

## Methodologies applied during Stage 0

The methodology of Stage 0 of **RIS DISCOVER NE ROMANIA** will follow the basic guidelines of the IRE RIS "Methodological Guide Stage 0" edited by IRE Network, adapted to the specific needs of the North-East Region.

A particular attention was given to identify the need to concentrate the statistical data existing at level of the region, according to the figures authorised by the National Institute for Statistics in 2004, that was confronted with collecting analyses studies and researches developed in the field of SMEs at national and regional level (White Chart for SMEs 2005 edition), or in the field of research Romanian White Paper on Innovation (edition 2005) or in the field of regional development National Plan for Development 2004-2006, as well as North-East Regional Development Plan 2007-2013.

Due to the particular situation of Romania in the project implementation period 2005 -2008, (phasing out pre-accession and transition to accession funds), references were collected also in terms of operational programs issued by Romanian Government for 2007 -2013 programming period, particularly in the field of competitiveness, human resources, regional development and cross border cooperation.

More precisely, we adopted the following approach:

### 1. Desk research

- **identification of the organisations** in the region to be involved in project activities (conferences, seminars, interviews, surveys, management structures). As a result of this activity carried out by North-East RDA experts, a database with **150 contact details** was prepared that included: selected companies, business associations, universities, research institutes, local authorities, business support organisations, national and regional representatives of NASMEC, NCPSME, MofEC and MofER; More than **257 participants** were registered at public events organised during Stage 0.
- **analyse of existing information sources on regional economic situation**, the sectorial trends (SMEs evolution, privatisation process, the research and TT situation, national policy for R&D, etc) and EU Regulations (deliverable 23, **WP4**). The activity was delivered by North-East RDA experts, supported by IPC and Italian partner when appropriated, and contrasted with expert opinions during different bilateral meetings as well as recommendations made during the meetings by Steering Committee and Reference Panel members. The result was an **Analyse on Regional Trends** that will be the basis for the selection of enterprises and research - university centres to be interviewed and audited in the Stage 1 (deliverable 4, **WP1**);
- collected info to define the **logo** of the project, **the content of articles and materials** to be used in different dissemination activities (ex. press release, brochure, web, etc) as well as the structure of the **dedicated web section** of the project to be placed on the address [www.adrnorddest.ro](http://www.adrnorddest.ro) (deliverable 12, **WP2**);
- **identification of potential networking activities**. The North-East RDA experts prepared info on the region and the description of the organisation to be placed on IRE Network website (September 2005). The information was improved and up -dated on regularly basis. Following the requests received, contacts were developed with University of Salford (UK) and Technology Transfer and Innovation Centre Newcastle (UK). Communication was maintained with the other 4 RDAs in Romania that implemented RIS Projects, in order to prepare a meeting together with EC project officers in January 2006 (deliverable 29, **WP5**).
- **a mailing list was prepared with 200 recipients** and launched in 2006. The recipients were key regional actors that received regularly information on innovation research &TT, consultation on draft of the **Analyse on Regional Trends** (deliverable 11, **WP2**).

- collected info **to prepare the framework agreement and other reference documents**; North-East RDA together with IPC and Italian partner drafted and agreed the format of the framework agreement, the rules of participation to the project managing structures;
- collected info in order to **select a new partner for the project**. North-East RDA experts prepared the documents in accordance with Romanian law on public procurements and Guide to Financial Issues relating to Indirect Actions of the FP6 Projects. The process concluded with selection of FUNDECYT Spain. The proposal was to start the activities of the new partner on 01.06.2006 together with Stage 1 start-up.
- **prepare an addendum for the IRE contract 014623**. Collect forms, analyse methodology, submit documents to European Commission on the 16.06.2006 – activity developed by North-East RDA experts based on project officer recommendation and appropriate guidelines.
- collected info to **prepare the tender dossiers for subcontracting services**; North-East RDA experts prepared the documents in accordance with Romanian law on public procurements and Guide to Financial Issues relating to Indirect Actions of the FP6 Projects for each contract as following:
  - o **Service Contract for International Process Consultant** – contract no. 5751/02.12.2005 concluded with Infyde Spain, total value **79,940 Eur** (advanced paid 23,982 Eur); deliverable 2, **WP1**)
  - o **Service Contract for designing materials**, concluded with Gamma Advertising SRL Piatra Neamt, total value **547.03 Eur** (paid related to Launching conference)
  - o **Printing materials**, invoice issued by Accent Print SRL Suceava, total value **446.42 Eur** (paid related to Launching conference)
  - o **Consumables** – total invoices **118.43 Eur** (paid related to Launching conference)
  - o **Lecturers accommodation and transport** – total invoices **505.75 Eur** (paid related to Launching conference)
  - o **Catering services** – invoice issued by Casa Bolta Rece SRL Iasi – total invoice **600.95 Eur** (paid related to Launching conference)
  - o **Catering services**, invoice issued by Rosid Prod SRL Slanic Moldova – **1091.74 Eur** (paid related to Seminar “DISCOVER NE ROMANIA“ in Slanic Moldova )
  - o **Catering services** invoice issued by Ecozit SRL Iasi – **195.15 Eur** (paid related to Seminar “Innovation as opportunity for North-East Region economic development” in Iasi)
  - o **Posters production(3)**, invoice issued by Grafit Invest SRL Bacau – **81.82 Eur** (paid related to participation on **Information Day** entitled “Reporting systems IRE and examples of best practices” in Brussels on 07.04.2006)

## **2. Work meetings - organized at local and regional level**

- **management and coordination meetings** in order to ensure a clear understanding of the role and responsibilities of each member of the Management Unit and to define the structure of the Steering Committee and Reference Panel (**WP 1**);

### **1. Management Unit** met 4 times during Stage 0 as following:

- o On 21.06.2005 in Piatra Neamt
- o On 13.09.2005 in Piatra Neamt
- o On 16.01.2006 in Piatra Neamt
- o On 19.05.2006 in Iasi

The purpose of each meetings were to inform the RDA team experts about the currently stage of the project and to establish the approach and schedule for the following activities according to the work program. At each meeting the experts of North -East RDA (7), the IPC and Italian partner (according to the agenda) were attending.

### **2. Reference Panel and Steering Committee** met 2 times each during Stage 0 as following:

- o On 08.02.2006 in Piatra Neamt
- o On 19.06.2006 in Piatra Neamt

The purpose of the first meeting was to analyze and approve institutional composition as well as work procedures for each structure (attached copies). The meeting was attended also by IPC and Italian partner that explained what is a RIS process, and the experience of a European region.

The second meeting discussed first draft of the **Analyse on Regional Trends as well as a SWOT analyse** attached in order to be able to select economic sectors for evaluation and technological auditing in Stage 1. Also at this meeting the new partner of the project was introduced FUNDECYT Spain.

**3. Workshops and conferences attended by North-East RDA experts and IPC, Italian partner in order to promote the project, identify potential network connections and definition of project methodology:**

- **Plenary IRE Conference 4<sup>th</sup> edition**, Ljubljana Slovenia (07-08.06.2005) – Mrs. Gabriela Macoveiu, project manager attended the meeting.
- **First RIS Methodological Workshop**, Lithuania (06-11.07.2005), Mrs. Elena Pascanu and Alina Capitanu, attended the meeting. The purpose of the seminar was to present the RIS/RITTS methodology (particularly for stage 0 – involvement of groups of stakeholders, preparation and implementation of communication strategy), explore good practices and problems at stage 0.
- **Working group for RIS Projects in Romania**, hosted by EC Delegation in Bucharest, 29.07.2005. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss perspectives on EC Priorities for innovation policies, identify connection between regional innovation strategies and national economic policies in Romania (connection with National Development Plan), identify financing resources for implementation of regional innovation strategies in Romania (connection with Regional Operational Program and Sectorial Operation Program for Competitiveness for 2007 -2013). Mrs. Gabriela Macoveiu attended this meeting.
- **Second RIS Methodological Workshop**, Malta (16-17.02.2006), Mrs. Liliana Baicu and Claudia Calin attended this meeting. The purpose of the seminar was to insist on preparation of RIS analyze and tools used for evaluation.
- **IRE Focus Group – ‘Promoting innovation in SMEs’** - first meeting, Banska Bistrika, Slovakia 03-04.04.2006. Mrs. Alina Capitanu attended this meeting with the purpose to collect know how regarding RIS project implementation.
- **Information Day - “IRE Reporting systems and examples of best practices”**, developed in Brussels on 07.04.2006. Mrs. Gabriela Macoveiu and Mrs. Elena Nane attended the meeting. The purpose was to present and discuss requirements for successful project implementation and reporting.
- Mrs. Liliana Baicu was appointed as member in **Steering Committee of project ARISE, Project Coordinator RDA South-East**, kick-off meeting on 18.05.2006 Braila, Romania
- Mrs. Elena Pascanu participated to the **Launching Conference organised by North-West RDA, Project Coordinator for REGIS Project** in Cluj Napoca on 3.05.2006

**4. Launching conference/Workshops/seminars organized by DISCOVER NE RIS Project:**

- **Launching conference, lasi 06.10.2005 (deliverable 14, WP 2)** to introduce the project objectives, present European Policy on Innovation (**Mrs. Renate Weissenhorn from DG Enterprise**), presentation of Region Abruzzo experience in elaborating RIS (**Mr. Vittorio Cauti and Mrs. Sabina Giovanini from Metron Srl. Italy**), contribution of innovation policies to increasing regional companies competitiveness (**Mr. Jack Lanco CEBANOR Bass Normandie France**), Measures for research and innovation in Romanian economic

policies (**Dr. Elena Simona Toma MofER**), regional development policy in Romania (**Mrs. Diana Hagi, Ministry of European Integration**), stages and activities envisaged in the RIS project (Mrs. Gabriela Macoveiu North-East RDA). At the conference, hosted by the **Technical University Al. Ioan Cuza Iasi** (biggest and oldest university in the region) were registered 87 participants (including representatives of North-West and South-East RDAs in Romania that run identical RIS exercise). The event was promoted in regional media (press release and press conference) as well as in regional bulletin **"INFO NORTH-EAST"**.

- **Information seminar for RDA experts, Slanic Moldova 15.12.2005 (deliverable 14, WP 2)**. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce RIS methodology in principle to all RDA employees (as interface with key regional actors, potential applicants and beneficiaries), as well as to present the project objectives and activities developed at the current stage in order to induce awareness raising and mobilize all relevant actors/stakeholders. At this seminar 37 persons were registered.
  - **Innovation related seminar "Perspectives of innovation in North-East Region", 10.02.2006, Bacau (deliverable no.16, WP2)**. The event hosted by **Bacau County Council**, was intended to discuss on the importance of innovation in Romanian context (Prof. Battes Klaus Werner, Bacau University), financing opportunities in RDI sector for 2007-2013 period (Mrs. Alina Capitanu, North-East RDA), introduction to a RIS exercise (Dr. Jaime del Castillo INFYDE Spain), Italian experience in RIS development (Dr. Ercole Cauti Metron Srl Italy), DISCOVER NE Project presentation (Mrs. Gabriela Macoveiu). At the seminar attended 32 participants.
  - **Innovation related seminar "Design and implementation of a regional innovation strategy for North-East Region", 13.04.2006, Suceava (deliverable no.16, WP2)**. **Suceava County Council** hosted the event with 29 registered participants. The purpose of the event was to present the project to the local actors in Suceava County and the financing opportunities in the RDI field for 2007-2013. Mrs. Alina Capitanu Planning & Programming project expert and Mrs. Gabriela Macoveiu Project Manager, delivered the presentations.
  - **Innovation related seminar "My business starting 2007", 04.05.2006, Piatra Neamt, (deliverable no.16, WP2)**. The event was hosted by **Neamt Chamber of Commerce and Industry** and had 30 participants. The purpose of the event was to present the project to the local enterprises in Neamt County and the financing opportunities for SMEs in 2007-2013. Mrs. Alina Capitanu Planning & Programming project expert and Mrs. Baicu Liliana, Business Support project expert, delivered the presentations.
  - **Innovation related seminar "Innovation as opportunity for economic development of North-East Region", 18.05.2006, Iasi (deliverable no.16, WP2)**. The event was hosted by **Research Institute Petru Poni** (the biggest research unit in North-East Region, the third at national level) and had 46 registered participants. At this event presentations were made on financing RDI sectors through Structural Funds between 2007-2013 (Mrs. Alina Capitanu Planning & Programming project expert), Competitiveness Sectorial Operational Program (Mrs. Marilena Giosanu, Director Territorial Office of NASMEC), SME policy to promote innovation (Mr. Vasile Avadanii, Councilor Training and Consultancy Center Neamt County), a success story in innovation (Mr. Corneliu Lucaci General manager, CERAMICA SA Iasi), examples of partnerships and cooperation projects (Mrs. Gabrielle Charlotte Chitanu, Research Institute Petru Poni Iasi) and workshop – **"Is innovation needed to develop a business?"** – moderator Mr. Jaime del Castillo IPC.
5. **Continuous feedback and interaction (via, e-mail, phone, direct meetings)**. A mailing list was prepared with 200 recipients and launched in 2006. The recipients were key regional actors that received regularly information on innovation research & TT, consultation on draft of the **Analyse on Regional Trends**.

6. **Information dissemination** was achieved via communication and dissemination plan (press notes, regional periodical newsletter). **The communication strategy** (deliverable 9, **WP 1**) developed had 2 objectives: firstly to ensure communication inside the project partners and management structures and secondly to raise awareness in the region on the regional innovation strategy and innovation initiatives.

RDA North-East together with IPC prepared an **action plan** for the entire project taking into account the resources available, targeting to following **groups of actors**:

- local public authorities as decisional bodies at local level,
- regional representatives of National Agency for SMEs and Cooperation (NASMEC), regional representative of National Council of Private SMEs (NCPSME), representative of Ministry of Economy and Commerce (MofEC), representative of Ministry of Education and Research (MofER) as national coordinators of the innovation and R&D policy,
- SMEs in the region as source of information regarding the regional needs and potential beneficiaries of RIS strategy,
- Universities and R&D institutes/units as source of information for the regional offer and as potential beneficiaries of RIS strategy,
- TT units (technological parks, industrial areas and business incubators) in the region as regional bodies involved in innovation and R&D national policy implementation as well as potential beneficiaries of RIS strategy,
- general public as indirect beneficiary of projects implemented under the RIS strategy,
- international partners as potential sources of best practices on RIS and innovation projects,
- others RDA in Romania as potential partners in a National Association of RDAs, to exchange experience regarding design, implementation of a RIS project

The action plan included the following actions:

- **Organization of several public events**:
  - Project Launching Conference in Iasi,
  - two big RIS presentations in Iasi and Slanic Moldova,
  - four innovation related seminars in the region (Bacau, Suceava, Piatra Neamt)
  - regular meetings of Management Unit(4), Steering Committee (2) and Reference Panel (2)
- **Preparation & dissemination of periodical newsletters** (deliverable 10, **WP 2**). For information and communication with a larger interested public, in the last **five quarterly newsletters** (INFO NORD-EST no.5, no.6, no.7, no.8 and no.9) it was inserted information, prepared by the Management Unit, about the stage of the project corresponding to the respective period. The regional bulletin is printed quarterly in 2000 copies (pure black & white). The target groups for distribution include: local public authorities and public services (800 copies), universities, research units and TT (200 copies), private companies (350 copies), business support organizations and professional associations (250 copies), regional and national central governmental bodies (200 copies), NGOs (150 copies). Courier does distribution. The articles included in newsletters contained information related to: presentation of the project objective (no.5), news about IRE events (no.6), official launch and project start-up (no.7), composition of management structures (no.8), activities developed during Stage 0 (no.9).
- **Press notes** (deliverable 9, **WP1**). One was released during the RIS Launching Conference in Iasi, on 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2005, together with the organization of a press

conference with representatives of local mass media. The second was issued to announce the first meetings of Reference Panel and Steering Committee on 08.02.2006. At both events participated North-East RDA experts, Italian partner Metron Srl Italy and IPC Jaime del Castillo INFYDE Spain.

- ***Designed Internet platform*** to be dedicated to the project (under construction),
- ***Preparatory activities*** started for the First Annual Innovation Forum tentative date proposed for 25<sup>th</sup> October 2006 in Bacau, Hemeius Information &Technology Park location.