

UNDP Opens New Centre for Supporting Regional Development

26 November, 2006. The United Nations Development Programme in Romania together with the Ministry of European Integration (MEI) launched a new "Centre for Training and Consultancy on Regional Development" at the "University 1 December" in Alba Iulia, as part of a pilot project designed to help regions increase the absorption of non-reimbursable structural funds.



Top L, from L to R: Soknan Han Jung, UN RC/UNDP RR Anca Boagiu, Minister of MEI, and the Mayor of Alba Iulia City Council, cutting the ribbon of the new center.

The new Centre will encourage and support the development of partnerships between various stakeholders and communities as well as access to experts in the fields of interest to their beneficiaries. It will provide technical support consisting of advice, training, exchange of experience, and working meetings for stakeholders in the Development Region Centre, one of the eight such regions from Romania. It will also manage a database of experts able and willing to work in the region in fields such as project development, accessing non-reimbursable funds, or effective partnerships. The database will be available for free on the website of the Centre.

This is the second facility after the Information and Documentation Centre in Braila, in the South East

regional development area of Romania, was set up earlier this year. The Centre in Brăila was created at the initiative of the Brăila County Council by a non-profit organization established by the local and county authorities from Brăila. The two centers will create a functional network of expertise and services available to all key actors in the field of regional and local development.

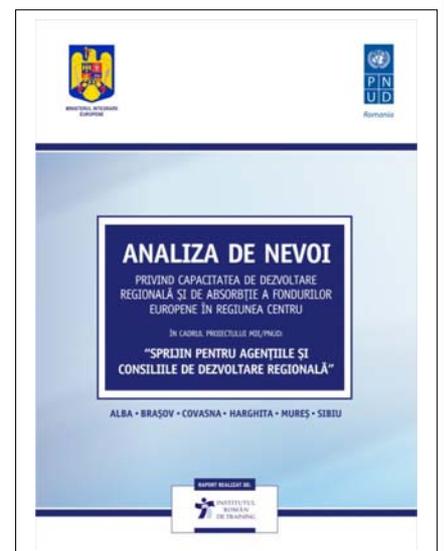
The project seeks to empower local governments and other stakeholders to participate in regional and local development by enhancing their capacities to govern in a more effective, accountable and participatory way, in line with EU requirements and standards.

The location, staff and equipments necessary for the smooth implementation of the Centre activities were offered by the City-hall of the Alba Iulia Municipality, in partnership with the University "1 December 1918".

At the launch of the new Centre, Ms. Soknan Han Jung, UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative, said: "We thank and congratulate the University "1 December 1918", the City-Hall of Alba Iulia, as well as the Regional Development Agency for their support and involvement in the project. And we encourage all the authorities, companies and NGOs to come and use the newly created Center, for the best of the development of their communities!"

On the same occasion, the *Needs Analysis Report on the Absorption and Regional Development Capacity in the Region Centre*, was launched. The Report describes the current regulatory framework applicable to Regional Development in general and Region Centre in particular, constraints and opportunities identified as a result of a complex methodology, and makes concrete recommendations on priority needs.

Public authorities, SMEs, CSOs, universities and any other interested organizations are largely invited to join the activities of the Centre.



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