



## The Managing Authority of the Regional Operational Programme

Dear Mr. Eduardo Barreto,

We would like to express our thanks for your support in a sound and efficient implementation of the Regional Operational Programme 2007-2013 (ROP) in accordance with the share management principle of EU structural funds.

In reply to your remarks foreseen in the letter No.04931/ 17.06.2010, with regard to the concerns about the implementation of the programme, we would like to mention the following:

1. Regarding the state aid schemes we would like to inform you that the Managing Authority has the obligation to report yearly in a form of database to the Competition Council, in accordance with the provisions of "Emergency Ordinance No.117/2006 with regard to national procedures in field of state aid". All the information provided by Managing Authority is than submitted to DG Competition by the Competition Council from Romania.
2. With regard to the reallocation of funds from the Priority Axis 4.2, we would like to inform you that the Managing Authority will sent in due time a proposal to modify the ROP agreed by the Monitoring Committee.
3. Regarding the implementation of the Growth Poles strategies - the Managing Authority offers a permanent support to the 7 poles by assisting them to develop and implement quality projects. Therefore, periodic meetings are held with the main stakeholders involved (ADI, pole's coordinators, RDAs, ACIS and the relevant MAs) to analyze and discuss the progress in implementing the Growth Poles Strategies (the last meeting took place on 17th of June).
4. In order to accelerate the payments cycle to the beneficiaries, the latest measures adopted by the Managing Authority envisage simplifying the verifying process of the reimbursement claims with the aim to avoid over-checking and to apply effectively the "4 eyes principle", and this will result in shortening the period for processing the reimbursement claims.

**Mr. Eduardo Barreto**  
**Directorate General for Regional Policy - Head of Unit**  
**European Commission**

The Intermediate Bodies are periodically monitoring the reimbursement schedules as foreseen in the financing contracts, and they also analyze and send the updated cash flows to the Managing Authority. In the first six months of the year 2010 around 565 reimbursement claims were processed and payment were made which amount to about 631 million LEI which include both, the ERDF pre-financing and reimbursement payments. This represents an increase of 313% as compared to the previous year.

At the end of June 2010, the reimbursed ERDF funds amounted to 95 million Euro, out of which 35 million Euro represent applications for Payments reimbursed by the European Commission to the Managing Authority. The absorption rate will reach 2.54% after the certification by the Certifying and Paying Authority of the remaining amount of 60 million Euro.

Out of the initial estimated amounts forecasted for the first six months of the year 2010, around 60% was covered by the statements of expenditures. Therefore, MAROP estimates that for the year 2010 an amount of 220 million Euro will have been registered in the statements of expenditures to be sent to the European Commission.

5. Concerning the recommendations issued by the Audit Authority in the Audit Report regarding the efficient functioning of the management and control system established for the Regional Operational Program, registered at the ROP MA with the no. 40134/AP/16.02.2010 we would like to inform you as follows:
- Total of recommendations: 43
  - Implemented recommendations: 27, representing 67% of total recommendations,
  - Partial implemented recommendations: 3
  - Recommendations under implementation: 13

We are sending you attached, also, the Stage of the implementation of the recommendations at 15.07.2010, in Romanian language.

6. Regarding the additional information on the progress of the priority axis 5.3 - „Promoting the tourism potential and setting-up the needed infrastructure in order to increase Romania’s attractivity as tourism destination”, we would like to inform you as follows:
- In 16.06.2010, the Tourism Marketing Unit submitted the application form for the project „Creation of national tourism brand”. The total amount of the project is 12,459,663.74 Lei. Currently, the application form is under the evaluation process.
  - There were submitted 49 application forms until 16.01.2009, within the first call for proposals of the operation „Development and consolidation of domestic tourism by supporting tourism promotion of specific products and specific marketing activities”, with total amount of 42,161,523.63 Lei (7% from the allocated amount of the key area of

intervention). There were accepted 30 application forms. After the technical and financial evaluation, there were prepared 19 financial agreements, out of which 7 have been signed and 12 are following the simplified evaluation procedure, in order to clarify the implications of state aid rules.

In December 2009, it was launched a new call for proposals, being submitted 209 application forms, with total amount of 204,608,263.73 Lei (34% from the allocated amount of the key area of intervention). 48 applications were not eligible, 34 applications are currently in the process of eligibility check and 127 applications are now within the technical and financial evaluation stage.

- Regarding the operation „Creation of National Tourism Information and Promotion Centres”, there were submitted 9 applications, out of which 3 were rejected.

Last but not least, I would like assure you that the Managing Authority will continue its actions to seek and identify the most effective simplification measures possible, in order to improve the absorption of EU funds and in this respect aiming to achieve a more balanced development of the Romanian regions in according with objective of the ROP.

My services are at your disposal if further clarification is needed.

Yours sincerely,

Gabriel Friptu

General Director