

Roadmap for enhancing Cultural and Creative Industries in

CENTRU REGION

ROMANIA

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1. Introduction

According to the Application Form of CRE:HUB, the 8 Roadmaps by all project partners have to be **delivered by the end of 2nd semester**. The purpose of Roadmaps is to prepare the basis of the Action Plans of project partners, which are due **at the end of 5th semester**.

According to the Application Form as result of research conducted for the State of Art report and CCI Barrier & Solution Analysis, each region is able to outline **a Roadmap as a framework for the Action Plan**. Then, an integrated mutual assessment & learning is carried out to further investigate identified valuable practices and simultaneously increase capacities of all regional relevant stakeholders. The Action is, in fact, structured by:

- a) On-field evaluations (peer review) in each region: 2 experts (from other partners with relevant skills) assess system and Roadmap of hosting region and provide inputs to improve policy system, adopt new measures/policies and **convert Roadmap into action plan**. Visiting experts hold a local workshop and directly interact with local stakeholders group producing a mutual learning process
- b) Study visits: participants in the study visits are representatives of partners and/or /managing authorities, stakeholders groups. The aim of the study visits is to share and learn partners experiences, building and strengthening interregional relationships among partners, other policy makers and stakeholders. At the end of study visits, participating representatives hold a specific working session of stakeholders group to spread knowledge and experience.

The Roadmap is the preliminary framework of the Action Plan. It will also serve for an integrated mutual assessment & learning by peer reviews by each hosting partner presenting its Roadmap to visiting experts. The aim is to receive important suggestions and inputs by partners with the relevant capacity/skill in order to improve the policy system, adopt new measures/policies and refine the Roadmap. In addition, **each stakeholder group is involved in outlining the Roadmap**: it actively participates in regional workshops aiming at sharing and refining the Roadmap.

1.1 Methodology

The Roadmap is based both on the State of Art report (specifically SWOT and good practices' analysis) and on the CCI Barrier & Solution analysis. The Roadmap includes **the list of proposed activities** (which is based mainly on the Barrier & Solution and SWOT analyses) towards **goals to be achieved**, the **allocation of responsibilities to the players**, the **allocation of resources** (budget, materials, equipment, etc.) if relevant, a **timing** and a **monitoring** of the fulfilment and the impact of the Roadmap implementation.

The purpose of the Roadmap is to prepare for building the Action plan. According to the Interreg Europe Action Plan definition "... it is a document providing details on ***how the lessons learnt from the cooperation will be exploited in order to improve the policy instrument tackled within that region***. It specifies the nature of the actions to be implemented, their timeframe, the players involved, the costs (if any) and funding sources (if any)." Please, see the template of Interreg Europe Action Plan attached in the e-mail.

The Action Plan focuses on the selected number of specific actions, while the Roadmap is proposing a larger number of actions against particular goals defined during the research work, peer reviews and discussions with stakeholders. Therefore, the scope of Roadmap is wider than the one of the Action Plan, while the Action Plan is putting a focus on the selected number of specific actions. A key issue is the involvement of policy makers and public authorities in the Action Plan.

Taking into account a close relation between the Roadmap and the Action Plan, it is important to define the policy context of the Action Plan already in the Roadmap stage.

Please, find the designed Roadmap template below.

1.2 Workplan

Task	Deadline
Roadmap description and template sent to partners	26.01.2017
PPs sent their comments to Zane and Denize (PP5 - LU)	during 2 nd SG
The final template created and sent to the partnership	End of February 2017
Roadmaps discussed at the CRE:HUB meeting in Trieste	May, 2017
Roadmaps finalized by partners	31 March 2017
Roadmaps presented during peer review sessions and refined according to assessment results	To be defined
Roadmaps reverted into Action plans	31 October 2018
Implementation of Action plans	1 November 2018 - 31 October 2020

The Methodology proposes 3 stages to prepare a Roadmap:

Stage 1: Short information of the project, General Partner information.

Stage 2: Research and planning – goals to be achieved by the Partner and policy context.

Stage 3: Actions to implement the project goals – actions, resources, timing and monitoring.

2. STAGE 1 – Short description of the CRE:HUB project

The project “Policies for cultural CREative industries: the HUB for innovative regional development” (CRE:HUB) started on April 2016 and it will continue until the end of September 2020. It’s divided into two phases:

- 1) Phase 1. 01.04.2016 – 30.09.2018;
- 2) Phase 2. 01.10.2018 – 30.09.2020.

During the Phase 1 all eight project partners following their Roadmaps will develop Action Plans for improving cultural and creative industries (CCI) in their regions. During the Phase 2 the implementation of Action Plans will take place.

In the project context CCIs represent highly innovative SMEs and their promotion can effectively increase regional competitiveness and job creation capacity. For participating regions CCIs represent a strategic sector of development as underlined in many of their RIS3 documents. Despite the dynamic and innovative field of action, CCIs encounter difficulties in access to credit and lack resources to enhance their competitiveness on the global market, building effective partnerships, extending their activity to other countries. CRE:HUB overall objective is to improve 8 programmes for Investment for Growth and Employment (TO3), to support creation and development of new SMEs in CC sector at regional and national level through fruitful cooperation among regions with different level of capacities and experiences in CCIs supporting policies.

2.1 General Partner information

Partner organization: **The Regional Development Agency Centru**

Country: **Romania**

NUTS2 region: **Centru**

Contact person: **Laurentiu David**

E-mail address: **laurentiu.david@adrcentru.ro**

2.2 RDA Centru and its role in the frame of the CRE:HUB project

Centru Region is one of the 8 development regions of Romania established in 1998, in accordance with the Romanian Law of Regional Development. Centru Region is situated in the central part of Romania, partially overlapping the historic province Transylvania and is composed of 6 counties: Alba, Brasov, Mureş, Covasna, Harghita and Sibiu. The region is formally and institutionally represented by the Regional Development Agency Centru (RDA Centru), a nongovernment, non-profit organization of public utility, operating in the field of regional development. The activity of RDA Centru focuses on two main dimensions:

1. **Monitoring and implementation of European and national financing programs.** In 2007, RDA Centru was appointed as Intermediate Body for the implementation of the Regional Operational Program 2007-2013 in Centru Region. The same role is continued in the actual programming period 2014-2020.

2. **Regional Planning.** RDA Centru is involved in the elaboration of the Regional Development Plan, Smart Specialization Strategy, as well as other regional and national planning and programming documents.

As Intermediate Body for the Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 in Centru region, RDA Centru is directly involved in the implementation and monitoring of the program and has the ability to propose recommendation to improve the management of the program and to stimulate the participation of creative industries in the different type of support granted by ROP 2014-2020.

In the frame of the CRE:HUB project RDA Centru has the opportunity to learn and share good practices, experiences and views concerning the best tools for supporting the CCI sectors with the help of ERDF funded programs.

Besides learning form the other CRE:HUB partners, the project gives us the chance to create and animate a regional group of CCI stakeholders and to connect them to the other SG formed at project level in order to foster the transfer of knowledge and ideas, and thus encourage innovation.

2.3 State of the Art of CCI in Centru region

The State of the Art Analysis of the Cultural and Creative Industries of Centru Region covers the analysis of 40 economic activity classification codes (NACE). The results of the analysis come from their indicators of entrepreneurial dynamics (evolution of number of companies), turnover and employment of companies from these industries. In 2011 CCI had represented 4.5% of the EU GDP and hired 3.8% of its workforce. In 2009 in Romania this contribution stood at 5.93% of the GDP and 4.48% of the workforce. The results show that all county residence cities of Centru Region – Alba Iulia, Brasov, Sfantu Gheorghe, Miercurea Ciuc, Targu Mures si Sibiu – are in the first 15 most culturally vibrant cities in Romania.

In terms of economy, Centru region has a strong orientation towards industrial activities with a significant potential for supporting CCI activities – ensuring 46% of the national timber production, but also 20% of the furniture production. The region has a great potential in terms of tourism, including cultural tourism, but the most important dimension of its CCI is the ICT sector.

The CCI sectors in Centru Region have seen a vigorous development in the recent years, mostly due to the rise of ICT, which dominates in terms of revenues.. The regional analysis explores this relationship in depth. By studying the distribution of results among economic sectors, we will see that the ICT, printing and advertising subsectors accumulate over 2/3 of the economic results in the region's CCI. The ICT subsector, covering 6 NACE codes, is especially well established in Braşov, Mureş and Sibiu counties, where it dominates the local CCI. Braşov is among the top 5 ICT poles in the country.

As it happens in all regions of Romania, CCI activities are polarized around large cities, in particular county residence-cities. Looking at the recent year's dynamics of the CCI within the region, based on the selected NACE codes, we see that 3 counties dominate these industries, accounting for 80% of the region's CCI, and for 94% of the growth of the regional CCI from 2012 to 2015: Braşov, Mureş and Sibiu. Going beyond economic activities, the cultural industries of the region have different hierarchies. Sibiu is the dominating county in all matters related to culture, while Brasov is only an emerging pole. Cultural entrepreneurship in Sibiu, Covasna and Alba are significantly higher than in more established counties like Brasov and Mures, resulting in interesting case studies with a cultural flavour.

In terms of funding, the region Centru shows the most advanced consistency with local public funding for cultural projects (festival, exhibitions, etc.) in the entire country. Analysing the local and county level budgets allocated specifically for cultural projects we can estimate that in 2016 more 2.5 million have been spent on such projects. There is still however an issue with intra-regional consistency in handling

funding processes. Each of the regional authorities operates its own grant system under different rules, with a couple of them (Alba Iulia City, Mures County) funding cultural via partnership networks. The differences in budgets, rules and ease of work have had a direct influence on the cultural life of the respective cities and counties. As a result, the good practices from the region come from different fields, depending on the county. In Brasov we can study the effect that the technology festival ALT Braşov is having one establishing Brasov as a national and international ICT and innovation pole, while in Alba Iulia we can look at the way that the Carolina Cultural Quarter project is working on revitalizing the old city fortress. In Sibiu we can learn from how the year as European Capital of Culture has transformed the cultural life of the city, while in Mures, Covasna or Harghita we can look at the way the rehabilitation of the cultural heritage monuments by the works of Mihai Eminescu Trust have spawned not only a new cultural tourism market, but also a new interest (and market) for craftsmanship.

To conclude, the CCI sector is defined by a well distributed educational network and well established subsectors like publishing, advertising and ICT-related disciplines. It however lacks cohesion and collaboration at all regulatory, funding, and community levels. To enhance the competitiveness of creative SMEs in Centru Region, their global value chain values needs to be raised. The resources for a stronger collaboration between CCIs need to be developed; and a stronger spillover across sectors needs to be linked with cross-funding and the development of cohesive regulatory ecosystem.

3. STAGE 2 – Research and planning – goals to be achieved by the Partner and policy context

3.1 Policy instrument

In the frame of CRE:HUB the Regional Development Agency Centru approaches, as policy instrument to be influenced and improved, the **Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 (ROP 2014-2020)**.

3.2 Background

ROP 2014-2020 – The Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 is one of the 6 operational programs via which Romania accesses and administers the European structural and investment funds provided by the European Commission through the European Regional Development Fund – ERDF.

Romania has access to a total allocation estimated at 8.25 billion euros, of which 6.7 billion euros is EU support through the ERDF and 1.5 billion euros in national contribution.

The Regional Operational Programme (ROP) aims at promoting smart sustainable and inclusive growth in all regions in Romania making them more attractive places in which to live and work. The programme addresses the major development challenges for Romania: regional competitiveness, sustainable urban development, the low-carbon economy, and economic and social infrastructure at regional and local level.

The program includes 11 priority axes (plus an axis of technical assistance), and each axis has a number of sub-axes (investment priorities), with more specific objectives and potential beneficiaries.

Priority axis 1: Promoting technology transfer

Potential beneficiaries – Legal entities incorporated or performing their role creates an infrastructure for technology transfer

Priority axis 2: Improving the competitiveness of SMEs

Potential beneficiaries – SMEs, incubators, business accelerators

Priority axis 3: Supporting the transition to a low carbon economy

Potential beneficiaries – Local and central authorities

Priority axis 4: Support sustainable urban development

Potential beneficiaries – Local public authorities - urban areas

Priority axis 5: Improving the urban environment and conservation, protection and sustainable use of cultural heritage

Potential beneficiaries – Local government authorities and central cult units, NGOs, partnerships between these entities

Priority axis 6: Improving road infrastructure of regional importance

Potential beneficiaries – Local Public Authorities (CC), ATU partnerships (ATU county and city / municipality / town)

Priority axis 7: The diversification of local economies through sustainable tourism development

Potential beneficiaries – ATU sites, partnerships between ATU sites

Priority axis 8: Health and social infrastructure development

Potential beneficiaries – Local public authorities, social service providers of public and private accredited under the law, partnerships

Priority axis 9: Supporting economic and social regeneration of deprived urban communities

Potential beneficiaries – Partnerships between: local authority representatives, institutions, local business environment, civil society, marginalized urban area

Priority axis 10: Improving educational infrastructure

Potential beneficiaries – Administrative Territorial Units (public administration authorities and institutions), institutions of higher education

Priority axis 11: Geographical expansion of the system of cadastre and property registration in the Land Registry

Potential beneficiaries – National Agency for Cadaster and Land Registration

Priority axis 12: Technical assistance

Potential beneficiaries – POR Managing Authority, POR intermediate bodies

3.3 Investment priorities of ROP 2014-2020 targeted by the CRE:HUB project

The application form of the CRE:HUB project mentions as policy instrument to be influenced by the Regional Development Agency Centru the **Investment priority 2.1 of the ROP 2014-2020**. However, during the implementation of the project and based on the results of our stakeholder group sessions we have identified other Investment priorities of ROP 2014-2020 that could be approached.

In this section we will present each of the selected Investment priorities and analyze their strong points, weak points, goals and possible improvements in order to better support the development of the CCI sector.

3.3.1 Targeted Policy instrument No1

Priority axis 1: Promoting innovation in enterprises via support entities for innovation and technology transfer in respects to the Regional Smart Specialization Strategy

Budget: 206.51 mil euro (at national level) – **28.54 mil euro available for Centru region**

Thematic objective 1 - Strengthening research, technological development and innovation;

Priority investment 1.1: Promoting business investment in innovation and research, and developing links and synergies between enterprises, R&D centres and higher education, in particular product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, cultural and creative industries, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialization and supporting technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in Key Enabling Technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies.

This axis has a **direct impact** on the CCI sector.

Strong points:

It supports, indirectly, the creation of innovative Spin-offs and start-ups that capitalize on academic R&D or on patented ideas. It is a unique call for its focus on thorough investigative dimension and strong business potential. It does also target specific CCI economic sectors such as tourism, textiles, wood and furniture, and creative industries in particular – and it finances their R&D activities up to 30%.

Weak points:

It does not directly favors the cultural dimension in CCI, but it has a strong potential for the creative fields – such as ICT. It grades the innovation understood as a scientific contribution, rather than a creative one. It is restricted to a few key enabling technologies and smart specialization areas such as: bio-economy; ICT, space and security; energy, environment and climate change; nanotechnologies and advanced materials; and health.

Defined goals:

- Relax expectations about the performance of a technology transfer center as it is an under-researched experience in the Romanian economic ecosystem;
- Increase the employment of CCI personnel;
- Open technology transfer centers to a larger potential community;

- Prepare for consistent data collection and analysis on the performance of technology transfer centers;
- Make IPR the basis for sustainable business development.

Possible improvements:

- R&D understood from a less scientific perspective – redefined as RRI – Responsible Research Innovation;
- Include more definitions of IPR besides scientific research or patent – to encourage artistic experimentation and artistic projects;
- Include funding for IPR in terms of informing/educating about IPR – not just funding covering taxes for patents as it is now;
- Include funding for subscriptions to international resources: articles, magazines, academic journals, online courses;
- Include as eligible spending funding for internship activities or implement an FSE scheme for cross-financing;
- Including the Regional Smart Specialization Strategy as a criteria for eligibility;

3.3.2 Targeted Policy instrument No2

Priority axis 2: Improving the competitiveness of SMEs;

Budget: 758.45 mil euro (at national level) – **94.44 mil euro available for Centru region**

Thematic objective 3 - Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs;

Priority investment 2.1 A&B: Promoting entrepreneurship, especially by exploiting new ideas and encouraging the creation of new businesses, including via business incubators;

Priority investment 2.2: Supporting the creation and expansion of advanced production capacities and service development.

This axis, both priorities included, has a **direct impact** on the CCI sector.

Strong points:

It is aimed at supporting the competitiveness of SMEs, CCI-related ones too, to engage in growth in regional, national and international markets, and to approach innovation processes. Focuses on production activities and aims to increase the production capacity of SMEs.

Weak points:

Includes some specific CCI activities, but not all, and focuses specifically on the production of components that are part of a product with CCI destination (eg. Production of computer or photo camera components). No extra points are given for CCI-related projects.

NACE: in bold those with a potential CCI component will receive maximum score, leaving out 33 other potential cultural and creative economic activities.

- 2.1: **13, 14, 15, 16, 26, 29, 31**
- 2.2: **13, 14, 15, 16, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 43**



Defined goals:

- Support CCI specific activities;
- Support the creation of incubators with specific CCI activities;
- Reducing risk of investment failure for incubators by imposing lighter sanctions;
- Relax expectations about the performance of an incubator as it is a new experience in the Romanian economic ecosystem;
- Increase the employment of CCI personnel;
- Open incubators to a larger potential community;
- Prepare for consistent data collection and analysis;

Possible improvements:

- Grant extra points to those projects initiated by companies whose current NACE activity is the same as that of the investment project¹;
- Support incubators and startups with a specific CCI profile such as artistic creation²
- Include eligible spends for cultural and creative activities that can support production activities³
- Reducing risk of investment failure by imposing lighter sanctions: in case of non-conformity of expected results to actual results, the funding recovered should be in accordance with the results meet, not of the entire grant
- Include within the incubator spaces dedicated to co-working so the incubator is opened to individual residents as well as companies and startups, fostering possible future collaborations;
- Maintaining as compulsory the investment in assets, but raising the 'minimis' to 50% of the project⁴;
- Including the Regional Smart Specialization Strategy as a criteria for eligibility;
- Set the duration of the implementation of the project to 5 years, of which maximum to years for construction activities, and maximum 3 years for developing the services financed via 'minimis' – making it compulsory to have at least one complete cycle of incubation⁵
- Reducing the indicator from the scoring grid 'average number of minimum compulsory employees' from 3, to 2⁶
- Reduce the indicator from the scoring grid 'rate of survival of companies incubated' from 70% to 60%
- Regarding the administrator's eligibility in the scoring grid – include as viable experience previous experience as hub or coworking space administrator which can prove they had at least 10 resident startups⁷

¹ Currently, a company with sound financial activity from a more economically advanced sector can apply for funding in any other sector, to the disadvantage of CCI companies, with less performing financial indicators, but with greater experience in the sector

² Following the example of Fabrica de Pensule from Cluj-Napoca, the reproduction of which would not be possible as this grant is defined today

³ For example, a furniture-making investment could have the costs of furniture design covered by the grant

⁴ Referring to the section on the compulsory of investment in assets where the 'minimis' component cannot be higher than 20%: „A project must include one investment in assets funded via regional funds. Including spends funded via 'minimis' is optional. The 'minimis' component cannot go over 20% from the project's full value (the eligible value of the spendings via regional funds and eligible value of spending via 'minimis') – This way, an unnatural limitation is set on the services supported by the minimis. For example, an incubator that needs only repairs and equipment, with a non-minimis budget of 400.000 euros (80%), will only receive a help 100.000 euro (20%). This model encourages only investments of minimum 800.000 euro, while smaller projects, like hubs, will be discouraged.

⁵ As it is currently set today, the 3-years implementation period does not leave time for a full incubation cycle. In the case of a project which includes the construction from scratch of an incubator, the construction can take 18-24 months, leaving just 12-18 months for developing services.

⁶ These indicators were set according to international standards, surveys and observations, but such a process has never been developed in Romania, thus the conditions should be more encouraging.

- Include as eligible spend assets of the inventory items and supplies types⁸
- Grant extra points for those incubator projects with support structures such as hubs, accelerators, co-working spaces, which can provide creative input both in terms of human resources and business ideas.

3.3.3 Targeted Policy instrument No3

Priority axis 4: Support sustainable urban development;

Budget: 1386.86 mil Euro (at national level) – **191.66 mil euro available for Centru region**

Thematic objective 6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

Thematic objective 9: Promoting social inclusion and containing poverty;

Thematic objective 10: Investing in education, competencies and life-long learning;

Priority investment 4.2: Improving urban environment, revitalizing cities, regenerating and decontaminating former industrial areas, reducing air pollution and promoting noise reduction actions;

Priority investment 4.3: Supporting the physical, economic and social regeneration of disadvantaged communities;

Priority investment 4.4: Investing in education, training, including lifelong learning through developing educational and training infrastructure.

This axis, all of its priorities included, have an **indirect impact** on the CCI sector.

Strong points:

Through this fund, the regional CCI sector can develop by firstly ensuring the necessary infrastructure and resources for future generations: developing educational, cultural and recreational activities meant to create social inclusion for marginalized communities, in public spaces such as buildings, parks, squares, with small, local impact, but also educational institutions such as kindergartens, daycares, high schools and colleges.

Also, this fund supports the revitalization of decaying and abandoned urban areas which can foster the development of creative communities.

Weak points:

This fund is addressed to local administration and authorities who have the opportunity to directly impact the living standard of the citizens of their respective cities. However, citizens themselves do not have the grassroots opportunity to interfere.

Defined goals:

- Increase the CCI component and contribution of urban development projects via specific consultations with work groups and CCI stakeholders or via project competitions, adding to the

⁷ As it is now, imposing the administrator had previous experience as incubator administrator, while this is a new phenomenon in Romania, and no follow-up has been

⁸ Which are indispensable for working in an incubator, and as arts supplies are highly expensive, specific needs, currently not covered by the grant

existing consultations city authorities currently have for elaborating the integrated strategy for urban development

Possible improvements:

- Include in the call the obligation for public authorities to have consultations with an project-specific working group which included at least one CCI stakeholder⁹
- Organize creative calls and contests for the urban planning projects¹⁰ and score also according to the innovation and creativity level of the project¹¹
- Encourage the creation of working groups to include foreign collaborators by including collaboration costs as eligible spends
- Include grant systems/financial instruments to support the formation of creative quarters and neighborhoods – attract CCI-specific companies and individuals to certain areas of the city via lower rents in publicly owned, unused buildings
- Allow for creative communities to transform via own financial contribution to a certain percentage, decaying spaces, and in exchange allow them to use the spaces for a certain amount of time

3.3.4 Targeted Policy instrument No4

Priority axis 5: Improving the urban environment and conservation, protection and sustainable use of cultural heritage;

Budget: 466.50 mil euro (at national level) – **47.20 mil euro available for Centru region**

Thematic objective 6: Protecting the environment and promoting the efficient use of resources;

Priority investment 5.1: Conserving, protecting, promoting, and developing the natural and cultural heritage;

Priority investment 5.2: Actions destined for improving the urban environment, revitalizing cities, regenerating and decontaminating former industrial areas, reducing air pollution and promoting noise reduction actions;

This axis, both priorities included, has a **direct impact** on the CCI sector.

Through this fund, the regional CCI sector can develop via restorations, protection of and capitalizing on cultural heritage.

Strong points:

The call scores higher those projects in towns/villages with existing housing for tourists and which are included in known touristic circuits, thus supporting cultural tourism.

Weak points:

Romania has a large number of old, degrading heritage constructions in private ownership, that are on the path of touristic circuits. These cannot benefit from this funding, as only NGO or publicly administrated heritage sites qualify.

⁹ For example, a museum director, a festival project manager, an arts gallery director, specific professors, etc.

¹⁰ Following project-specific regulations, not public regulations

Also, the IP is financing buildings (restauration, conservation, consolidation, endowments) and marketing activities, but not cultural and creative activities.

Defined goals:

- Increase the CCI component and contribution in projects development.

Possible improvements:

- Include cultural and creative activities as eligible spending;
- Allow for creative communities to transform via own financial contribution to a certain percentage, decaying spaces, and in exchange allow them to use the spaces for a certain amount of time

3.3.5 Targeted Policy instrument No5

Priority axis 7: The diversification of local economies through sustainable tourism development;

Budget: 118.9 mil euro (at national level) – **13.73 mil euro available for Centru region**

Thematic objective 8: Promoting sustainable and quality work force and workforce mobility;

Priority investment 7.1: Supporting workforce occupation by developing local potential as part of a territorial strategy to include reconverting industrial regions in decay, and also by enhancing accessibility and developing natural resources and specific culture.

This axis has an **indirect impact** on the CCI sector. Through this fund, the regional and local CCI sectors can develop via cultural tourism.

Strong points:

It finances small infrastructural activities for the development of touristic resorts. The projects funded need to facilitate subsequent investments.

Weak points:

It focuses mostly on the natural heritage.

Defined goals:

- Increase the number of CCI-related follow-up investments
- Add value to Romanian CCI brands

Possible improvements:

- Public authorities need to be stimulated to access the funds, so private entities can then make subsequent investments;
- In the rating scale of the projects – grant extra points if at least one of the subsequent investment facilitated identified comes from the CCI sector¹²
- Creating state-recognized regional brands to certify hand-made Romanian crafts destined for tourism

¹² Currently points are granted if follow-up investments are guaranteed, no matter of their nature

- Developing new cultural infrastructure with touristic potential: theaters (open air), galleries, festivals, etc.

Summarizing, we have identified 5 Priority Axis of ROP 2014-2020 that offer room for improvement and could foster the development of the CCI sector. However, the improvement of ROP 2014-2020 must take into consideration the balanced development of all regional economic sectors, with a special focus on those fields that are considered to be the drivers. In this respect the possible improvements of ROP 2014-2020 foreseen in this document are intended to foster the development of the CCI sector in a synergic way with other economic sectors, thus ensuring a cumulative effect for the regional development.

In order to maximize the chances for this goals and measures to be included in the policy instrument we must first identify what are the improving and influencing mechanisms that could be approached.

3.4 Policy instrument improvement mechanisms and possible actions

The Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 is a rather rigid policy instrument, being the result of a complex planning process aimed at ensuring the balanced and equitable development of Romania's regions. The program focuses on offering solutions to the problems faced by the regions and on capitalizing the regional strengths and opportunities, with the support of EU funds. In order to ensure the proper and efficient use of the European funds allocated for the period 2014-2020 the priorities of the ROP have been negotiated and agreed together with the experts of European Commission.

Considering the multitude of factors and stakeholders involved in the elaboration of the ROP 2014-2020, modifying its contents is a challenge that must be approached in a careful and responsible way, by holding a strong vantage point and considering all possible effects of the proposed measures.

In this respect, when trying to influence and improve a policy instrument such as the ROP 2014-2020 a well justified level of rigidity and inflexibility is to be expected from the responsible bodies, as changes may affect the overall balance of the program.

However, there are processes, instruments and communication channels that could be used for bringing to the attention of the Managing Authority those good practices and recommendations that could ensure an improved impact of the program.

In terms of better supporting the CCI sector in the frame of the Regional Operational Program, the improvement proposals described in the previous section could be presented to the Managing Authority, by using the following mechanisms:

- a) Active involvement in the midterm evaluation and revision of ROP 2014 – 2020;**
- b) Uptake and inclusion of CRE:HUB good practices and recommendations in the Regional Development Plan and the Smart Specialization Strategy of Centru Region, which are elaborated by RDA Centru;**
- c) Presentation of the CRE:HUB good practices during the targeted IP call for proposals launching events;**
- d) Presenting the CRE:HUB good practices and recommendations in the drafting of the next ROP.**

e) Involving the relevant representatives of ROPs Managing authority in the High level dissemination event foreseen for the second phase of the CRE:HUB project.

However, in order to be able to use these mechanisms, the project partners of the CRE:HUB project need to engage in preparatory actions that will provide the necessary data and justifications for improving the policy instruments.

3.5 Planned actions towards implementing the CRE:HUB project

The preparatory actions envisaged to be realized in the frame of the CRE:HUB project, in order to pave the way for the policy improvement efforts, consist in:

- 4 Analyzing the situation of the CCI sector in Centru Region – The CCI state of the art in Centru region, including: identification of GPs, SWOT analysis, Barrier&Solution analysis, has already been realized.
- 5 Exchange of experience, knowledge and good practices with other project partners;
- 6 Drafting of a Roadmap for the improvement of the policy instrument;
- 7 Participation in Peer review processes with other project partners;
- 8 Preparation and implementation of the action plan;
- 9 Constant involvement of the stakeholder group in all project implementation actions;
- 10 Raising the public awareness on the importance of the CCI sector through project dissemination actions.

The implementation of these actions should provide the ground and support necessary for the improvement of the policy instrument. A crucial role in giving voice to the CRE:HUB project's inputs will be played by the stakeholders group.

3.6 Stakeholder Group

The stakeholder group formed at regional level in order to support the implementation of the CRE:HUB project is a mix of CCI clusters, County level authorities, Municipalities, Universities and Chambers of Commerce.

However, the actions and meetings of the CRE:HUB SG established in Centru region, are most of the time realized in larger contexts and ensure the involvement of additional actors such as SMEs, Start-ups, NGOs, creative communities or persons, project development consultants, funding authorities etc.

We estimate that the inputs and support offered by these categories of stakeholders, combined with the strategic vision and role of the Regional Development Agency Centru will generate the necessary level of representativeness needed to draw the attention and consideration of ROPs 2014-2020 Managing Authority.

3.7 Performance Indicators

Considering:

- ROPs improvement mechanisms and possible actions mentioned above;
- The preparatory actions under implementation in the frame of the CRE:HUB project;
- The involvement and support of the regional stakeholder group;
- The role and influence of RDA Centru, as Regional Intermediate Body for the management of ROP 2014-2020;

We estimate that the following performance indicators could be achieved:

- I. Increased number of project applications (with a cultural and creative component) received for financing in the frame of ROP 2014-2020;
- II. Policy recommendations for better supporting the development of the CCI sector formulated and presented to the Managing Authority of ROP 2014-2020;
- III. Improved/Revised version of the ROP 2014-2020 with a better focus on supporting the CCI sector
- IV. Number of inspiring Good Practices identified in the frame of the CRE:HUB project and replicated at regional level;
- V. Improved versions of the Regional Development Plan and the Smart Specialization Strategy of Centru Region with a stronger focus on supporting the CCI sector;
- VI. Increased focus on financing CCI projects in the frame of the next ROP.

4. STAGE 3: Actions to implement the project goals – actions, resources, timing and monitoring

Goals	Activities to implement the goals ¹³	Resources ¹⁴	Timing of each activity	Players involved
Inclusion of the improvement proposals formulated in the section: <i>Stage 2 / Investment priorities of ROP 2014-2020 targeted by the CRE:HUB project</i> – in the ROP 2014 - 2020 or in the next ROP	<p>1. Active involvement in the midterm evaluation and revision of ROP 2014 – 2020;</p> <p>2. Uptake and inclusion of CRE:HUB good practices and recommendations in the Regional Development Plan and the Smart Specialization Strategy of Centru Region, which are elaborated by RDA Centru;</p> <p>3. Presentation of the CRE:HUB good practices during the targeted IP call for proposals launching events;</p> <p>4. Presenting the CRE:HUB good practices and recommendations in the drafting of the next ROP.</p> <p>5. Involving the relevant representatives of ROPs Managing authority in the High level dissemination event foreseen for the second phase of the CRE:HUB project.</p>	Not applicable	<p>For Activity 1: 2019</p> <p>For Activity 2: 2018</p> <p>For Activity 3: 2017</p> <p>For Activity 4: 2019-2020</p> <p>For Activity 5: 2019-2020</p>	<p>CRE:HUB stakeholder group</p> <p>RDA Centru</p> <p>ROPs Managing Authority</p>

¹³ The list of possible activities to reach the defined goals.

¹⁴ An indicative allocation of resources, if possible to define at this stage.