

Regions profile

REGION OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA

The Region of Central Macedonia is a traditional gateway for trade between Greece, the Balkans and south-eastern Europe. Between mid-90s and 2008, the time of onset of the current economic crisis, the region experienced high economic growth rates. Despite this fact, unemployment rates remained relatively high compared to the EU and the national average. With regards to the economic activity, the primary sector, despite its decline, remains quite significant for the local economy, with high productivity above the national average. It is important to note the high proportion of arable and irrigated areas, the above national average production of cereals, industrial and aromatic plants, the improved structure of agricultural holdings compared to the national average and the relatively high degree of mechanisation and organisation of animal farming. Nevertheless the primary sector remains vulnerable because of its dependence on agricultural subsidies and the replacement of products by imports. The secondary (manufacturing) sector remains highly specialized in certain medium to low technology and labour intensive sectors. It accounts for a significant part of regional employment and thus is a factor of social cohesion and a key component of economic activity due to the intense and interactive relationship with other productive activities in all three sectors of the economy. However recent negative trends in investment have been noted, accompanied by relatively lower labour productivity and growth. The rates of setting up new and modern manufacturing enterprises remain low and far from internationally competitive manufacturing standards. The difficulties in attracting Foreign Direct Investments are indicative of the fact.

REGION OF APULIA, ITALY

The region of Apulia is the Italian south-eastern most region, with a territorial extension of 19.366 km², bordered by both the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, giving it one of the longest coastlines of any region in Italy, extending for about 800 km. The region is widely accessible by the sea and it seems a natural equipped wharf of the European community stretching over the Mediterranean that from centuries is in fruitful geographical economic cultural and religious relations with the Balkan area, the Middle-East, Northern Africa and East Europe. The Apulia is a Region of Convergence with a population of 4,076,546 inhabitants, generating a GDP of about 68.9 million (in 2009). The per capita GDP is about the 66% of the national average and represents about 72% of the EU27 average. Apulia manages for the period 2007-2013 about 2,7 M€ of the FESR programme and 640 K€ of the FSE programme plus other funds coming from interregional and national programmes. In the recent period, while the GDP in the South over the previous year grew by 0.2% (in north-central than 1.7%), in Apulia it decreased in 2010 of 0,2% to 16,932 euros per capita. The situation is not good even if one looks at annual average 2000-2010: Apulia, which was to be the motor production of southern mainland, has recorded a minus 0.3%. For the second consecutive year, although, the Apulian economy has performed the best performance in the South. In 2009 the GDP of Apulia fell by 2.3% compared to 4.6% of South Italy (SVnIMEZ Annual report 2010). Agriculture in Apulia is largely modern and intensive, allowing the region to be at the first places in Italy for the production of many products, like "hard" grain and tomatoes in the Foggia province, besides table grapes and oil, with around 50 millions olive trees. Also important is the production of salad, artichokes, fennel, cabbage, celery and oats. In specific areas fruit cultivation is also relevant. The primary sector, equal to 5%, produces considerable quantities of valuable produce as wheat, olives, fruit and vegetable, beets,

milk, flowers, tobacco and, in some areas of the Salento, medicinal herbs that give rise to an intense activity of food processing and agroindustry one. These industries are distributed in various territorial points and often represent local branches of large industries from the North of Italy.

REGION OF PAZARDZHIK

The District of Pazardzhik is situated in the central part of Southern Bulgaria and borders on Sofia, Blagoevgrad, Smolyan and Plovdiv district regions. It occupies an area of 4457.0 km², which is 4% of the country's total territory. More than half of this territory (57.1%) represents forest area, 35.6% is agricultural land, 3.3% are urban territories, 2.6% are rivers and water basins. The regional relief varies from low-lying (in the Pazardzhik-Plovdiv field, comprising the western part of the Upper Thracian Valley) to mountainous (parts of the Ihtiman and Sredna Gora, the Western Rodopi and the Rila mountains). The climate is trans-continental in the flat areas and mountainous in the eastern slopes of the Rila mountain and the high uplands of the Rodopi mountains.

Economic indicators In 2006 Pazardzhik region had a 2,9% share of the country's Gross Domestic Product. For 2007 the reduction compared to the previous year is almost 0,3%. The income per person in a family in Pazardzhik region indicates a 30% growth in 2008 when compared to 2006. The average annual salary of people employed under labour or civil service contract indicates a 45% growth in 2008 when compared to 2006. The growth rate of employed work force in 2008 is 4,2% when compared to the previous year and the growth rate in the private sector is 8% while in the public sector there is a 6% reduction. Productivity in 2007 marks a 5,1 % growth when compared to the previous year.

The share of the industrial sector in the structure of the Gross Added Value shows significant reduction in 2009 when compared to 2007. 48% in 2007 this share falls down to 42% in 2008 and remained stable in the following year. The share of agriculture also shows some reduction by 2% while the share of services marks a 7% growth for the same period. The trend observed in the first years of the transition period for services to take a major share of Gross Added Value now seems to be back in the recent years. Industrial companies in the region are now reviving their manufacturing processes and provide investment for new processes and products of higher added value.

In 2007 the Gross Added Value produced by economic operators in the region was 1377 mln. Leva according to current prices; in 2009 this showed some growth but in 2010 again dropped to the 2007 level and even lower. Different sectors feature different characteristics. The share of agriculture in the Gross Added Value follows the main trend while the industrial sector shows reduction throughout the period and the services sector shows considerable growth.

ROMANIA (SOUTH-EAST DEVELOPMENT REGION AND BUCHAREST-ILFOV DEVELOPMENT REGION)

ROMANIA - Country Profile Romania has a surface of 237.500 km² and it is the second biggest East European country after Poland (312.685 km²) having almost the same surface as the United Kingdom. Romania is splitted in several administrative units called counties (41). To apply the European regional development policy, on the Romanian territory has been created 8 development regions as a free agreement between counties councils and local councils. Main industries are: textile and leather industry; metallurgical industry; building machines industry; mining industry; wood processing industry; construction materials industry; chemical and petrochemical industry; food industry; IT industry. In 2010, the economy is based on services (55% of GDP), and industry and agriculture had a contribution of 35% and 10% respectively. In the same time, 32% of the working population is involved in agriculture and production, one of the higher rates in Europe.

SOUTH-EAST DEVELOPMENT REGION Region's Profile The South-East Development Region is neighbouring in the North with The North-East Development Region, in the West with Center Development Region in the South-West with South-Muntenia Development Region and Bucharest-Ilfov Region, in the South with Bulgaria and in the East with Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and the Black Sea. The Region has a surface of 35,762 km², being the second largest development region of Romania (15% of the country's territorial area). The region is participating with 11.2% of the national GDP, the 6th place between the 8th Development Regions of Romania. The Economic structure of the Region and their components contributions to the Regional GDP: agriculture and forestry with 22%; industry with 22%; constructions with 11%; trade with 9%; hotels and restaurants with 2%; transportation and communications with 10%.

The industry in the South-East Development Region includes companies from: food sector; leather sector; mechanical and metallic products sector; petro-chemistry sector; ship construction sector; electrical equipments sector. The Region has three specific issues making a difference of the other Development regions: 1. The ship building industry (4 locations: Braila, Galati, Mangalia and Tulcea) and the water transportation sector, because of the Danube and the Black Sea, the largest harbour of Constanta at the Black Sea and Danube River's harbours like Galati, Braila and Tulcea. 2. The leisure and entertainment industry because of the touristic potential, due mainly the 70 km of the Black Sea coast with 13 vacation cities for the summer holiday. 3. The Danube Delta Reservation has a touristic and scientific potential in the same time and it is one of the main attraction of the region all over the year.

BUCHAREST-ILFOV DEVELOPMENT REGION Region's Profile The Bucharest Ilfov Development Region is located in the southern part of Romania, being surrounded by the South-Muntenia Development Region. It is constituted by the largest metropolitan area of Bucharest (the capital city of Romania) and the smallest county of Romania (Ilfov). The Region has a surface of 1,821 km² (0.76% of the country's territorial area) being the smallest Development Region as area. 13.1% of the region's territory is the city of Bucharest and 86.9% is the area of Ilfov county. The region is participating with 26.1% of the national GDP, the 1th place between the 8th Development Regions of Romania. The GDP per capita in 2011 was 13.164 euro, due to the development status of Bucharest metropolitan area, which is 111% over the EU-27 average. The Economic structure of the Region (2010) and their components contributions to the Regional GDP: agriculture and forestry with 0.3%; industry with

12.8%; constructions with 13.7%; services with 64.3%; others 9%

The Bucharest-Ilfov Development Region has a strong development of the services which include: financial and insurance; public administration; real estate; trade and retails; hotels and restaurants;

REGION OF SLOVENIA

Republic of Slovenia is one of the smallest EU member states and covers 20,256 square kilometres. It borders with Austria in the North (the length of border is 324 km), with Italy in the west (235 km), Hungary in the northeast (102 km) and Croatia in the south and southeast (546 km). Slovenia's coastline on the Adriatic Sea in the southwest is 47 km long. Slovenia has a population of about two million people. Similarly to other modern societies, the country has been facing demographic issues, such as ageing, and low birth rate. Population density in Slovenia is about 100 inhabitants per square kilometre which is much lower than in the majority of European states. Approximately one third of the population live in towns with more than 10,000 inhabitants, the rest live in nearly six thousand smaller towns and villages. The larger towns are Ljubljana (the capital), Maribor, Kranj, Celje, Koper, Novo Mesto, Nova Gorica, Velenje, Ptuj, MurskaSobota, SlovenjGradec. In spite of its geographically small size, Slovenia is a convergence point of a range of different landscapes – Alpine and Mediterranean, Pannonian and Dinaric, each of which has its own characteristics and unique features as well as this area has always been the juncture of various cultural impacts. With its position between the Alps and the northernmost gulf in the Mediterranean, Slovenia represents one of the most important passages from the south-eastern Europe to the west. Slovenia's geographical position is favoured by the proximity of propulsive, fast developing European regions playing the role of development generators. Thanks to its geographical position and good understanding of the Balkan region, Slovenia has good chances of actively participating in the process of political democratisation and economic restructuring of this region. Owing to its central location, Slovenia has always been at a crossroads.

The country's topography is very diverse. Slovenia is rich with its man-made environment, architecture and the heritage of settlements and extensive natural systems. This can be illustrated by the fact that 35% of the territory of Slovenia is regarded as NATURA 2000. Approximately 90 per cent of the country lies more than 300 m above sea level, forests cover more than half of its territory (56.7%) and about 85 per cent of the other half is agricultural land. This is all reflected in the number of natural regions, naturally formed borders, a variety of relief, the diversity of land great biodiversity, long borders, minorities, richness of surface and underground waters, wealth of landscape and nature as well as extensive woodlands. The consequence is that some areas are hard to pass and thus unfavourable conditions have been created for the organisation of economic activities.

REGION OF HUNGARY (CENTRAL HUNGARY DEVELOPMENT REGION)

HUNGARY - Country Profile Hungary has a surface of 93.028 km². Hungary is splitted in several administrative units called counties (19). To apply the European regional development policy, on the Hungarian territory has been created 7 development regions as a free agreement between counties councils and local councils. Main industries are: machinery industry;; chemical (plastic and pharmaceuticals industry; food industry; In 2011, the economy is based on services (65,7% of GDP), and industry and agriculture had a contribution of 30,1% and 4,8% respectively. In the same time, 4,8% of the working population is involved in agriculture and 3,2% in food production. **CENTRAL**

HUNGARY DEVELOPMENT REGION Region's Profile The Central Hungary Development Region is neighbouring in the North-East with The North Development Region, in the West with Middle Pannon Development Region in the South with South-Plain Development Region. The Region has a surface of 6918 km², (7,4% of the country's territorial area). The region is participating with 45% of the national GDP. The Basic Economic structure of the Region The situation of the region is determined by its central position and by the dominance of the Capital and its agglomeration. 40% of all active economic organisations in the country is concentrated in the Region.

REGION OF ODESSA, UKRAINE

Odessa region is located in the far south-west of Ukraine. It borders on Romania in the south, Moldova in the west, Vinnitsa and Kirovograd regions in the north, and Nikolayev region in the east. Odessa region is the largest in Ukraine by its area (33.3000 sq. km) that constitutes approximately 5.5% of total Ukraine's territory and is comparable with the territory of such Western European countries as Belgium and the Netherlands. The main peculiarity of economic and geographical status of the region consists in its coastal and boundary location. Free access to Black Sea - Azov basin and to large river routs of the Danube and the Dniester gives good advantages to Odessa region in the development of transport infrastructure. Sea ports of the region are located at the crossroads of existing international transport corridors. Thus, the region appears to be the main sea gate of Ukraine. Economically and geographically Odessa region is a zone of intensive steppe farming with advanced irrigation. Its coastal part is also included into the recreational zone of north-western Black Sea coast. The population of the region numbered 2 388 300 inhabitants as of January 1, 2012. Odessa is an administrative center of the region, it is the third largest city in Ukraine with a population of 1,003,705 inhabitants. Odessa is also an important transportation, industrial, scientific, cultural, and resort center. The average population density of Odessa Region is 71.7 people per 1 sq km. The most densely populated suburban area is Southern part of the region, the less populated is central and northern parts. The regional gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices was 4.79 billion Euros (~5.32 % of total national GDP, Ukrstat 2009). GDP per inhabitant was 2 005 € (~10.1 % of national average).