



Report of the Northern Netherland visit in Romania

Following the visit in the Netherlands of the NE RDA team during the period of 27th and 29th, a visit to Romania has been organized by NE RDA in order for our SNN partners to better understand the current situation of our region and together to evaluate and define the areas where partnerships can be developed. A series of internal meetings have been organized as well as field visits meeting the private sector, universities and local authorities, during which the SNN team had the chance to learn the role and the concerns of various regional stakeholders, the opportunities and threats, as well as the strengths and the weakness of the region. All meetings have been organized in a dynamic way, with the possibility of 2 way communication, therefore SNN team had the possibility to ask questions and express opinions during all presentations.

During the final day of the visit a series of conclusions have been drawn as following.

Commune goals agreed on:

1. Both parties are willing to work on a strategy with long term effects
2. We will agree on short term actions and objectives in order to develop our partnership step-by-step, this way having the chance to monitor the results of intermediary objectives that are leading to reaching the macro objectives – creation of milestones
3. We will carefully select the partners to be involved in our cooperation program, partners that are having the learning capacity and, most important, partners that are willing to contribute to the development of the community they are part of
4. We will encourage to join our program the partners that can be “game changers” and who can share the know-how gained during the workshops or the experts visits organized by NE RDA together with SNN

Joint actions

In the following 4 weeks we are willing to establish the followings:

- Define the group of people, companies, institutions we will get involved in our program – based on the development needs of the North East Region and following the Smart Specialization Strategy
- Define the profile of the “experts” that will be part of the next bilateral visits
- Create and agree on the “work sheet” (detailed in the next paragraph)
- Following the internal development of the “work sheet” we will meet the agreed partners in our project to confirm and eventually refine the agreed topics and actions before starting working on them.

The „work sheet” should include:

- ➔ 10 needs identified in the Northern Netherlands that North-East Romania could provide solutions for
- ➔ 10 challenges (societal, economical, etc) identified in Romania where the Northern Netherlands could provide solutions, for example:
 - NE Region (North East Region) farmer needs access to knowledge
 - NE Region IT sector/specialists needs access to big data
 - Companies from NE Region needs access to learning sources for developing sustainable business plans and eventually create Business Model Innovation
 - Creation or development of the NE Region value chains

SNN team conclusions

The SNN team expressed their appreciation for the way North East RDA has organized the visits. SNN has appreciated the fact that RDA NE is working closely with the universities, local authorities and most important with the private sector for supporting the regional economic development. The SNN team members consider that, in this way, the progress of the economic development will be faster and, at the same time, it will be easier to establish international efficient partnerships, including with SNN. Luc Hulsman has underlined that important for the success of our projects is to attract the private sector, but more important is to have the total commitment of the private sector players involved in our projects for participating to the development of NE Region. Also, it is important to have all the stakeholders involved in our project open for international partnerships, such as with SNN.

After the field visits and internal debriefings, the SNN team has concluded that the RDA North East is ahead of the plan and they appreciate the fact that RDA North East has managed in a short period of time to develop multiple local actions and to attract important stakeholders.

SNN team suggestions (most important)

- Living Labs – RDA NE should work together with various stakeholders, mainly Universities, in order to apply the “Living Labs” models observed during the RDA NE visit in the Northern Netherlands. The “Living Labs” are extremely helpful for solving societal challenges, but not the only.

- Implement a practical exercise, “Closing the Valley of Bistrita” – during the final day field trip we’ve observed the mountain region Piatra Neamt – Bicaz – Lacu Rosu where river Bistrita it is also present. Willem Reek has suggested to hypothetically create the scenario where this area, named “the Valley of Bistrita” would close in and the inhabitants would have to survive only with the local resources this way creating only local economy and closing values chains inside the area of “the Valley of Bistrita”. This exercise was recommended to take place with the support of multiple stakeholders, including the universities.
- Efficient exploitation of local resources – for example introducing new processes in the local resources valorization, such as the 2nd and 3rd harvest in the agriculture field (2nd being a relatively new concept where plastic fibers and resins are being extracted from the vegetable waste), 100% wood processing (leaving 0 waste and utilizing the resource to the final particle), etc. Implementing efficient exploitation of local resources supports the maximization of the financial profit and, in the same time, supports the local community development by potentially adding new jobs and/or business opportunities.
- SNN – RDA NE to play the role of facilitator, allowing to the agreed partners to develop direct partnerships and direct communication channels without the interference of the agencies, but having permanent support from the agencies. Of course both agencies will monitor the progress of the partnerships and the outcome for learning purposes.
- SNN has mentioned already some of the potential partners from the Northern Netherlands that can be attracted into the project: Innovation Centers, Philips Living Lab, Clusters, etc

Recommendation of the RDA NE before starting the implementation:

Before deciding the potential partnerships, we are going to continue in mapping the region to better understand the intervention areas and to prioritize our interventions according to the local needs but following as well the Smart Specialization Strategy. Prior connecting the partners from the two regions RDA NE is considering working closely with selected partners from the NE Region in order to help them understand the benefits of the partnerships, the expectations and the desired objectives.

RDA NE is willing to include in the study phase the analysis of potential side effects of initiated actions in the region. This way we can anticipate and prevent potential negative side effects and or encourage positive side effects that are supporting our initiative.

RDA NE - Next steps:

- RDA NE would like to better understand what are the areas of interest of SNN and their partners. In the same time we would like to learn if SNN has concrete partnerships propositions following the visit in our region
- Evaluate and propose potential partnership proposals, including common area of interest for both parties, RDA NE and SNN
- RDA NE has proposed already the agriculture field to be considered in the partnerships with SNN and to select already “experts” from this area for the next coming bilateral “expert visits”.
- RDA NE is working to identify local value chains, especially the ones where we could contribute to their development by attracting partners from the Northern Netherlands

The visit agenda

Day 1: Tuesday 27th of October

In the first half of the day the SNN delegation was invited at the ADRNE premises, where a welcoming introduction was made by the General Director of ADRNE, Mr. Vasile Asandei. The next presentations focused on ADRNE activities and they were organised by departments:

- Legal and HR
- Regional Planning, Programming and Iasi Urban Growth Pole
- IB ROP
- IB SOP IEC
- Regional Study Center
- Communication Cooperation and Business Support

A general presentation of SNN activities followed.

Before lunch break, differences and similarities in between Northern Netherland Provinces and North-East Romania were discussed.



In the afternoon the members of both delegations joined to a study visit in Husi, Vaslui County, our identified objective being Averesti Vineyard Farm. There, Mr. Constantin Duluta, the farm owner, presented the investments and the challenges farmers are confronting with. The meeting was also attended by representatives of small farmers, 2 local mayors and one representative of Vaslui County Council who presented their input regarding the challenges faced by the small farmers.



Day 2: 28th of October

The day started with a study visit at Gheorghe Asachi Technical University of Iasi where there were presented the research, development and technology transfer activities, focusing on ITC, biotechnologies and environment. Two modern labs were visited, a chemistry testing facility and a technical measurements laboratory. After each presentation and visit we have tried to identify possible joint schemes, innovation challenges and possible collaboration in North-East Romania and Northern Netherlands.

After lunch we have been attending a meeting with the dean and a collective of professors from the Faculty of Informatics of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, discussing about technology transfer activities, nanotechnologies and robotics, as well collaboration opportunities.

Last but not least, the delegation paid a visit to the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "Ion Ionescu de la Brad" Iasi where we have been presented the research and development activities, focusing on agriculture and biotechnologies. Modern laboratories were visited as well where we've realized that the laboratory technology and machines are produced in the Netherlands.



Day 3: 29 of October

We have started the day with some conclusions and a follow up of the first 2 days. Moreover, we have been detailing a working plan and we had an agreement on further preparations of visits, within Taixex and not only.

Meetings with Mayor of Piatra Neamt and with the President of Neamt County Council followed. The City Hall and the City Council are located next to “Curtea Domenasca” (Princely Court), the historical area of the city, recently rehabilitated benefiting from EU funds.



In the afternoon, we have visited the Bistrita River Valley, Bicz Dam and Bicz Gorges and more discussions about societal challenges and local development had followed.

