly to the EU Member States, to regions in particular. EU provides financial support through the **Structural Funds** and other two **special funds: the Social Cohesion Fund and the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF)**, these being also named **structural instruments**.

The regional development policy in the EU Member States is implemented at NUTS-2 level. The funding from structural funds is based upon programs, these programs being structured according to the priority fields and objectives of the regional policy, while the Solidarity Fund and the Cohesion Fund are based upon projects.

The European Union created a unitary reference base of the regional policy, which is named the **Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics** (*Nomenclature des Unités Territoriales Statistiques* – NUTS). **The systematization, according to NUTS, is based upon administrative territorial units**, while the regions always consist of administrative units.

NUTS is based upon statistical information collection reasons, and practically the access to data is organized by five levels, from the largest to the smallest units.

The NUTS 1, 2 and 3 levels are differentiated according to the following demographic thresholds.

*Table 1*  
*The demographic thresholds and the NUTS levels*

Level	Number of people	
	Minimum	Maximum
NUTS 1	3 000 000	7 000 000
NUTS 2	800 000	3 000 000
NUTS 3	150 000	800 000

Source: EU Report – 1991.

The entire territory of a country is included in this classification, which covers both the urban and the rural areas, regardless of level (NUTS 0–5).

The European Union created the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics through the European Statistical Office (Eurostat) even since 1988, having in view to establish the unitary, logical and coherent structure of the territorial distribution at EU level and to design a regional statistical system for **economic analyses**, as well as for the **design of the regional development policy at the level of each country**.

Since 1988, The European Commission publishes on a periodical basis (every 3 years) a report on the socio-economic situation and NUTS regions development in the Member States, from NUTS 1 level to NUTS 3 level; for NUTS 4 and NUTS 5 the national administrative units of each state are used that are called LAU 1 for NUTS 4 and LAU 2 for NUTS 5.

In the year 2003, the European Union covered the following regions according to NUTS nomenclature (Table 2).

*Table 2*  
*NUTS territorial units in EU*

Territorial units	EU-15	EU-25
NUTS 1	72	89
NUTS 2	213	254
NUTS 3	1 091	1 214
NUTS 4 (LAU 1)	2 453	3 334
NUTS 5 (LAU 2)	95 152	112 119

Source: EU Report–2003.

#### 4. REGIONALIZATION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ROMANIA

**The regionalization is an administrative action meant to delimit larger cooperation areas** compared to the administrative-territorial units.

The region delimitation is conditional on two aspects: **territorial homogeneity** and **statistical data availability**.

**The territorial homogeneity** refers to the geographic, historical, economic and social criteria as well as to the community of interests, traditions and customs, folklore, population's language, dialect and speech.

For the analysis and diagnosis of the situation of a region, the **statistical data** are of vital importance. Starting from the databases at regional level, objective criteria can be defined by which a certain region can be qualified under a specific development stage. On the basis of data processing, the statistical data should identify those regions with socio-economic problems, thus permitting to formulate a regional development policy on the basis of which the regional development projects should be designed.

**When delimiting a region (territorial unit), the natural limits should also be taken into consideration, if possible even overlapping with a certain geographic region featuring certain specific characteristics – relief, weather, waters, resources, economy – from the interaction of which it results a zone with its own specificity that is different from the neighbouring regions.**

The legal bases of the regional policy were laid in Romania in the year 1998 by **Law 151/1998 on the regional development in Romania**. Later on, certain modifications and amendments were made to the initial institutional and legal framework by Law 315/2004. These laws define the institutional framework, the objectives, competences, specific principles and instruments of the regional development policy in Romania.

Law 151/1998 on regional development created the legal framework by which 4 up to 7 counties joined into a **development region** established as a voluntary association of neighbouring counties without taking into consideration the historical provinces: Banat, Crişana and Maramureş, Dobrogea, Oltenia, Moldova, Muntenia, Bucovina and Transylvania. At Romania's level, at present, there are 8 development regions that are not administrative-territorial units and are not legal entities.

The institutional framework, the objectives, competences and instruments specific to the regional development policy in Romania were revised in 2004, in the context of negotiations referring to Chapter 21 "Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments", through the approval of Law 315/2004 on regional development in Romania.

In Romania, the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Dwellings, through the National Regional Development Council, is in charge of the regional development policy at national level; in the territory, through the Regional Development Councils and the Regional Development Agencies and regional development agency offices in each county except for the residence county of the agency.

**The basic objectives of the regional development policy** stipulated in Law 315/2004 are the following:

- Diminution of existing regional disequilibria, with the focus on the stimulation of a **balanced development and the revitalization of less-favoured areas (areas lagging behind)**; prevention of new disequilibria;

- **Complying with the integration criteria into the EU structures and access criteria to the financial support instruments for the Member States (structural and cohesion funds);**
- **Correlation of the regional development policies promoted by EU with the governmental regional development policies;** stimulation of inter-regional, internal and international cooperation, which contributes to the economic development, in conformity with the national legal provisions and the international agreements concluded by Romania.

The regional development policy objectives are reached through the programs funded from the National Regional Development Fund and the Regional Development Funds administered by the Regional Development Agencies.

The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) have legal personality, yet they cannot approve the funding of projects submitted at regional level. The RDAs submit the projects selected at regional level **for approval to the Regional Development Council** that submits them for a **final approval** to the National Regional Development Council. In this situation, the following question arises: how are respected the three regional development policy principles, stipulated in Law 315/2004 Art. (2), Paragraph (3) – subsidiarity, decentralization and partnership?

The development regions are defined as “areas corresponding to a group of counties, established by association, on the basis of a convention signed by the representatives of county councils, of the General Council of Bucharest Municipality respectively”.

The 8 regions from Romania correspond to NUTS 2 level of EU, while the 42 counties of Romania (Bucharest municipality included) correspond to the NUTS-3 level.

In Romania, the eight Development Regions were created on a voluntary basis, with no administrative status and as non-legal entities, corresponding to the European NUTS system, namely:

- NUTS 1 level: macro regions, they have not been delimited so far;
- NUTS 2 level: 8 development regions with an average population of 2.8 million inhabitants per region;
- NUTS 3 level: 42 counties, reflecting the administrative-territorial structure of Romania;
- NUTS 4 level: it is not used, as no associations of territorial units have been established;
- NUTS 5 level: comprises 269 cities and towns (out of which 103 municipalities), 2,732 communes with 13,042 villages (NARDP 2007–2013) and reflects Romania’s administrative-territorial structure.

We consider that these regions were established on an arbitrary basis, without taking into consideration the inter-county links based upon an organic and sustainable development. There are significant differences among regions with regard to the development level expressed by GDP/region, as it results from Table 3, and mainly a lack of homogeneity due to the traditions and historical links in Romania.

*Table 3*  
*Analysis indicators of the economic development regions*

Indicators	Region (1) NORTH- EAST	Region (2) SOUTH- EAST	Region (3) SOUTH MUNTENIA	Region (4) SOUTH- WEST OLTENIA	Region (5) WEST	Region(6) NORTH- WEST	Region (7) CENTER	Region (8) BUCHA -REST ILFOV	RO	EU
Population (thou. people)	3823.5	2934.3	3465.5	2399.8	2041	2844.0	2642.2	2284.7	22435. 2	376455
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	36850	35762	34453	29212	32034	34160	34100	1821	23839 1	3191000
Population density (inhab./km <sup>2</sup> )	103.8	82.1	100.6	82.2	63.7	93.3	77.5	1254.6	94.1	118
Share of rural population (%)	56.5	43.2	58.4	54.7	37.8	47.4	39.7	11.2	45.4	17.5
GDP/capita (compared to EU average) (%)	21.6	28.4	25.3	26.5	32.4	26.0	31.8	40.3	28.2	100.0
Structure of employed population (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
-agriculture, forestry, pisciculture(%)	51.2	44.7	48.6	51.2	35.9	45.9	34.0	6.6	41.4	4.5
-industry, constructions (%)	22.5	25.3	26.1	23.4	30.7	25.6	34.3	34.8	27.3	29.3
-services (%)	26.3	30.0	25.3	25.4	33.4	28.5	31.7	58.6	31.3	66.2
Death rate (%)	13.0	10.4	10.0	10.1	9.3	10.7	10.4	8.0	10.5	-

Source: Romania's Government database – National Development Plan 2002–2005.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

According to several specialists' opinion and according to the operation experience of the regional development system in Romania, we find out that the created system should be improved and completed. In this respect, legal, institutional and procedural measures are needed.

The regional development structure in Romania is of pyramid type, with a strict hierarchy, with excessive focus upon the national level from the decisional point of view, which result in excessive bureaucracy, inefficiency, delays in decision-making and implementation, and above all, corruption. This structure has nothing in common with the subsidiarity principle in the decisions related to the design of projects, the allocation and utilization of regional development funds.

**At present, the Development Regions are only regions with statistical function, which do not have instruments at their disposal, and neither their own financial resources in order to apply the European Commission policy in the management of funds and in reaching the regional development objectives.**

The regional development policy in Romania must undergo a deep reform so as to meet the EU requirements in order to reach the economic and social cohesion established by the EU regional policy.

**Regionalism** as process can be regarded from multiple points of view, namely: economic (development), administrative, cultural, ethnical, etc., with an increasingly strong manifestation in the European area. It is obvious that the regionalism is a complex phenomenon, which appeared as a natural reaction to the unprecedented evolution of another complex process that has been an European concern for more than 50 years: the European integration, integration being finally a component of globalism (even if we refer here only to the European globalism).

As a result, we consider that regionalization and (political, economic, commercial, cultural and even juridical) globalization represent parallel phenomena, with contrary effects that can be included in the syntagm of Europe as **unity in diversity**.

The feeling of regional appurtenance is the people's individual reaction, which stems from their individual identity feelings. If we focus upon the individual identity reactions, we shall find out that most people's **identity** feeling refers to the **place of birth** (village, town), followed by the **district, province** where they belong, then, following the next steps, we come to the **national, European identity** etc. These are relations that cannot be eluded, representing the citizens' natural reactions that largely explain the **identity cultural aspect**. If we also add to this the need of economic equilibrium, of the community participation to the development decisions, and we have in view here the subsidiarity principle, we can get a more accurate picture and, at the same time, an explanation of the pregnant regionalism manifestation.

That is why regionalization cannot be considered only from the statistical point of view or from the point of view of development equilibrium through the absorption of the European funds, as it was the case in Romania through Law 151/1998. **In our opinion, regionalization is, above all, an identity issue for the majority of the population included in a certain region.** We are aware of the fact that **there is no perfect regionalization**, yet we consider that the **regionalization based only upon statistical principles is an administrative fiasco**. Thus we can explain why in most cases the development regions from Romania are rather peer meetings of the county council presidents than operational decision structures in the field of development. Each county council president tries to "draw" development funds for his county during his regional presidency.

Another main factor of the dysfunctionality of the Romanian regionalism at present is represented by the **financial prerogative of regions**. As long as the administrative decentralization pillar and the operation of governmental structures at local level are not based on regional and local self-finance in Romania, in conformity with the EU financial philosophy, the regionalization and decentralization in Romania are mere stories. As long as the local and county authorities are

mandated only with tax collection by law, the financial autonomy and the administrative autonomy implicitly are only words, not facts.

The geographic, economic and social analysis of Romania's development regions reveals obvious disparities, the absence of functional economic and commercial links inside the regions, without taking into consideration the existing traditions and historical facts. In a word, the delimitation of development regions was based only upon secondary considerations of statistical and neighbourhood nature.

Considering both the inadequate structure of the present development regions from almost all points of view, and mainly the inconsistency of prerogatives conferred by Law 315/2004 under the chapters referring to regional development, administrative autonomy and decentralization (subsidiarity and devolution), we consider that the amendment of Law 315/2004 is necessary.

The amendments of this law on the development regions, in our opinion, should include the following aspects:

- Delimitation, on Romania's territory, of all the structures included in the nomenclature of territorial units (NUTS 1 and NUTS 4);
- **at NUTS 1 level (macro regions, provinces) the three historical provinces of Romania** (Muntenia, Moldova and Transylvania);
- at NUTS 4 level it is necessary to delimit the micro regions (zones) by taking into consideration the administrative organization under historical nets at territorial level.

The delimitation is necessary in order to respond to the people's needs from the respective zone, aiming at reaching the economic and social equilibrium.

We suggest several variants for the delimitation of development regions that should respect, to a certain extent, the NUTS criteria established by the European Union (Annex) while taking into consideration the historical regions of Romania, and enable the design and implementation of regional development policy according to the specific conditions of each region.

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## ANNEX 1

## Romania's regionalization – proposed variants

NUTS 1 (Provinces) (population/province)	NUTS 2 (Regions)	NUTS 3 (Counties)	Population (2002 Census)
0	1	2	3
<b>VARIANT 1</b>			
<b>I. Muntenia (9 777 686)</b>	<b>1. The Danube</b>	Teleorman	436 025
		Ilfov	300 123
		Giurgiu	297 859
		Călărași	324 617
		Ialomița	296 572
		Brăila	373 174
			<b>2 028 370</b>
	<b>2. The Sub-Carpathians</b>	Argeș	652 625
		Dâmbovița	541 763
		Prahova	829 945
		Buzău	496 214
			<b>2 520 547</b>
	<b>3. Dobrogea</b>	Tulcea	256 492
		Constanța	715 151
			<b>971 643</b>
	<b>4. Oltenia</b>	Mehedinți	306 732
		Gorj	387 308
		Dolj	734 231
		Vâlcea	413 247
			489 274
		<b>2 330 792</b>	
<b>5. Metropolitan-Bucharest</b>	Bucharest	1 926 334	
		<b>1 926 334</b>	
<b>II. Moldova (4 681 555)</b>	<b>6. Prut</b>	Botoșani	452 834
		Iași	816 910
		Vaslui	455 049
		Galați	619 556
			<b>2 344 349</b>
	<b>7. Siret</b>	Suceava	688 435
		Neamț	554 516
		Bacău	706 623
		Vrancea	387 632
			<b>2 337 206</b>

<b>III. Transylvania</b> (7 221 193)	<b>8. Alba-Iulia</b>	Alba	382 747
		Hunedoara	485 712
		Sibiu	421 724
		Braşov	589 028
		Covasna	222 449
			<b>2 101 660</b>
	<b>9. Someş</b>	Sălaj	248 015
		Cluj	702 755
		Bistriţa-Năsăud	311 657
		Mureş	580 851
		Harghita	326 222
			<b>2 169 500</b>
	<b>10. Crişana – Maramureş</b>	Bihor	600 246
		Satu-Mare	367 281
		Maramureş	510 110
			<b>1 477 637</b>
	<b>11. Banat</b>	Arad	461 791
		Timiş	677 926
		Caraş-Severin	333 219
		<b>1 472 396</b>	

0	1	2	3
<b>VARIANT 2</b>			
<b>I. Muntenia</b> (9 777 686)	<b>1. The Danube</b>	Teleorman	436 025
		Giurgiu	297 859
		Călăraşi	324 617
		Ialomiţa	296 572
		Brăila	373 174
			<b>1 728 247</b>
	<b>2. The Sub-Carpathians</b>	Argeş	652 625
		Dâmboviţa	541 763
		Prahova	829 945
		Buzău	496 214
			<b>2 520 547</b>
	<b>3. Metropolitan-Bucharest</b>	Ilfov	300 123
		Bucharest	1 926 334
			<b>2 226 457</b>
	<b>4. Oltenia</b>	Mehedinţi	306 732
		Gorj	387 308
		Dolj	734 231
		Vâlcea	413 247
		Olt	489 274
		<b>2 330 792</b>	
<b>5. Dobrogea</b>	Tulcea	256 492	
	Constanţa	715 151	
		<b>971 643</b>	

<b>II. Moldova</b> (4 681 555)	<b>6. Prut</b>	Botoșani	452 834
		Iași	816 910
		Vaslui	455 049
		Galați	619 556
			<b>2 344 349</b>
	<b>7. Siret</b>	Suceava	688 435
		Neamț	554 516
		Bacău	706 623
		Vrancea	387 632
			<b>2 337 206</b>
<b>III. Transylvania</b> (7 221 733)	<b>8. Mureș</b>	Mureș	580 851
		Sibiu	421 724
		Harghita	326 222
		Covasna	222 449
		Brașov	<b>589 028</b>
			2 140 274
	<b>9. Apuseni</b>	Sălaj	248 015
		Bistrița-Năsăud	311 657
		Cluj	702 755
		Alba	382 747
		Hunedoara	485 712
			<b>2 130 886</b>
	<b>10. Crișana – Maramureș</b>	Arad	461 791
		Bihor	600 246
		Satu-Mare	367 281
		Maramureș	510 110
			<b>1 939 428</b>
<b>11. Banat</b>	Timiș	677 926	
	Caraș-Severin	333 219	
		<b>1 011 145</b>	

0	1	2	3
<b>VARIANT 3</b>			
<b>I. Muntenia (9 777 686)</b>	<b>1. The Danube</b>	Teleorman	436 025
		Giurgiu	297 859
		Călărași	324 617
		Ialomița	296 572
		Brăila	373 174
			<b>1 728 247</b>
	<b>2. The Sub-Carpathians</b>	Argeș	652 625
		Dâmbovița	541 763
		Prahova	829 945
		Buzău	496 214
			<b>2 520 547</b>
	<b>3. Metropolitan-Bucharest</b>	Ilfov	300 123
		Bucharest	1 926 334
			<b>2 226 457</b>
	<b>4. Oltenia</b>	Mehedinți	306 732
Gorj		387 308	
Dolj		734 231	
Vâlcea		413 247	
Olt		489 274	
		<b>2 330 792</b>	
<b>5. Dobrogea</b>	Tulcea	256 492	
	Constanța	715 151	
		<b>971 643</b>	
<b>II. Moldova (4 681 555)</b>	<b>6. Siret</b>	Neamț	554 516
		Iași	816 910
		Bacău	706 623
		Vaslui	455 049
		Vrancea	387 632
		Galați	<b>619 556</b>
			3 540 286
	<b>7. Bucovina</b>	Suceava	688 435
		Botoșani	452 834
			<b>1 141 269</b>
<b>III. Transylvania (7 221 733)</b>	<b>8. Crișana – Maramureș</b>	Bihor	600 246
		Satu-Mare	367 281
		Maramureș	510 110
			<b>1 477 637</b>
	<b>9. Ardeal</b>	Sălaj	248 015
		Cluj	702 755
		Alba	382 747
		Hunedoara	485 712
		Bistrița-Năsăud	311 657
		Mureș	580 851
		Sibiu	421 724
		Harghita	326 222
		Brașov	582 028
	Covasna	222 449	
			<b>4 264 160</b>
	<b>10. Banat</b>	Arad	461 791
		Timiș	677 926
Caraș-Severin		333 219	
		<b>1 472 936</b>	

0	1	2	3
<b>VARIANT 4</b>			
<b>I. Muntenia (9 777 686)</b>	<b>1. The Danube</b>	Teleorman	436 025
		Giurgiu	297 859
		Călărași	324 617
		Ialomița	296 572
		Brăila	373 174
			<b>1 728 247</b>
	<b>2. The Sub-Carpathians</b>	Argeș	652 625
		Dâmbovița	541 763
		Prahova	829 945
		Buzău	496 214
			<b>2 520 547</b>
	<b>3. Metropolitan-Bucharest</b>	Ilfov	300 123
		Bucharest	1 926 334
			<b>2 226 457</b>
	<b>4. Oltenia</b>	Mehedinți	306 732
		Gorj	387 308
		Dolj	734 231
Vâlcea		413 247	
Olt		489 274	
		<b>2 330 792</b>	
<b>5. Dobrogea</b>	Tulcea	256 492	
	Constanța	715 151	
		<b>971 643</b>	
<b>II. Moldova (4 681 555)</b>	<b>6. Siret</b>	Botoșani	452 834
		Iași	816 910
		Vaslui	455 049
		Galați	619 556
			<b>2 344 349</b>
	<b>7. Prut</b>	Suceava	688 435
		Neamț	554 516
		Bacău	706 623
		Vrancea	387 632
			<b>2 337 206</b>
<b>III. Transylvania (7 221 733)</b>	<b>8. Ardeal</b>	Sălaj	248 015
		Cluj	702 755
		Alba	382 747
		Hunedoara	485 712
		Bistrița-Năsăud	311 657
		Mureș	580 851
		Sibiu	421 724
		Harghita	326 222
		Brașov	589 028
	Covasna	222 449	
			<b>4 264 160</b>
	<b>9. Crișana – Maramureș</b>	Arad	461 791
		Bihor	600 246
		Satu-Mare	367 281
		Maramureș	510 110
			<b>1 939 428</b>
	<b>10. Banat</b>	Timiș	677 926
		Caraș-Severin	333 219
			<b>1 011 145</b>

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<b>VARIANT 5</b>			
<b>I. Wallachia</b> <b>(9 777 686)</b>	<b>1. Oltenia</b>	Mehedinți	306 732
		Gorj	387 308
		Dolj	734 231
		Vâlcea	413 247
		Olt	489 274
			<b>2 330 792</b>
	<b>2. Muntenia</b>	Argeș	652 625
		Dâmbovița	541 763
		Prahova	829 945
		Buzău	496 214
			<b>2 520 547</b>
	<b>3. Dunăre</b>	Teleorman	436 025
		Giurgiu	297 859
		Călărași	324 617
		Ialomița	296 572
		Brăila	373 174
			<b>1 728 247</b>
	<b>4. Dobrogea</b>	Tulcea	256 492
		Constanța	715 151
			<b>971 643</b>
<b>5. Bucharest</b>	Ilfov	300 123	
	Bucharest	1 926 334	
		<b>2 226 457</b>	
<b>II. Moldova</b> <b>4681555</b>	<b>6. Siret</b>	Iași	816 910
		Vaslui	455 049
		Galați	619 556
		Bacău	706 623
		Vrancea	387 632
			<b>2 985 770</b>
	<b>7. Bucovina</b>	Suceava	688 435
		Botoșani	452 834
		Neamț	554 516
			<b>1695785</b>
<b>III. Transylvania</b> <b>7221733</b>	<b>8. Crișana-Maramureș</b>	Arad	461 791
		Bihor	600 246
		Satu-Mare	367 281
		Maramureș	510 110
			<b>1 939 428</b>
	<b>9. Transilvania</b>	Mureș	580 851
		Alba	382 747
		Cluj	702 755
		Sălaj	248 015
		Sibiu	421 724
		Harghita	326 222
		Covasna	222 449
		Brașov	589 028
Hunedoara	485 712		
Bistrița-Năsăud	311 657		
		<b>4 271 160</b>	
<b>10. Banat</b>	Timiș	677 926	
	Caraș-Severin	333 219	
		<b>1 011 145</b>	