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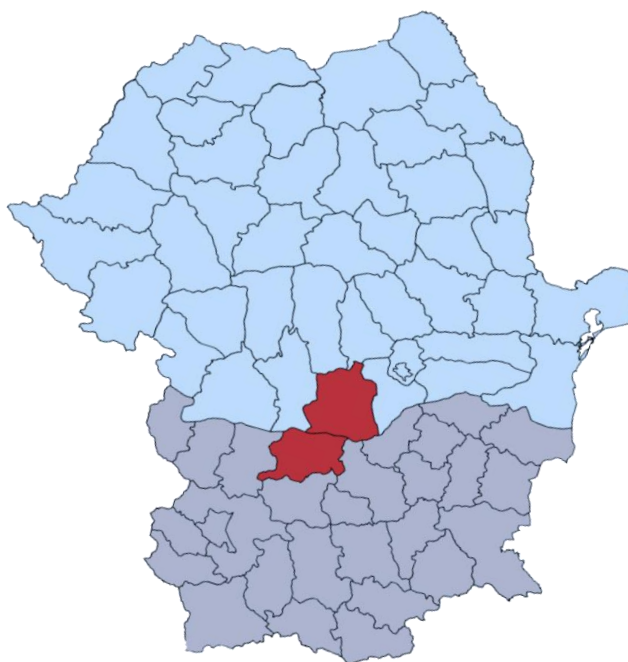


БЪЛГАРСКО ПРАВИТЕЛСТВО



JOINT STRATEGY

FOR THE CROSS-BORDER REGION OF **PLEVEN DISTRICT, BULGARIA AND TELEORMAN COUNTY, ROMANIA** RELATED TO CROSS-BORDER LABOUR MOBILITY, IDENTIFYING KEY SECTORS THAT CAN ENABLE WORKFORCE MOBILITY AND INTEGRATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET OF DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE



PROJECT 16.4.2.046 - "STIMULATION AND INCREASE OF EMPLOYMENT AND CROSS- BORDER MOBILITY IN THE CROSS-BORDER REGION" E-MS CODE: ROBG-175, COFINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION THROUGH THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND WITHIN THE INTERREG V-A ROMANIA - BULGARIA PROGRAMME



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LIST OF USED ABBREVIATIONS

ANOFM	National Employment Agency, Romania
ISN	National Statistical Institute, Romania
NBR	National Bank of Romania
AEBR	Association of European Border Regions
EA	Employment Agency, Bulgaria
BNB	Bulgarian National Bank
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
R&D	Research and Development framework
NSI	National Statistical Institute, Bulgaria



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I. METODOLOGICAL NOTES

A. GENERAL DATA FOR THE PRESENT STRATEGY

The present strategy was developed in implementation of service contract №05 / 20-02-2019 concluded between Belene municipality and Finvera Consult EOOD within the framework of project 16.4.2.046 - Stimulation and increase of employment and cross-border mobility in the cross-border region "e-MS code: ROBG-175, co-financed by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund under the INTERREG V-A Program Romania - Bulgaria.

INTERREG V-A Romania-Bulgaria (2014-2020) is a cross-border co-operation program co-funded by the European Union with funds from the European Regional Development Fund. The strategic objective of the program for the period focuses on the thematic areas of the Europe 2020 Strategy related to climate change, risk prevention and management, preservation and protection of the environment, promotion of resource efficiency, sustainable transport, employment promotion and labour mobility strengthening institutional capacity by promoting cooperation between citizens and institutions.

The selected thematic objectives are formulated in five priority axes that respond to the needs and challenges of the cross-border area, with a **"Skilled and Inclusive Region"** relevant for this strategy. This axis addresses the integration of cross-border labour markets, including cross-border mobility, joint local employment initiatives, information and advisory services, and joint training. The specific objective of creating an integrated cross-border region in terms of employment and mobility of the workforce is also highlighted.



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B. GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT "STIMULATION AND INCREASE OF EMPLOYMENT AND CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY IN THE CROSS-BORDER REGION"

The overall objective of the project is to stimulate the mobility of workforce and job opportunities by providing favourable conditions for the development of joint business and entrepreneurship in the cross-border region.

The implementation of the project will help to overcome the lack of useful and easily accessible information on job opportunities, prospects and opportunities for joint business and entrepreneurship, lack of information on applicable Romanian and Bulgarian labour and tax legislation in the cross-border region, transport logistics, conditions for sharing and developing ideas and joint initiatives to stimulate the labour market and joint business activities, lack of a common strategy for cross-border labour mobility identifying key sectors that can enable labour mobility and labour market integration of disadvantaged people, low levels of education for the unemployed and lack of free training courses for the unemployed and inactive.

This strategy addresses the lack of a common strategy for cross-border labour mobility, identifying key sectors that can enable labour mobility and labour market integration of disadvantaged people.

C. PRINCIPLES AND METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

In essence, the current strategy is a planning process that will enable Plevna District and Teleorman County to concentrate their resources around key project objectives through a set of measures included in it.

The strategy development approach is based on an analysis and formulation of a working tool to promote cross-border economic cooperation between Plevna District and Teleorman County in promising sectors and directions, resulting in increased cross-border mobility of disadvantaged people.



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The starting points in the development of the strategy are related to the main principles for development and implementation of local development policies. The development and implementation of strategies and measures for the development of economic development and cooperation at cross-border level and in general the establishment and implementation of public development policies is a process requiring the active participation of all stakeholders. The framework for implementing the strategy is oriented towards the programming period 2021-2027, with a view to positioning the strategy in the hierarchy of future programming documents, which is of paramount importance for its provisioning. The commitment of the strategy to the entire system of strategic documents is key to its recognition by key actors in the process of planning and implementing the development projects of the two regions.

Despite its orientation towards the upcoming programming period, the Strategy lays on what has been achieved in the 2014-2020 Regional Strategy Papers and offers solutions to improve the results of the challenges that the outgoing programming period addresses:

- Priority area 2 "Investments and employment" of the CSF of Pleven district for the period 2014-2020, addressing the negative demographic trends, unemployment, high levels of poverty and negative migration flows to the capital and abroad through measures for improving the labour market, raising of entrepreneurial activity at local level through the creation of new small and medium-sized enterprises and the realization of activities related to the attraction of new foreign investments;
- Vertical goal 1 "Re-activating the local economic base through industry development" of Teleorman Sustainable Development Strategy 2010-2020, addressing the revitalization of the region's industrial heritage and improving the links between business and administration; Vertical Goal 3 "Developing an Entrepreneurial Environment", aimed at promoting high value added productions, stimulating small entrepreneurs and creating an entrepreneurial culture.



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The strategy is based on the assumption that synergies between the two regions are possible to achieve their objectives, including by changing their current specific targets in the new programming period.

The baseline analysis needed to plan the activities are the result of a study of international, European, national and regional strategic development and research, statistical analysis, aggregation of experience of similar regions in the EU and document study.

The situational analysis has been developed on the basis of available and specifically collected for the purposes of the strategy statistical and analytical information. The task of this analysis is to describe and analyse both the processes and trends in the development of cross-border mobility between the two regions as well as its strengths and weaknesses. The aim is to put the strategy in a sufficiently clear context that will allow informed decisions on development opportunities, resources and their use in imposing cooperation measures between the two regions.

The data used for the analysis is based on public data and information sources such as National Statistical Institute, Employment Agency, National Employment Agency, National Institute of Statistics, Eurostat, World Bank, official documents, information databases, Internet, research of leading institutes in the EU, reports and developments of European institutions, project results, and other available and specifically processed statistical and analytical information for the strategy.

For the sake of greater accuracy, the data are mainly limited for the period 2014-2017. The choice of 2014 is determined by the beginning of the implementation of the current programming period, which is a prerequisite for the availability of resource-backed activities that focus on the problems that the strategy focuses on. Data used directly for the two regions is used, and in the case of absence are replaced with data on their territorial divisions (Northwest Bulgaria, South Muntenia). The use of other baseline and / or final years is made if further details are required with respect to major trends or in the absence of definitive data for 2017.



D. OBJECTIVES AND TASKS OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy defines the ways and ways to achieve the development of cross-border mobility by identifying key sectors to enable labour mobility and the integration of the disadvantaged people into the labour market. The goal is met by performing the following tasks:

- **Analysis of disadvantaged groups:** identifying key trends and characteristics of disadvantaged groups in both regions
- **Analysis of sectoral development in the two regions:** identification of key trends in the economic development of the two regions and the link with employment;
- **Cross-border Mobility Analysis (SWOT):** identifying the type of cross-border mobility and defining its leading characteristics for modeling the cross-border region in order to define the main development directions;
- **Specific strategy and action plan:** Creation of a single working document with features of an action plan plan to promote cross-border mobility between the two regions

II. INTRODUCTION

The cross-border region of Pleven-Teleorman is characterized by relatively low cross-border mobility. Pleven District and Teleorman County are lagging and relatively slow growing nationally and are one of the weaker competitors in the EU, leading to strong intranational and international migration, depriving them of human resource in the progressive aging of the population. Economic ties between the two sides of the Danube are underdeveloped, and their location as a link between leading agglomerations Bucharest and Sofia remains unused.

This strategy recognizes the need to develop joint cooperation, the creation of a cross-border area specializing in a particular economic function, due to the still dominant position of weaknesses and threats in the cross-border region. Measures have been put in the



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forefront to help build robust and inclusive capabilities to help strengthen the region's strengths in the form of economic agglomerations and promote entrepreneurship. Measures have been taken that affect the economy and entrepreneurship sector, with a special emphasis on the sectors of tourism, health and social care and R & D.

This is the preferred model for boosting employment and promoting the development of disadvantaged people as primary tools for their integration into the labour market. The indirect approach chosen is important for achieving structural changes in the region and establishing competitive advantages for which measures targeted at the employees themselves would not contribute, confirmed by the current situation. Considering that not only the preservation of the labour force in the region and the empowerment, it is important that measures are put in place to make it a competitive advantage for the cross-border region.

The Strategy calls for the active role of the administrations of Pleven District and Teleorman County to create a functioning framework for co-operation, including its integration into the forthcoming planning period 2021-2028.

III. ANALYSIS OF DISADVANTAGED GROUPS, SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY IN THE PLEVEN-TELEORMAN REGION

A. DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

Disadvantaged groups are a heterogeneous group of society that is most often the subject of social exclusion as a result of limited competencies or discrimination. They are denied access to or the opportunity to use tools that are accessible to the majority of society.

Disadvantaged people face barriers to self-sufficiency, which limits access to the resources they need. Namely, the presence of a particular model of blocked access to resources and available barriers is shaping the notion of a disadvantaged group.

Barriers, on the other hand, include the lack and inaccessibility of a resource to perceptions and practices of society and individual social groups, including the disadvantaged people themselves.



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Overcoming disability presupposes the overcoming barriers to self-sufficiency, which always include allowing groups with their own efforts to create the necessary resources. Overcoming disability presupposes the overcoming barriers to self-sufficiency, which always include allowing groups with their own efforts to create the necessary resources.

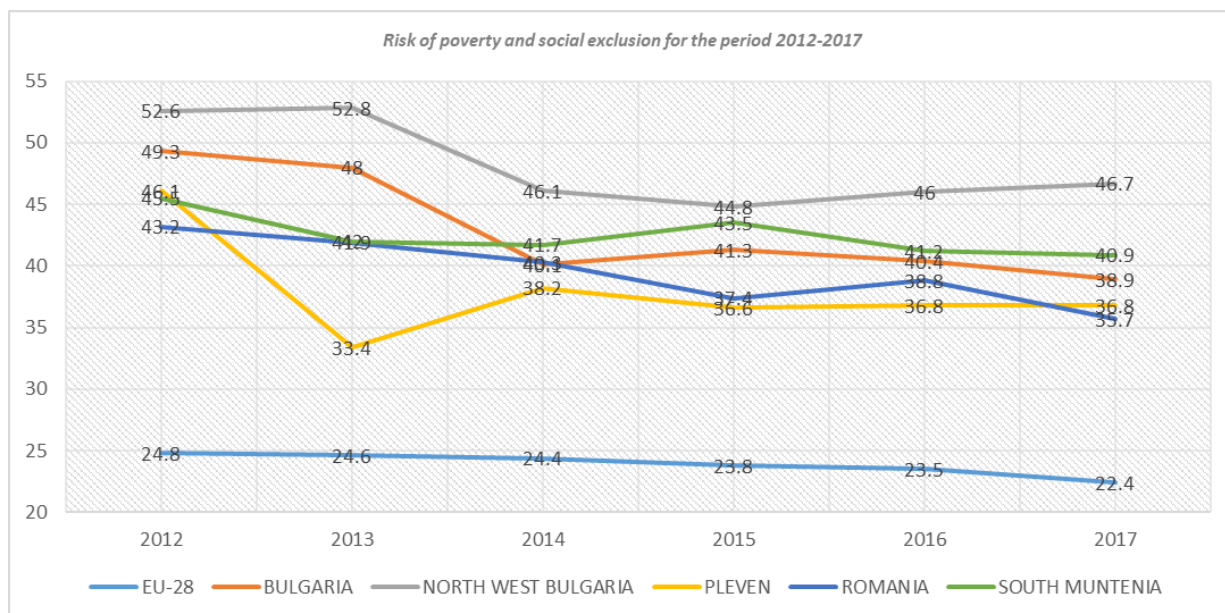
Excluding disadvantaged people from the labour market is one of the main barriers to self-sufficiency. However, the integration of these people should not be understood only as a function of the implementation of the employment instrument but, to a much greater extent, of implementing initiatives that activate multiple instruments, with particular emphasis on community support, access to information, capital and education.

Disadvantaged groups are the subject of social exclusion, leading to the inability to participate actively, including in the socio-economic life of society. The resources available to them (material, cultural and social) are so limited that they exclude them from the least acceptable way of life in the Member States of the European Union (the community) in which they live.

The indicators used by the EU to measure poverty and social inclusion are the risk of poverty (or disposable income below 60% of the national median after social transfers), low intensity of economic activity (household members have worked less than 20% of the possible work time) and material deprivation (the inability of the population to afford at least three of the most common costs (from food to telephone bills)).

Bulgaria and Romania are the leading countries at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Despite the accelerating reduction of the affected population in the context of a recovering economy, the planning regions Northwest Bulgaria and South Muntenia are lagging behind this trend and cannot fully benefit from the positive economic changes.

However, there is some difference between Plevna District and Teleorman County. While the latter is traditionally one of the worst affected by the poverty risk in Romania (according to the World Bank and also the lowest income region), Plevna differs significantly from Northwest Bulgaria and performs better than the average for Bulgaria.



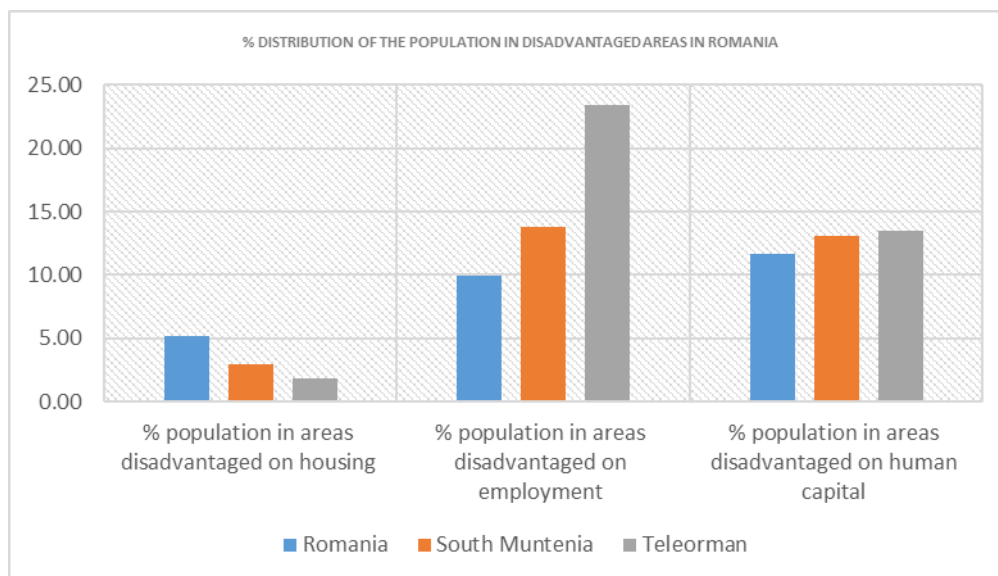
Graph 1 Risk of poverty and social exclusion for the period 2012-2017, comparison of the EU-28, Bulgaria, Northwest Bulgaria, Plevna, Romania and South Muntenia, ISN, NSI

In their poverty reduction strategies, **Romania and Bulgaria** point to similar groups on which they direct their efforts in the form of programs and measures:

ROMANIA	BULGARIA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-income people • Lonely or dependent elderly people • Children or young people who do not care for and support their parents • People of Roma ethnic origin • People with disabilities • People living in marginalized communities • Other sensitive groups (alcohol and opiate addicts, victims of domestic violence, ex-prisoners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working poor • Disabled people: children, elderly people • Families with children • Vulnerable representatives of the Roma community • People with disabilities • Groups disadvantaged on the labour market or outside the labour market • Homeless and people living in poor housing

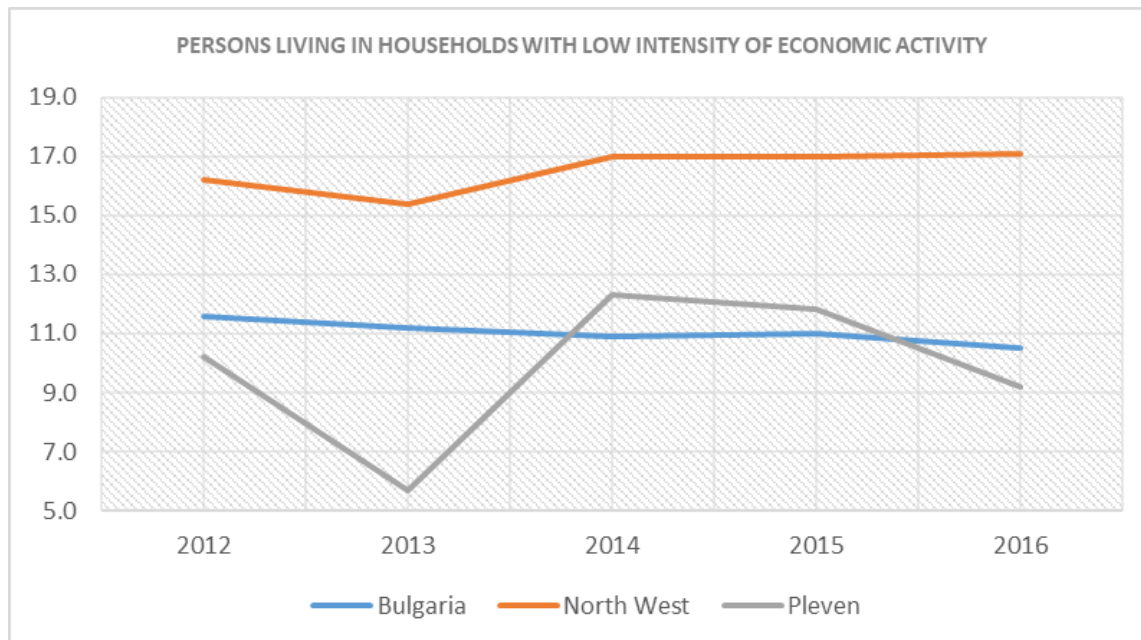
Table 1 Comparison of the scope of the definition of disadvantaged people in Romania and Bulgaria, EA

In a Teleorman County World Bank report, the clear difference with the country is precisely in terms of employability as a major cause of marginalization of communities.



Graph 2 Percentage distribution of the population in disadvantaged areas in Romania, World Bank

For its part **Pleven** region has a relatively low percentage of households with low intensity of economic activity and fluctuates around the average in the country and is significantly better than that of **North West Bulgaria**



Graph 3 Persons living in households with low intensity of economic activity for the period 2012-2016 for Bulgaria, North West, Pleven, NSI



Despite the positive performance of Plevna towards the Northwest region in terms of poverty, it is worth mentioning alarming income structure trends that may have a significant impact on the indicator over the medium term:

- Reduced wage levels;
- Reduction of the share of wages in total income, in the increase of loans and credits and regular transfers from other households and other benefits and benefits.

In Romania and South Muntenia, the increase in total wage income is coupled with a decrease in in-kind income and an increase in social payments. However, the region is still lagging behind the average for Romania and uses significantly lower loan financing.

In terms of income, **Teleorman** is always among the low-middle-income counties in Romania and the lowest in Southern Muntenia. By contrast, **Plevna** is the leading provider of income not only in the Northwest region, but even in much of the neighbouring North Central.

B. KEY SECTORS AND THE LABOUR MARKET

1. GENERAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THE REGIONS

The general comparison of the two regions gives a good idea of both the current potential and the medium-term trends that determine the opportunities for the development of the labour market.

INDICATOR (2017 / * 2016 Ref 2014)	ПЛЕВЕН		ТЕЛЕОРМАН	
Territory (K sq. km.)	4 651	0%	5 788	0%
Demography				
Population (total)	248 138	-4%	349 688	-5%
Population (up to 19 years old)	44 889	-3%	65 892	-6%
Population (up to 20-64 years old)	140 318	-7%	194 181	-7%
Population (over 64)	62 931	1%	89 615	1%
Net migration (%)	-5.7	42%	-13	160%
GDP*				



GDP (EUR million)	933	5%	1 575	4%
Purchasing Power Standard (euros)	7 800	4%	9 000	8%
Purchasing power standard (% of EU average)	27	0%	31	3%
Employment				
Labour force (in thousands)	103.2	-1%	199.3	-5%
Employed (in thousands)	92.1	22%	132.3	-12%
Unemployed (in thousands)	11.1	-21%	14.8	-15%
Enterprises*				
Active enterprises	9 616	2%	8 312	1%
Enterprises without employees	4 285	8%	4 807	-1%
Employees in enterprises without employees	3 983	3%	6 714	18%
Enterprises with 1-9 employees	4 497	-3%	3 096	4%
Employed in enterprises with 1-9 employees	14 014	0%	7 262	3%
Enterprises with over 9 employees	834	0%	409	7%
Employed in enterprises with more than 9 employees	37 982	-1%	18 411	-4%
Percentage of surviving start-ups period t-3	63	0%	44	-12%
Employed in start-ups and survivors in period t-3	1 590	-1%	2 647	115%
Tourism				
Accommodation	26	-10%	25	42%
Accomplished nights	80 962	-9%	18 022	-23%
Nights spent (% national)	0.6%	-23%	0.1%	0%
Bedside bedding in accommodation	428 770	-5%	285 169	-19%
Transport				
Roads (km)	794	0%	1 560	0%
Land transport of goods (loading thousand tons)	3 438	-2%	3 253	50%
Length of railways (km)	206	0%	227	-2%
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT				
Expenses for research and development (R & D) (thousand.	7 139	134%	13	-93%



Euros)				
Research and development (R & D) personnel (number)	742	29%	11	-66%
Direct foreign investments				
Investments (EUR thousand)	226 473	---	79 000	---
Investments (% of national)	0.9%	---	0.1%	---
Healthcare				
Hospitals (number)	13	18%	7	0%
Physicians in health and healthcare establishments (10,000 population)	60	13%	15	0%
Physicians (number)	1 459	8%	547	-6%
Medical healthcare professionals (number)	2 146	2%	2 005	11%

Table 2 Comparison of basic socio-economic indicators of Pleven District and Teleorman County, NSI, INS, BNB, NBR

TELEORMAN

Teleorman is a county in Muntenia, southern Romania, which borders the districts of Dumbovica, Arges and Olt and through the Danube River with Pleven, Veliko Tarnovo and Rousse in Bulgaria.

With a territory of 5 788 sq. km. the county ranks 19th in Romania and 3rd place among the Danube regions of the two countries.

According to the European classifications, Teleorman is a region of a predominantly rural type, with no industrial classification. It essentially belongs to the regions which are in program areas (cross-border cooperation) and internal border programs (EU + EFTA).

The population of the region shows a tendency for a general decrease in the period 2014-2017 with a focus on young and working population and an increase in the population to 64 years. The decline is well above the average in Romania and South Muntenia and affects both the urban and the rural environment. The county is exposed to strong negative migration processes.



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By the size of GDP, Teleorman is among the last regions in Romania, and at the same time registers one of the slowest growth in the developing economy, including abandoning neighboring counties. Teleorman registers growing economic activity (enterprise creation), especially in those with over 9 employees, but the number of surviving startups is declining. The county is among the last enterprises in Romania, as well as among the ones with the slowest pace. The newly created enterprises, on their part, contribute to the creation of jobs. On the other hand, the reduction in the number of enterprises with 1-9 employees is constantly limited in recent years and they are the main driving force for job creation.

Tourism in Teleorman, which could be a driving force to promote cross-border mobility of the workforce, is not developing in an upward trend. The main tourist products are transit and recreational tourism, hunting and fishing. Opportunities for development exist in the field of ecotourism and agrotourism, as well as in the use of the numerous cultural tourist sites in the southern region, adjacent to the Danube.

Foreign investment and R & D investment are insignificant. There are not technological or industrial parks.

For the county industry, the production of electrical equipment, where several micro-enterprises operate and the leading employer in the Electrotel field, is important. An important employer is the clothing and food production sector. Industry is the sector that attracts workers from the dominant agricultural sector, which is declining.

The development of Teleorman County is conditioned and followed by the general development of the Romanian economy, but it is relatively slower, including the South Muntenia region, and has a lesser impact on income growth (it can also be interpreted as lagging behind) which is becoming a strong prerequisite for migration processes and a reduction in the workforce.



Change	Romania	South Muntenia	Teleorman
GDP 14-16	14.4%	7.8%	5.4%
Average salary 14-18	38.4%	35.0%	41.0%
Registered unemployed 14-18	-39.6%	-48.5%	-40.7%
Working force 14-18	-1.3%	-2.6%	-4.8%
Population 14-17	-0.2%	-1.6%	-4.1%
Age 0-19	-1.4%	-3.3%	-5.8%
Age 20-64	-1.8%	-2.8%	-4.6%
Age 65+	6.3%	4.0%	0.1%

Table 3 Comparison of the rate of change of key economic indicators for the period 2014-2018 for Romania, South Muntenia and Teleorman, INS

PLEVEN

Pleven is a district in North West Bulgaria, which borders with the districts of Veliko Tarnovo, Lovech and Vratsa and through the Danube River with the districts of Olt and Teleorman in Romania.

With a territory of 4 651 sq. Km. the county ranks 10th in Bulgaria and 9th among the Danube regions of the two countries.

According to the European classifications, Pleven is a predominantly rural type region near a city with industrial branches that lose importance without metropolis. It essentially belongs to the regions which are in program areas (cross-border cooperation) and internal border programs (EU + EFTA).

The population of the region shows a tendency for a general decrease in the period 2014-2017 with a focus on young and working population and an increase in the population to 64 years. The decrease is significantly above the average in Bulgaria and affects both the urban and the rural environment. The area is exposed to significant negative migration processes.

The tourism in Pleven, which could be a driving force for promoting cross-border mobility of the labour force has reached a level of depletion of current and potential lack of growth despite strong historical potential of the region. The main tourist products are business tourism, followed by transit, urban and historical tourism.



Foreign investments are weak, but there is an increasing R & D progress. The region has two industrial zones (Pleven and Telish) in the cross-border Danube region (Bulgaria-Romania), and R & D is widely represented through several institutes and enterprises.

Major importance are sectors such as clothing, which generate over 6,000 jobs, land transport, plant production and livestock. The first two sectors are experiencing labour shortages.

It is important for the development of the area of health care, based on the approval of the Medical University and the Medical College in Pleven, as leaders in high technology medicine in Bulgaria.

The development of Pleven region follows the general direction of the country's economy, but the development is considerably slower. The structural area differs from the North West Bulgaria and fails to capitalize on the development by creating new jobs, despite a narrowing of the pay gap, which leads to a significant reduction in the working population.

Change	Bulgaria	North West Bulgaria	Pleven
GDP 14-17	12.4%	4.4%	5.1%
Average salary 14-18	29.3%	26.9%	35.9%
Registered unemployed 14-18	-46.5%	-24.1%	22.0%
Working force 14-18	-0.9%	-5.5%	1.0%
Population 14-17	-2.8%	-6.8%	-5.9%
Age 0-19	0.7%	-1.6%	-1.0%
Age 20-64	-3.1%	-5.1%	-4.9%
Age 65+	1.4%	-1.5%	-0.6%

Table 4 Comparison of the rate of change of key economic indicators for the period 2014-2018 for Bulgaria, North West Bulgaria and Pleven, NSI

2. SECTOR DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT

The analysis of employment in both regions shows that Teleorman County has increased the number of employees (2017 vs. 2014), but less than South Muntenia and Romania. Notes a decline in employment in agriculture, and sectors that are a major driver of growth, and which surpass the pace of growth in the country and the region for development are trade and human health and social work.



SECTOR	ROMANIA	SOUTH MUNTENIA	TELEORMAN
TOTAL	9.4%	8.1%	3.9%
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES	0.3%	0.4%	-0.8%
MINING AND QUARRYING	-0.2%	-0.2%	-0.6%
MANUFACTURING	2.3%	3.6%	-0.1%
ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	0.1%	0.1%	0.6%
CONSTRUCTION	0.5%	0.3%	1.0%
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	1.5%	1.4%	2.2%
TRANSPORTING AND STORAGING	0.6%	0.8%	0.6%
ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	1.1%	0.9%	0.7%
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	0.9%	0.2%	-0.1%
FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%
REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%
ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	1.1%	0.5%	0.5%
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE; COMPULSORY SOCIAL SECURITY	0.2%	0.0%	-0.2%
EDUCATION	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.2%
HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	0.9%	0.8%	1.4%
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	0.1%	-0.1%	-0.2%
OTHER SERVICES ACTIVITIES	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 5 The weighted employment growth of NACE sectors in Romania, South Muntenia and Teleorman for the period 2014-2017, INS

The analysis of employment in both regions shows that Teleorman County has increased the number of employees (2017 vs. 2014), but less than South Muntenia and Romania. Notes a decline in employment in agriculture, and sectors that are a major driver of growth, and which surpass the pace of growth in the country and the region for development are trade and human health and social work.

SECTOR	EMPLOYED			NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES			AVERAGE EMPL. PER ENTERP.		
	ROMANIA	SOUTH MUNTENIA	TELEORMAN	ROMANIA	SOUTH MUNTENIA	TELEORMAN	ROMANIA	SOUTH MUNTENIA	TELEORMAN
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES	13%	10%	10%	114%	11%	1%	-1%	-1%	11%
MINING AND QUARRYING	-16%	-16%	-13%	-9%	-2%	-11%	-7%	-15%	-23%
MANUFACTURING	10%	12%	0%	4%	8%	1%	6%	4%	-2%
ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	-6%	-5%	3%	-20%	-25%	-8%	16%	27%	97%
WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	4%	3%	13%	-2%	3%	7%	6%	0%	23%
CONSTRUCTION	7%	5%	16%	10%	11%	0%	-3%	-5%	16%
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	9%	9%	13%	-2%	0%	-2%	11%	9%	15%
TRANSPORTING AND STORAGING	10%	15%	13%	22%	26%	20%	-10%	-9%	-4%
ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	31%	33%	31%	5%	3%	-4%	24%	29%	36%
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	27%	16%	-22%	22%	19%	1%	4%	-2%	23%
FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	0%	-8%	9%	18%	20%	16%	-18%	-23%	11%
REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	13%	21%	23%	20%	18%	4%	-6%	3%	34%
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	14%	8%	10%	11%	17%	24%	2%	-8%	12%
ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	17%	9%	7%	14%	12%	0%	3%	-3%	7%
EDUCATION	-1%	-2%	-2%	54%	50%	21%	-36%	-35%	19%
HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	13%	10%	16%	51%	49%	44%	-25%	-26%	21%
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	8%	-11%	-7%	56%	60%	53%	-31%	-44%	52%
OTHER SERVICES ACTIVITIES	8%	1%	-3%	28%	32%	27%	-16%	-23%	24%

Table 6 Change in employment, number of enterprises and average number of employees in enterprises for the period 2014-2017 for Romania, South Muntenia, Teleorman, INS

Of the top 100 Teleorman employment companies established before 2013 and which do not have serious deviations in the number of employees, only three companies are involved



in the overall increase of 10% by 2017. They are engaged in the production of electrical equipment, the oil industry and the production of clothing. The other enterprises do not make a significant contribution to increasing employment.

For its part, Pleven region reported a drop in employment in the period 2014-2017, including compared to North West Bulgaria. This is strongly expressed in agriculture and administrative and support activities. Positive signals are given by the trade, transport and storage sectors.

SECTOR	BULGARIA	NORTH WEST	PLEVEN
TOTAL	3.0%	-1.4%	-2.3%
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES	0.0%	0.1%	-0.6%
MINING AND QUARRYING	-0.1%	-0.1%	
MANUFACTURING	0.8%	1.4%	0.2%
ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	0.0%	-0.3%	
WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%
CONSTRUCTION	-0.1%	-0.5%	-0.3%
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	0.2%	-0.1%	0.3%
TRANSPORTING AND STORAGING	0.5%	0.3%	0.7%
ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	0.4%	0.1%	0.2%
ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	0.0%	-0.8%	-0.8%
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE; COMPULSORY SOCIAL SECURITY	-0.1%	-0.2%	0.0%
EDUCATION	-0.1%	-0.5%	-0.3%
HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	0.1%	-0.3%	-0.1%
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
OTHER SERVICES ACTIVITIES	0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%

Table 7 Weighted employment growth by NACE sectors in Bulgaria, North West Bulgaria and Pleven for the period 2014-2017, NSI

Pleven's ability to generate business is most pronounced in the transport and storage sectors, creation of information and creative products, research (for the latter, it should be noted the impact of operational programs that encourage the creation of innovative products in these sectors in the Northwest Bulgaria). However, the potential for generating new jobs may be generated by hotels and restaurants at the level of an individual enterprise and by the processing industry as a generic sector. The potential of administrative and ancillary activities, which has a significant impact on employment and the creation of new business in Bulgaria, remains untapped.



SECTOR	EMPLOYED			NUMBER OF ENTERPRISES			AVERAGE EMPL. PER ENTERP.		
	BULGARIA	NORTH WEST	PLEVEN	BULGARIA	NORTH WEST	PLEVEN	BULGARIA	NORTH WEST	PLEVEN
ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	10%	-12%	22%	22%	2%	0%	-10%	-14%	22%
MINING AND QUARRYING	-9%	-76%	-94%	-3%	-19%	-38%	-7%	-70%	-89%
WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	0%	-5%	4%	4%	10%	6%	-4%	-14%	-2%
REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	8%	7%	-5%	34%	5%	6%	-20%	3%	-10%
MANUFACTURING	4%	3%	1%	4%	-1%	-4%	0%	4%	4%
WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	-3%	10%	3%	3%	4%	-9%	-6%	5%	12%
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	15%	12%	9%	19%	10%	12%	-3%	2%	-2%
REPAIR OF COMPUTERS AND PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS	3%	-3%	#N/A	0%	-3%	...	3%	0%	...
CONSTRUCTION	0%	-9%	-8%	12%	-4%	1%	-10%	-5%	-9%
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	27%	1%	4%	30%	10%	20%	-2%	-8%	-14%
TRANSPORTING AND STORAGING	10%	8%	12%	16%	11%	20%	-6%	-2%	-7%
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	3%	2%	2%	4%	-1%	-3%	-1%	3%	5%
ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	8%	3%	0%	5%	-4%	-10%	3%	7%	11%

Table 8 Change in employment, number of enterprises and average number of employees in enterprises for the period 2014-2017 for Bulgaria, North West Bulgaria, Plevna, NSI

Of the top 100 enterprises in Plevna, established before 2013 and which do not have serious deviations in the number of employees, only two companies are engaged in the production of machinery and equipment and clothing production and have an impact on the total increase of 6% in 2017. The other enterprises do not make a significant contribution to increasing employment.

CONCLUSIONS FROM SECTORAL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT

The traditional sectors that give the modern economy of Plevna and Teleorman lose their importance and do not allow for accelerated development. Demand for new sectors or cross-sectors is an alternative to development and a possible approach to establish cross-border cooperation and mobility.

3. OFFERING AVAILABLE JOB VACANCIES

During 2014-2017/8 in the Plevna region, according to the data of Employment Agency, the sustainability of the job vacancies shows types of positions of qualified workers and their relatives, machine operators and installers and professions which did not require a special qualification, the first two have shown significant progress over the years. This implies strengthening the element of vocational education of disadvantaged people, often in the group of professions not requiring special qualifications.

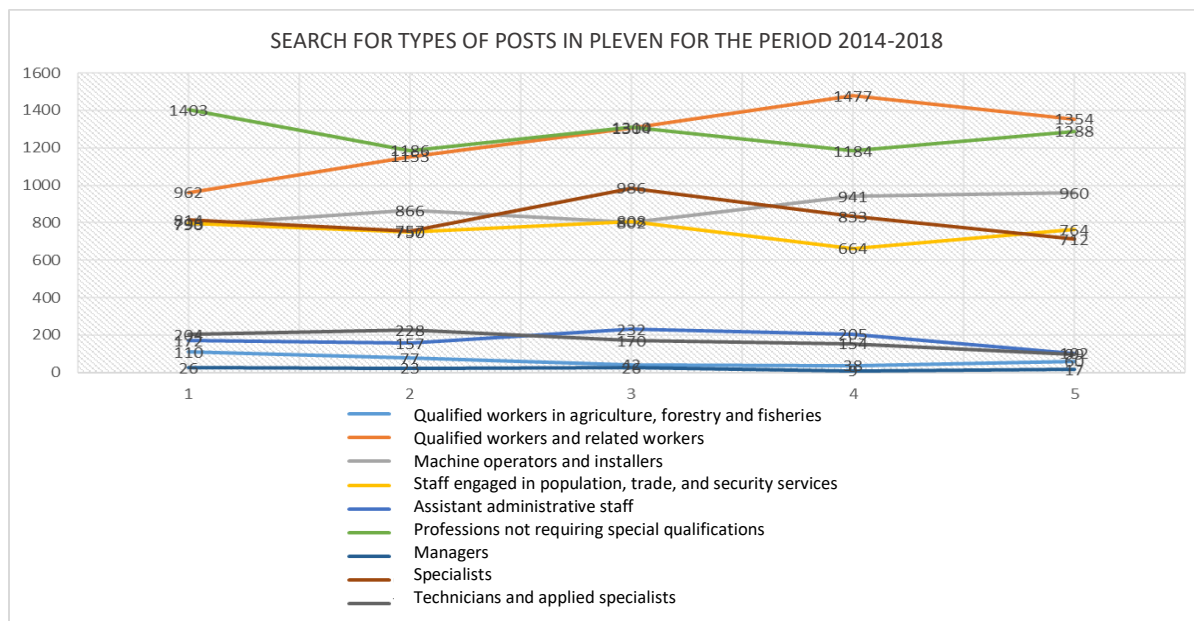


Table 9 Search for types of posts in Plevna for the period 2014-2018, EA

The potential of rapidly growing demand for skilled workers and machine operators is realized in manufacturing workers, vehicle drivers, machine operators and craftsmen.

Position	Qualified workers and related workers	Machine operators and installers	Professions not requiring special qualifications
WORKERS OF FOOD, CLOTHING, WOOD AND ARTICLES THEREOF	676		
WORKERS IN THE RENEWABLE AND PROCESSING INDUSTRY, CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORT			496
DRIVERS OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND OPERATORS OF MOVABLE EQUIPMENT		461	
WASTE WASTEWORKERS AND THEIR RELATED WASTE			342
OPERATORS OF STATIONARY MACHINES AND EQUIPMENT		342	
METALLURGES, MACHINERY AND MACHINERY AND RELATED WORKERS	312		
WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING			21
CLEANERS AND AUXILIARIES			145
BUILDING WORKERS AND PARTS THEREOF, EXCLUDING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT	118		
LAWYERS AND PRINTING	96		
INSTALLERS		69	
FOOD PREPARATORS			51
WORKERS FOR INSTALLATION AND REPAIR OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT	49		
STREET TRADERS AND WORKERS SERVING THE STREET			30

Table 10 Average number of jobs for 2014-2018 for Plevna, exp. EA

Approximately 60% of the jobs in these leading positions are related to the production of clothing and footwear, the service (including drivers) of agricultural machinery and transport (drivers of various vehicles)



In Teleorman County, the increase in vacancies during the 2014-2017 period is tangible. The main sectors generating vacancies are manufacturing, trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, and human health and ancillary activities. The last sector is reaching its peak in 2016, after which there is a slowdown in development. The impact of trade and repair of cars and motorcycles is significantly more pronounced than in Romania, resulting in untapped potential of sectors such as the creation of information technology.

Sector	Average number of vacancies 2014-2017	Percentage of change 2014-2017	Share in total vacancies	Weighted impact on vacancies	Weighted impact on vacancies (Romania)
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES	87	69%	1.3%	0.9%	0.5%
MINING AND QUARRYING	4	100%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
MANUFACTURING	2 170	71%	33.2%	23.6%	12.7%
ELECTRICITY, GAS, STEAM AND AIR CONDITIONING SUPPLY	6	71%	0.1%	0.1%	1.1%
WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND REMEDIATION ACTIVITIES	122	40%	1.9%	0.7%	0.7%
CONSTRUCTION	221	64%	3.4%	2.1%	1.7%
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND MOTORCYCLES	456	286%	7.0%	20.0%	6.2%
TRANSPORTING AND STORAGING	409	90%	6.3%	5.6%	5.0%
ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE ACTIVITIES	58	234%	0.9%	2.1%	1.4%
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	35	327%	0.5%	1.8%	3.8%
FINANCIAL AND INSURANCE ACTIVITIES	71	114%	1.1%	1.2%	1.7%
REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES	9	333%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES	175	41%	2.7%	1.1%	2.3%
ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT SERVICE ACTIVITIES	103	-32%	1.6%	-0.5%	2.5%
EDUCATION	81	-91%	1.2%	-1.1%	-0.3%
HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES	1 257	121%	19.2%	23.3%	12.3%
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION	113	105%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%
OTHER SERVICES ACTIVITIES	18	5%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%

Table 11 Jobs by sector in Teleorman 2014-2017, INS, ANFOM

There is a growing demand for staff employed in services, trade and security, and skilled workers. Specialists are still the most sought after. The main difference compared to job search across Romania is the increased demand for machine operators and installers and the reduced demand for Teleorman specialists as a share of vacancies.

Type	Number Teleorman (2017)	Change (2014-2017)	Number Romania (2017)
Managers	335	43%	2 559
Specialists	1 560	54%	17 472
Technicians and applied specialists	687	92%	5 335
Assistant administrative staff	244	20%	4 114
Staff engaged in population, trade, and security services	1 133	134%	8 411
Qualified workers in agriculture, forestry and fisheries	17	70%	140
Qualified workers and related workers	1 217	71%	7 368
Machine operators and installers	939	30%	6 626
Professions not requiring special qualifications	1 243	124%	7 962

Table 12 Job placements by job type in Teleorman 2014-2017, INS, ANFOM



ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ СЪЮЗ
ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ФОНД ЗА РЕГИОНАЛНО РАЗВИТИЕ
ИНВЕСТИРАМЕ ВЪВ ВАШЕТО БЪДЕЩЕ!



БЪЛГАРСКО ПРАВИТЕЛСТВО



C. LEVEL OF CROSS BORDER LABOUR MOBILITY (SWOT)

Developing a strategy for cross-border mobility should take into account the maturity of the relations between the different regions. The Association of European Border Regions (AERG) distinguishes three (aggregated) different degrees and opportunities for development based on real observations on interactions between regions in the EU¹. Cross-border mobility between **Pleven and Teleorman** has a significant similarity with defining also as a low-mobility region of the workforce in terms of weaknesses and threats to mobility. However, basic capabilities and strengths are not yet available, the addressing of which should be paramount to the transition to further deepening of relations.

EXTERNAL THREATS

1. EMIGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO OTHER COUNTRIES, NEIGHBOURING URBANIZED AGGLOMERATIONS

In Pleven District there is a negative migration, particularly abruptly expressed in the age groups 20-39. The negative result of the migration is mainly due to the abandoned in the direction of the big Bulgarian agglomerations and abroad. The results of previous years suggest that a large proportion of young people leave in connection with continuing their education. The positive outcome of intra-regional migration, although positive, is extremely small, Pleven is not a strong enough attraction centre even for areas that are ahead of the economy and the rates of negative migration are higher than those for the country.

¹ AERG also has a further degree, but it refers to border regions and is not applicable to this analysis. Information services for cross-border workers in European border regions (AEBR), 2012

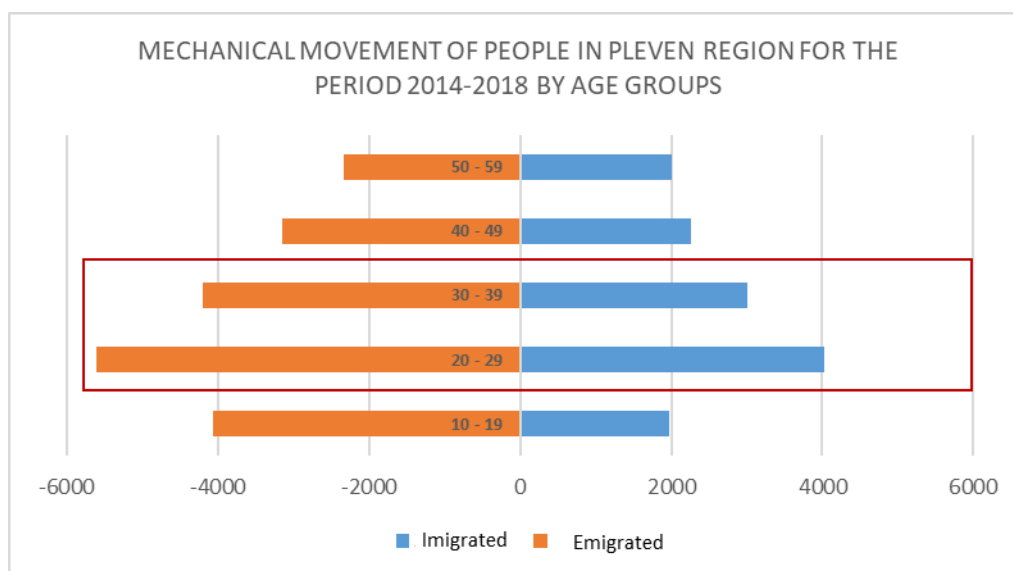


Table 13 Mechanical movement of people in Plevan region for the period 2014-2018 by age groups

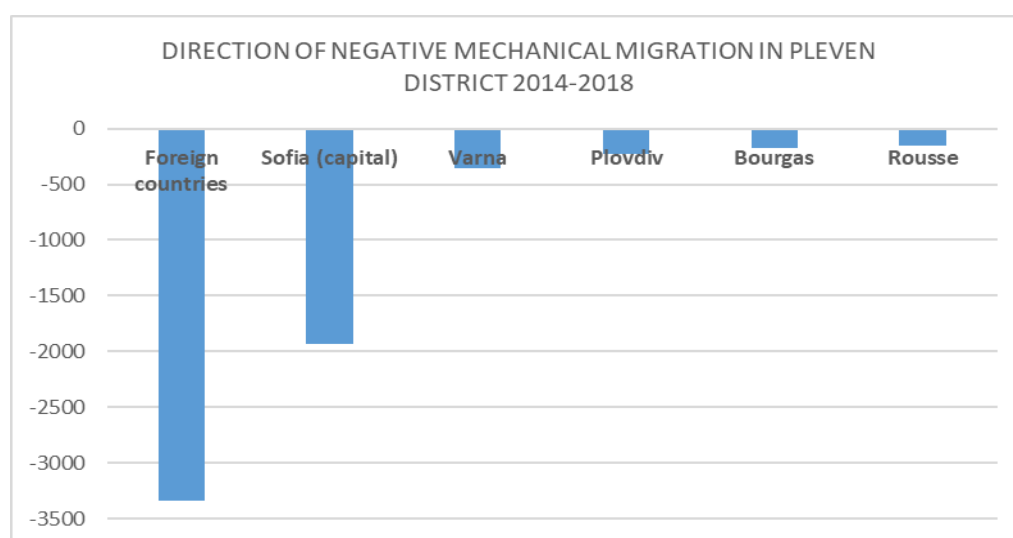


Table 14 Direction of Negative Mechanical Migration in Plevan District 2014-2018

In **Teleorman County**, negative migration is also pronounced and steadily rising (between 2014 and 2017, the gap is growing almost twice) and significantly exceeds Romania's average but is not as fast as in South Muntenia. In the case of large agglomerations, Bucharest has a major impact on Teleorman, placing the last of the six Romanian districts where more than 10% of the workforce travels to a different workplace (more than 50km, in the Teleorman case to 100km). Bucharest also attracts many students from the county. At the same time, Bucharest leads to the fact that the migration abroad by Teleorman is



relatively low for Romania. In a study of the World Bank, the centre of Teleorman, the city of Alexandria, occupies the penultimate place before Giurgevo's attractiveness for migrants.

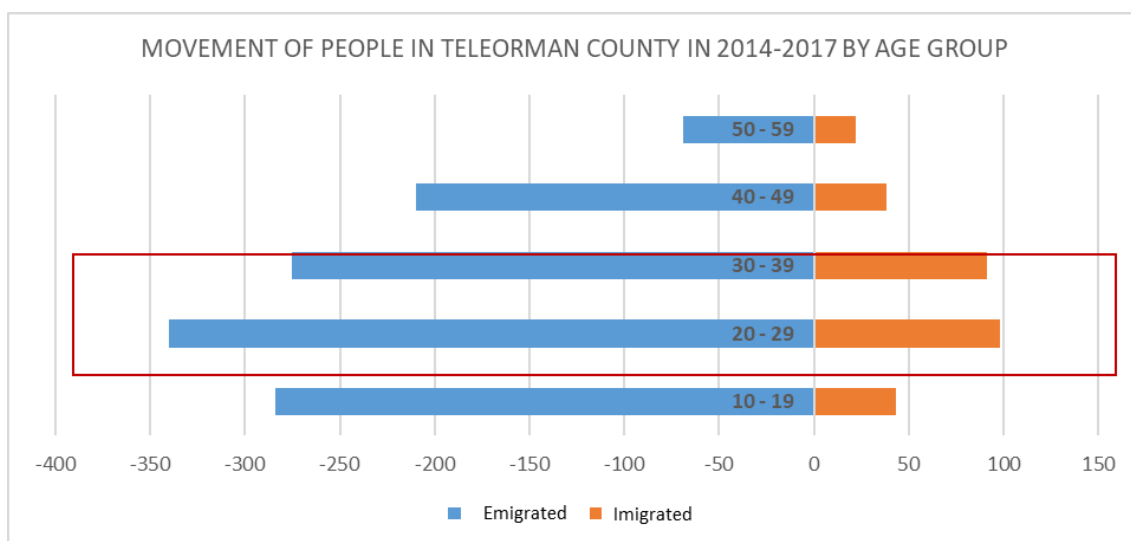


Table 15 Movement of people in Teleorman County in 2014-2017 by age group

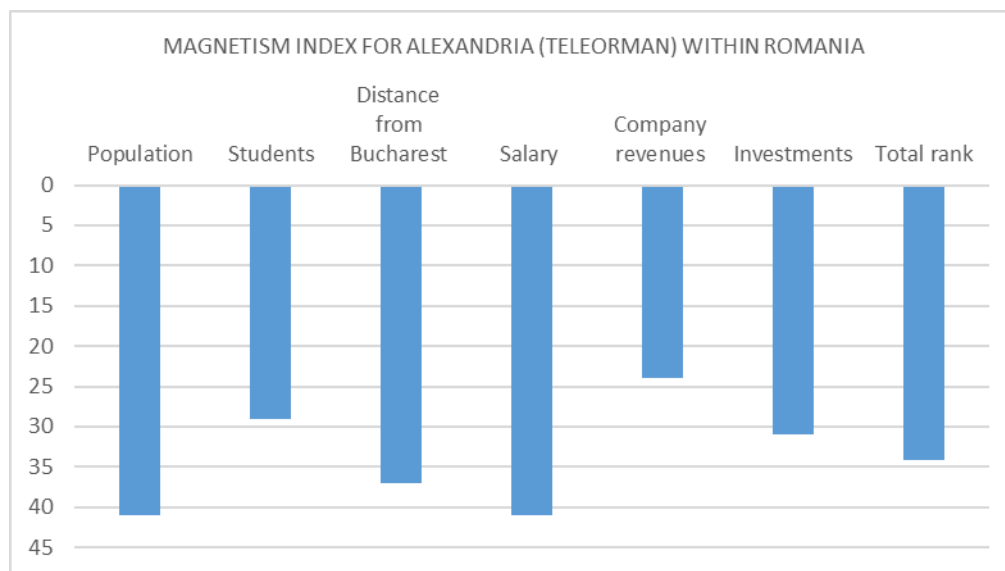


Table 16 Magnetism Index for Alexandria (Teleorman) within Romania, World Bank

2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Pleven region has a significantly lower natural growth than the average (-10.2 vs. -6.5) and the population structure is more aged than that of Bulgaria. As a result, the population in Pleven is decreasing faster than the country. Since the Northwest Region has deeper data



than those of Pleven, the trend cannot be expected to be improved by migratory movements.

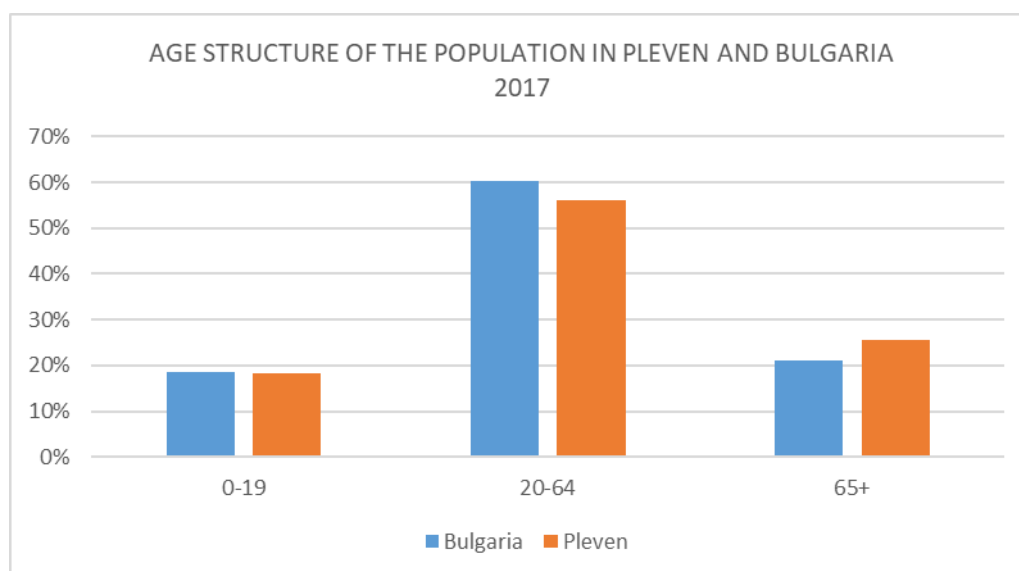


Table 17 Age structure of the population in Plevnia and Bulgaria 2017, NSI

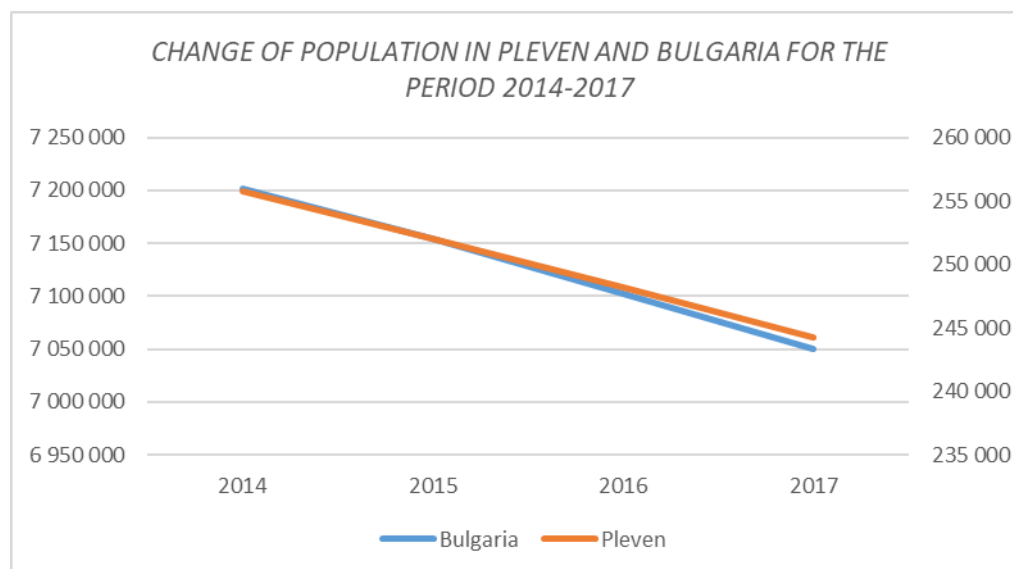


Table 18 Change of population in Plevnia and Bulgaria for the period 2014-2017

Teleorman's population also declined faster than Romania and South Muntenia, and natural growth was significantly lower (-10.9, -3, -5.7). At the same time, the structure of the population is more aging than in the country.

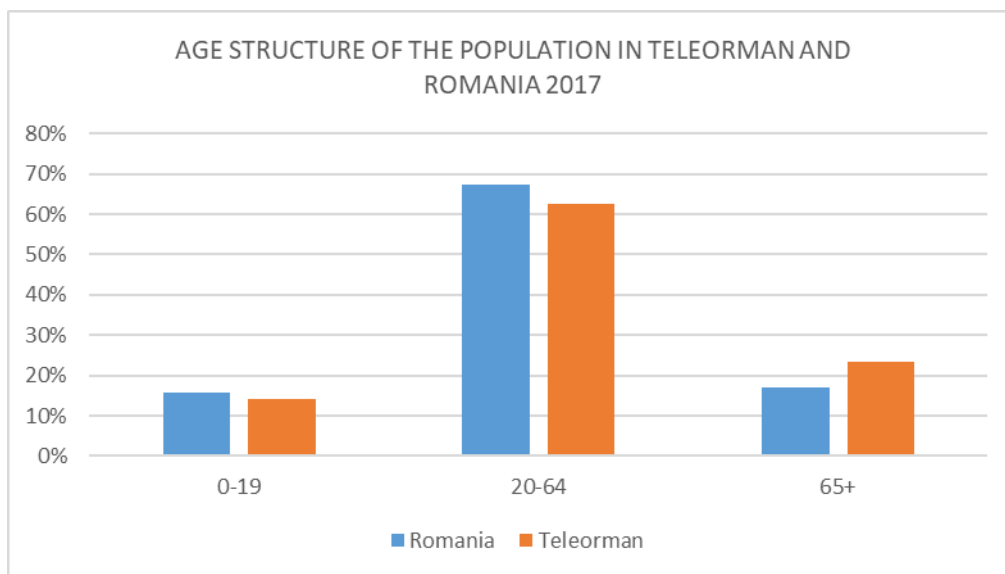


Table 19 Age structure of the population in Teleorman and Romania 2017, INS

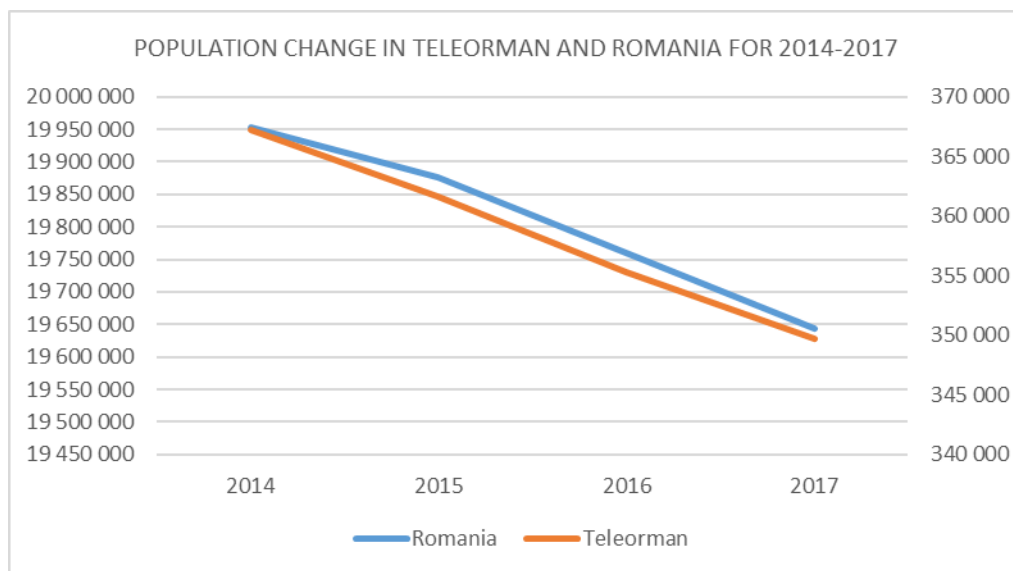


Table 20 Population Change in Teleorman and Romania for 2014-2017, INS

3. WEAK COMPETITIVENESS OF LOCAL WORKFORCE

The Regional Competitiveness Index in the EU places North West Bulgaria and South Muntenia at the backside of the region's ranking of lifelong learning and higher education and labour market efficiency. Productivity of the labour force can be isolated as one of the most underdeveloped components of the competitiveness of the local labour force. Changes



in the position of the regions compared to previous measurements of the 2010 and 2013 index are not observed.

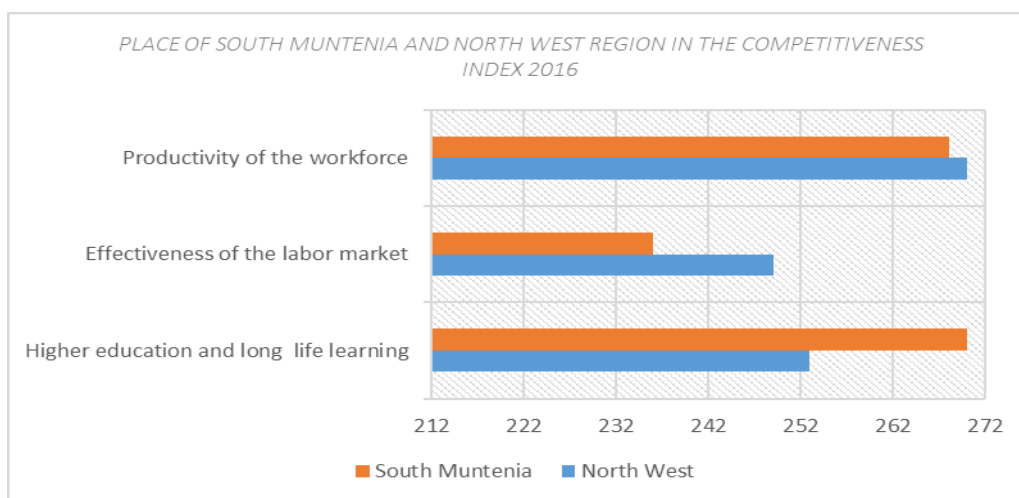


Table 21 Place of South Muntenia and North West Region in the Competitiveness Index 2016, EC

INTERNAL WEAKNESS

4. INSUFFICIENT INNOVATIVE WORK PLACES

The North West region, of which **Pleven** is part, is the least represented by the regions in Bulgaria in terms of R & D personnel. Positive signals, however, are the anticipated increase in R & D investment relative to other regions as a result of business activity, to a certain extent also due to changes in operational programs that promote innovation in the Northwest region.

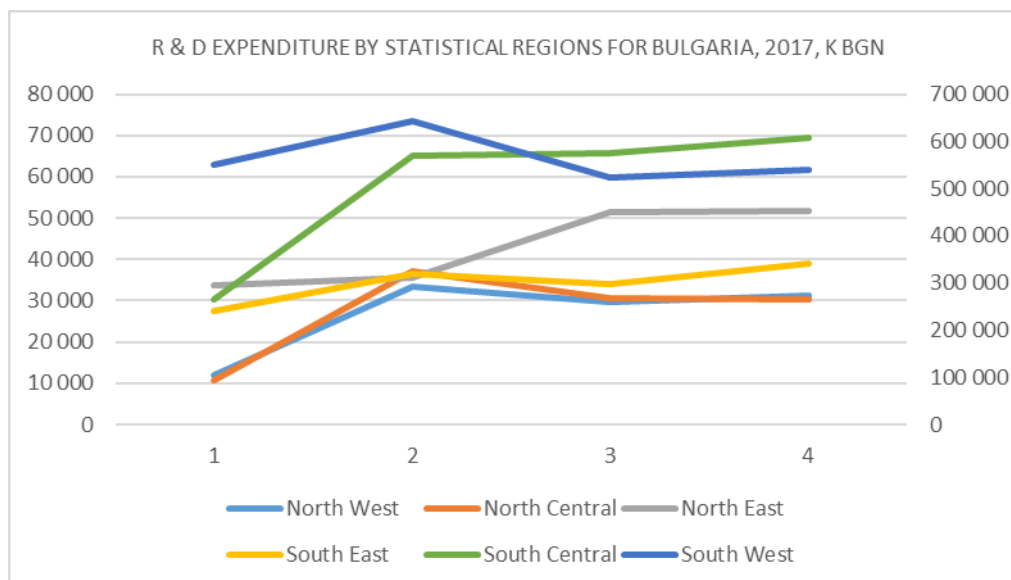


Table 22 R & D expenditure by statistical regions for Bulgaria, 2017, exp. NSI

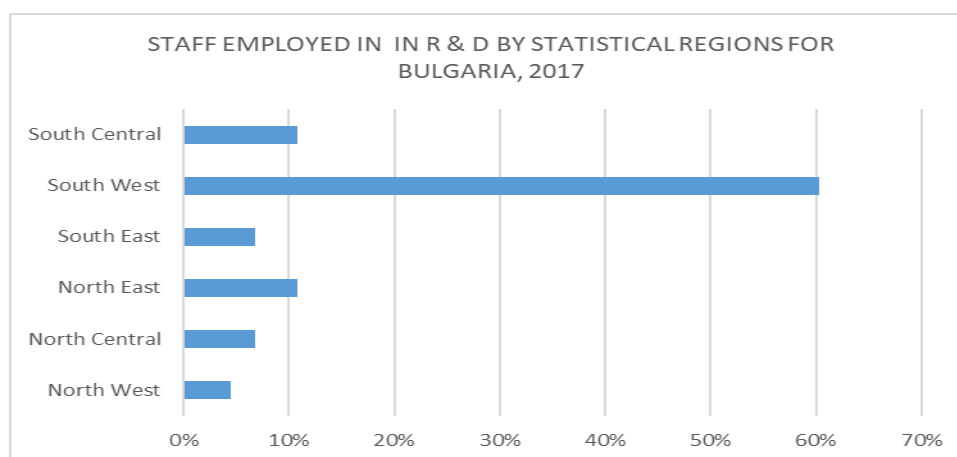


Table 23 Staff employed in in R & D by statistical regions for Bulgaria, 2017, exp. NSI

Similar is the situation in the South Muntenia region, of which the county of **Teleorman** is part. It is characterized by one of the smallest number of innovative enterprises and one of the lowest shares of the total number of enterprises with a negative trend over the past three years. Teleorman practically does not offer R & D jobs.

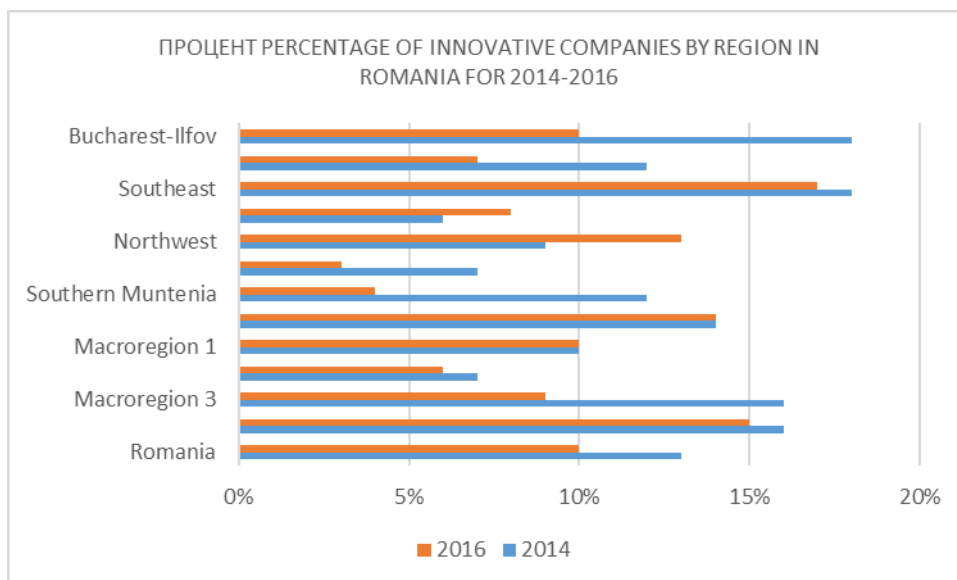


Table 24 Percentage of Innovative Companies by Region in Romania for 2014-2016, INS

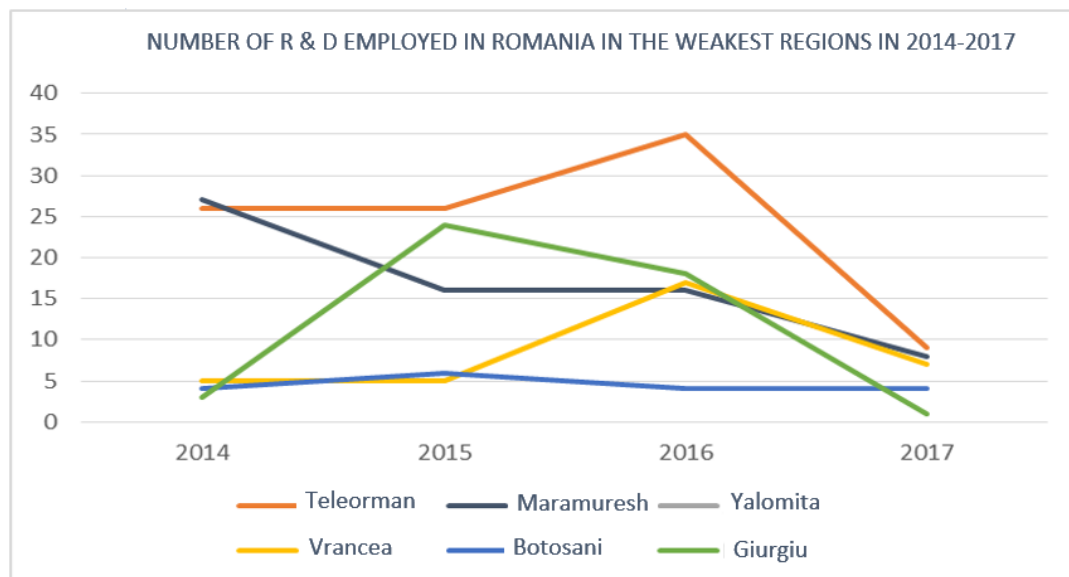


Table 25 Number of R & D employed in Romania in the weakest regions in 2014-2017, INS

The two planning regions, which include Pleven and Teleorman, occupy one of the last places in the Regional Competitiveness Index (259 and 260, respectively). Practically, the shortage of innovative jobs is also due to exceptionally small internal and external R & D investment, with the opportunity for development to provide medium and high-tech exports.

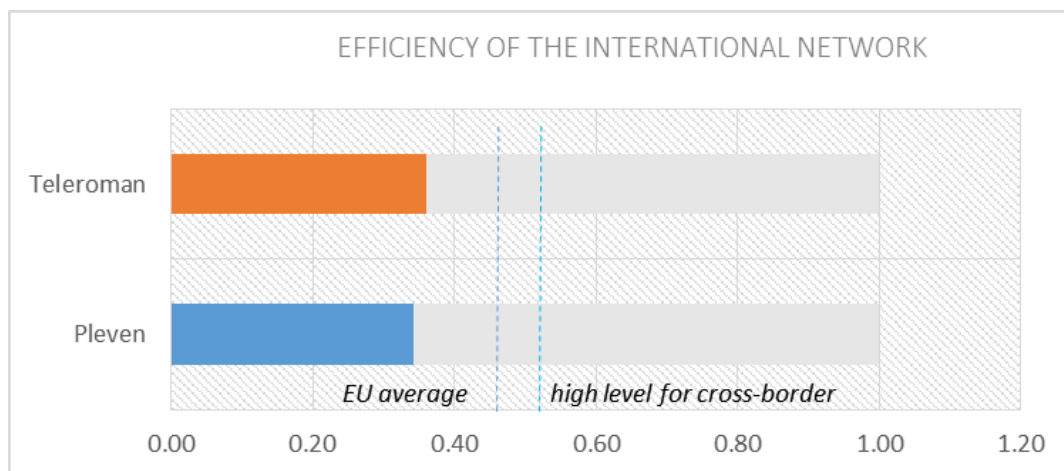


* alignment by the authors

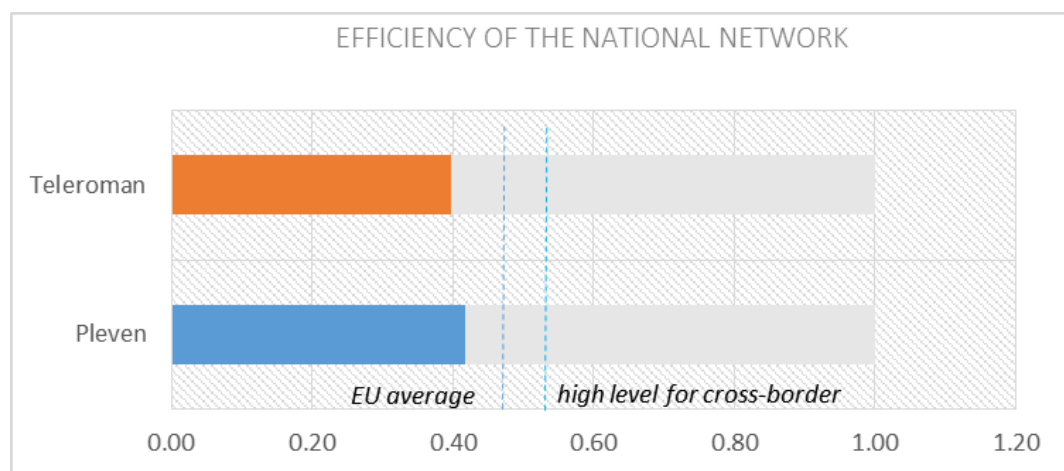
Graph 4 Regional Competitiveness Index of European Regions 2016, EC

5. LACK OF OPTIMUM CROSS-BORDER TRANSPORT

Pleven District and **Teleorman** County have one of the lowest efficiency ratios of cross-border transport networks in the EU, which is an objective obstacle to promoting daytime or weekly mobility. In recent years several major infrastructure projects have been aimed at improving the connections between Pleven and the Romanian border districts, but the result still does not produce the necessary effect. From the most distant point in the Pleven region with a population of over 5000 people in the town of Cherven Bryag to the first settlement with a population of over 5000 people, Turnu Magurele, the necessary time without taking into account the influence of the ferry is 2 hours (115 km) Belene 1 hour and 30 min (42.5 km). The lack of a bridge between border regions has an impact on accessibility and mobility opportunities.



Graph 5 Effectiveness of the international network, Joint Research Center, 2018



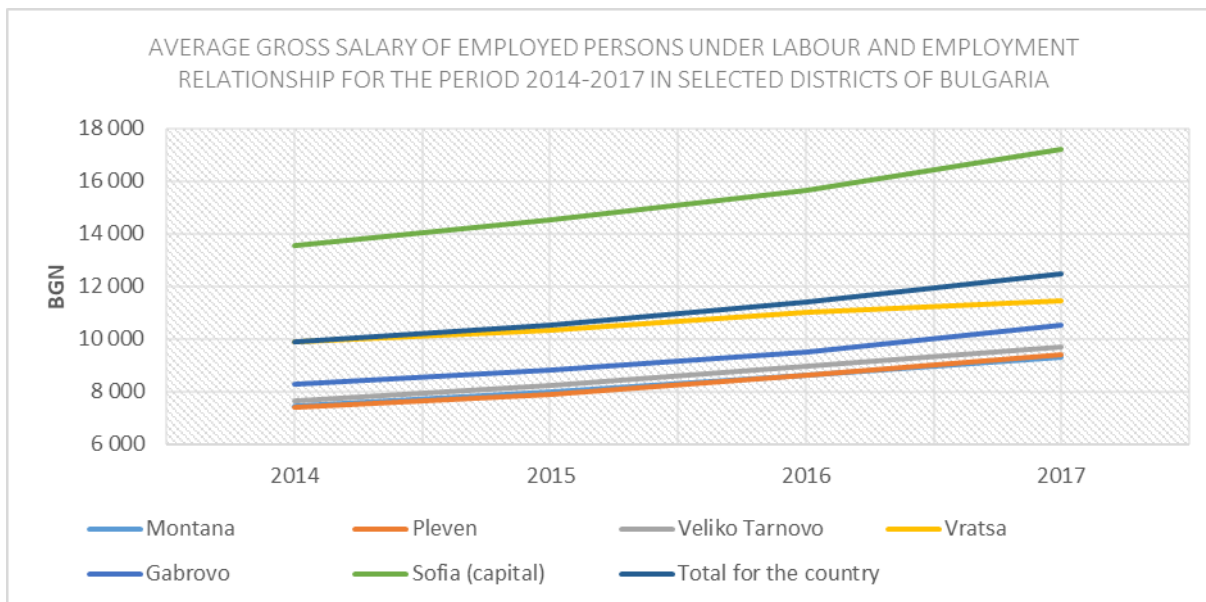
Graph 6 Effectiveness of the national network, exp. Joint Research Center, 2018

6. LOW ATTRACTIVENESS OF PAYMENT IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND NATIONAL LEADING AREAS

Bulgaria and Romania are the EU countries with the lowest pay. The attractiveness of wages in both regions shows that they are lagging behind not only from other European countries but also from the main leading regions in the individual countries. Pleven is 73% of the country and Teleorman 83%, and the euro is similar (the average salary in Pleven is 470 EUR and in Teleorman 485 EUR). The difference increases sharply if we compare them with the two main and easily accessible national labour force points - Sofia (55%) and Bucharest (65%). In the period 2014-2017 the salaries in Pleven are increasing according to the general

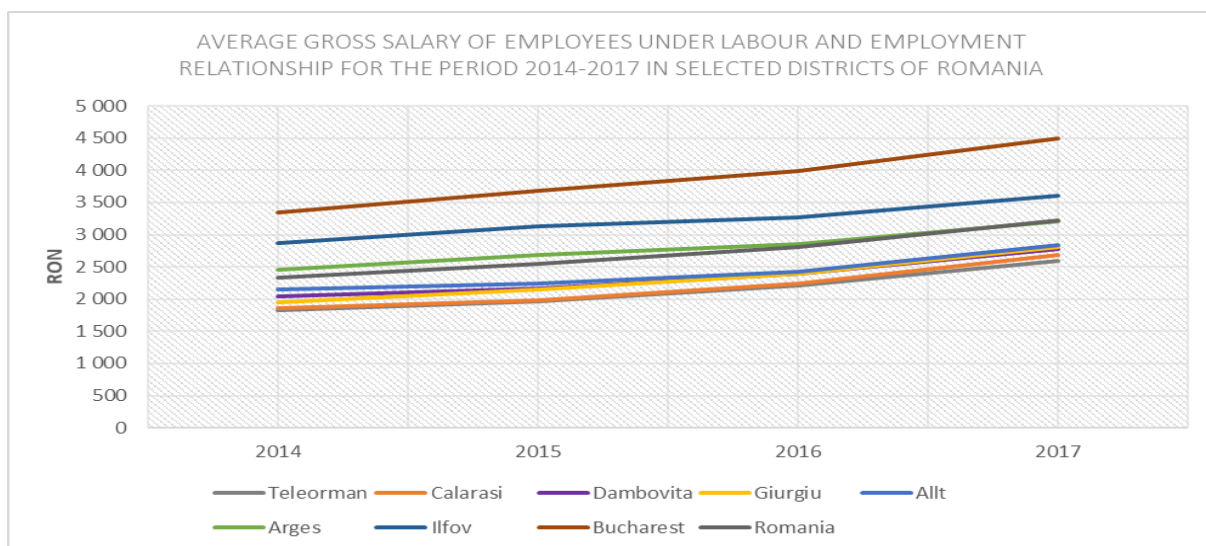


trend in the country, but the area continues to outnumber only Montana from the neighbouring and / or nearby areas. Nevertheless, the districts of Montana, Pleven and Veliko Tarnovo form a similar pay cluster.



Graph 7 Average gross salary of employed persons under labour and employment relationship for the period 2014-2017 in selected districts of Bulgaria, NSI

Paying in Teleorman is growing faster than in the country, but in the region and nearby areas, the county still has the last place in terms of salaries. Together with the other Danubian districts that form a similar salary cluster.





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Graph 8 Average gross salary of employees under labour and employment relationship for the period 2014-2017 in selected districts of Romania, INS

7. LIMITED LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE

One of the weaknesses is the low fluency of Romanian in Bulgaria and Bulgarian in Romania outside the adjacent settlements. Data on both areas is missing, but at the national level, 0.37% of Bulgarians are in possession of Romanian, the percentage decreasing with decreasing age. Knowing Bulgarian in Romania as a foreign language tends to zero. In the generation up to 34 years, both countries find similarities in the widespread distribution of English as the first foreign language (33% of Romanians, 28% of Bulgarians).

8. INITIAL STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Establishing cross-border labour market cooperation and providing sufficient information on mobile employment opportunities is at an early stage and driven by the implementation of key projects within the framework of Axis 4.1 of INTERREG 2014-2020 which create tools and opportunities for establish of sustainable cooperation. Currently, there are 34 projects with a budget of 17 million euros.

EXTERNAL OPPOTUNITIES

9. INCREASE THE POSSIBILITY OF CONSULTATION OF MOBILE WORKERS

34 INTERREG 2014-2020 projects and the need to ensure the sustainability of their results over the next five years provide the opportunity for their use, follow-up and / or upgrading. After their implementation, people with disabilities in Pleven and Teleorman will be able to benefit from:

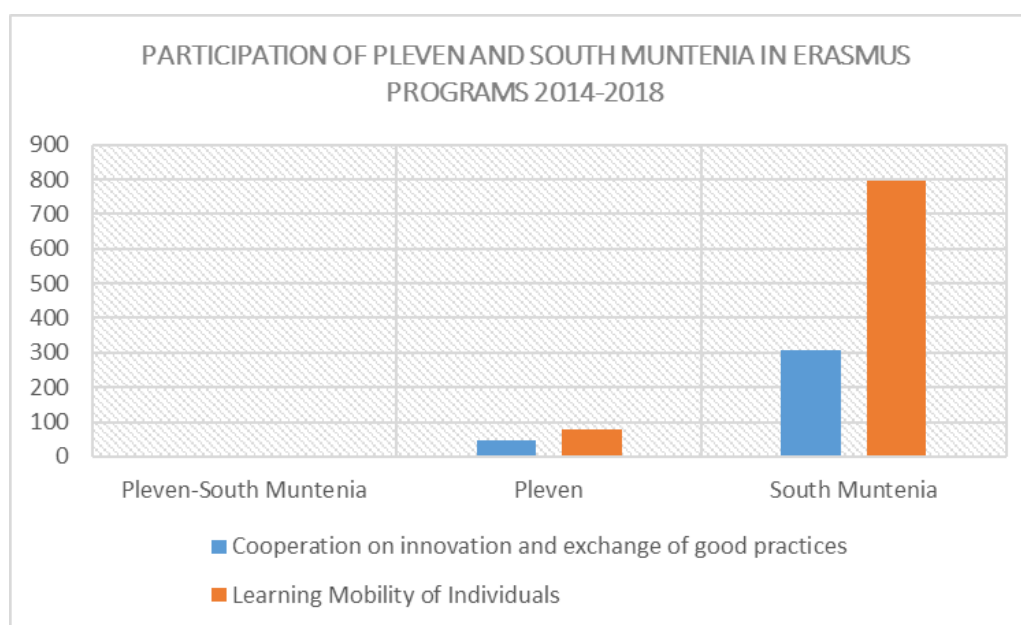
- 12 on-line job search platforms (respectively employers' publication), with 5 of them available for jobs in their respective regions;
- 4 online learning platforms in Romanian and Bulgarian which, due to their virtual nature, are directly applicable to the population in both regions
- 7 online resources for establishing of additional soft and specific competencies, including 2 opportunities for profiling jobseekers;



- 8 platforms give real information about the working conditions and requirements of the labour market in Romania and Bulgaria, and 3 provide business guidance.

10. FORMATION OF INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL CLUSTERS IN BORDER AREAS

The level of educational clusters between Pleven and Teleorman is low, which is also due to the lack of a higher education institution in Teleorman despite the presence of outsourced faculties. The University of Pleven does not participate in the implementation of INTERREG projects. Erasmus data show that Pleven and South Muntenia have been participating in only two joint projects on Citizenship Mobility in the period 2014-2018 and two on Innovation Cooperation and the exchange of good practice.



Graph 9 Participation of Pleven and South Muntenia in Erasmus programs 2014-2018, Erasmus program

There is also no cluster relations between companies on both sides of the Danube River, as the expectations are mainly in the field of cultural and historical tourism where the cross-border tourism product (s) between Pleven and Turnu Magurele and possibly Turnu Magurele and Nikopol.



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11. STRENGTHENING TRANS-BORDER COOPERATION TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The cross-border cooperation between Pleven and Teleorman is its initial phase of construction. In the 2007-2013 programming period, joint projects between the two regions are aimed at improving transport links and protecting the environment.

It should be noted that Pleven District has significantly more intimate links with Olt County in connection with establishing a wine road and cooperation in the field of agriculture, food and construction.

12. GENERAL CROSS-BORDER MONITORING ON THE LABOUR MARKET

At present, there is no common cross-border labour monitoring, although a large part of the INTERREG 2014-2020 projects triggered joint research and labour research in the border regions of Bulgaria and Romania.

INTERNAL STRENGTHS

13. FUNCTIONAL NETWORKS FOR CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

Despite the existence of a significant number of functional networks for cross-border cooperation between Romania and Bulgaria, between the two regions of Pleven and Teleorman, they are not very pronounced. The core functional networks are based on inter-municipal cooperation in the implementation of joint projects.

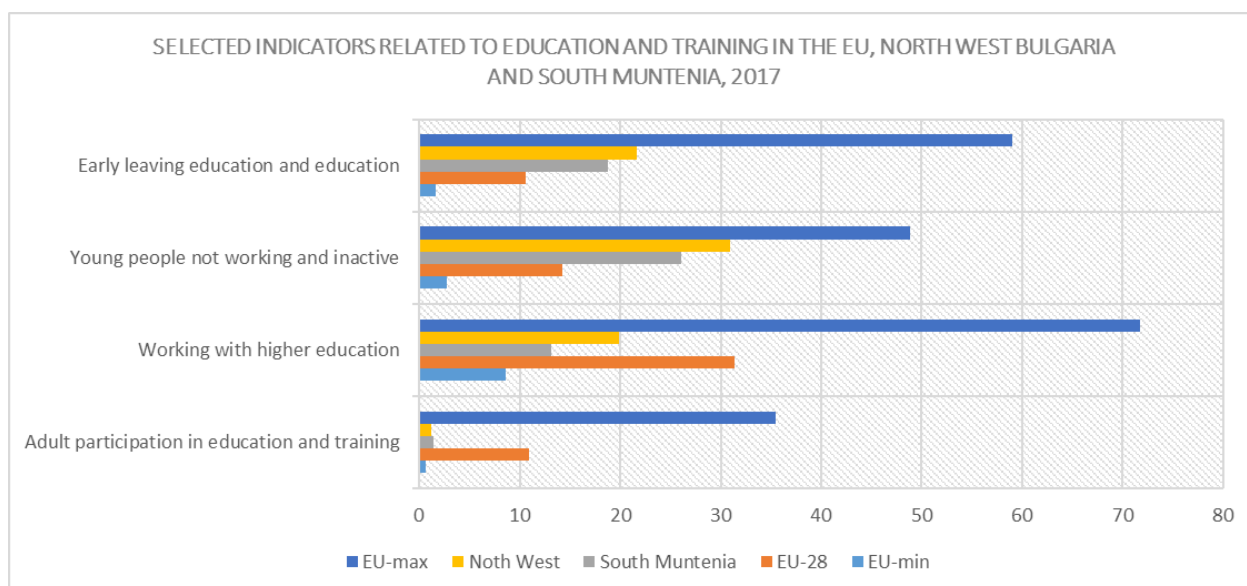
14. HIGH LEVEL OF MOVEMENT AND COMPETENCE OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

Due to the lack of statistics that allow us to measure this component, we empathize with employees as a key component in achieving it. The latter is related to the achievement of long-term specialization in the conditions that give the employee the feeling that he can cope with the activity, with constant training leading to an increase of his / her skills and understanding, including theoretical ones, for the activity he specializes. It is education and training which are measurable components, which are also a key point in the implementation of Europe 2020.



Pleven and Teleorman, as part of the Northwest region and South Muntenia, fall within the EU:

- Regions with the lowest and the same participation of adults in education and training (Northwest region is the last in Bulgaria, but Pleven region is the exception and is the leading district in the country, while South Muntenia is the first in Romania);
- The regions with the lowest and a similar percentage of workers with higher education (Northwest region is last in Bulgaria and South Muntenia in the middle group for Romania);
- Regions with the highest share of young people who are neither employed nor trained (the Northwest region is the last in Bulgaria, and the South Muntenia group of the latter for Romania)



Graph 10 Selected indicators related to education and training in the EU, North West Bulgaria and South Muntenia, Eurostat

DEVELOPMENT OF OPPORTUNITIES AND STRENGTHS



The development of opportunities and strengths is related to the need to establish three levels of cross-border cooperation that allow for its optimal use ²:

- The macro-structural - political framework of cooperation, linking the regions, especially in terms of infrastructure and legislation
- Functional networks - establishing and stabilizing links, companies, cultural and administrative institutions, associations, media;
- Collaboration - the creation of a cross-border area specializing in a specific economic function.

The recommendations on the development of the relations between Bulgaria and Romania point to the need to develop joint co-operation, based on the dominance of weaknesses and the threats to opportunities and strengths. This is practically true for the Plevna-Teleorman cross-border area. With a view to linking the different elements to the SWOT analysis (AEBR) in order to fulfil the build-up of robust and **comprehensive capabilities that contribute to strengths**, it is a key point.

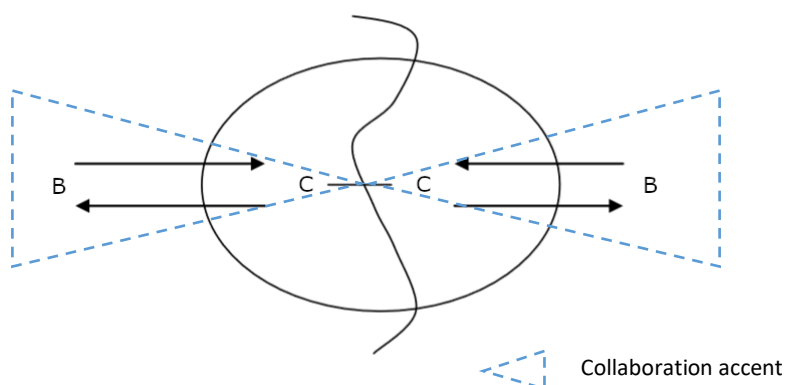


Figure 1 Model of Collaborative Co-operation as a Key Element of Cross-Border Mobility, et. own

The conclusion is also reflected in the evaluation of the functional networks in the draft of the Common Strategy for Sustainable Territorial Development of the Romania-Bulgaria Cross-Border Region, according to which the joint activities between public and private

² Cross-border Co-operation in Europe : A Comprehensive Overview for European Council, Institute of International Sociology Gorizia, 2011



organizations carried out during the period 2007 - 2013 have no particular impact on cross-border level

CONCLUSIONS ON THE LEVEL OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION BETWEEN PLEVEN AND Telerorman DISTRICT

The achieved and anticipated results of INTERREG 2014-2020 provide a good basis for overcoming major problems caused by the inability to access the labour market.

Deepening the level of cross-border cooperation can be achieved by enhancing external opportunities::

- Support for the **development of cross-border entrepreneurship**
- Support for building of **an economic agglomerations**

The success of their realization would lead to the positioning of the cross-border region as linking the two leading agglomerations in Bulgaria and Romania (Sofia and Bucharest). At the same time, the development of the two regions should take the form of different strands:

- Teleorman: acceleration and catching up of the Romanian economy while preserving the structural similarity of the local and national economy, using the opportunity to attract and create a business in the proximity of Ilfov-Bucharest;
- Pleven: Accelerating the local economy by establishing of competitive advantages, distinguishing the area from the rest of the country and thus establishing a relationship with the region of Sofia.

The experience of other EU regions shows that establishing a similar relationship should address the following challenges:

- Willingness of enterprises in the region to establish a direct partnership rather than networking;
- Expecting businesses in the region to have direct access to niche markets, in terms of revenue and profit, and to a much lesser extent by the exchange of knowledge, information, joint promotions;



- Waiting for other stakeholders to take the initiative to make a partnership;
- Due to the low purchasing power in the region, entry into the same sector in which businesses operate in the border area market is only possible for the most competitive ones;
- Highly positive assessment of working cross-border industrial organizations both in terms of contact with potential partners and in terms of information and market knowledge of the other region.

In this sense, in such a "interlink" approach and the current available resources in the cross-border region, cooperation could be optimal on the basis of specialization and demand for synergies between enterprises in both regions without the need to formalize relations but with increased intensity contacts and awareness and recognition between enterprises on both sides of the Danube.

D. SECTOR ADAPTATION OF CROSS-BORDER LABOUR MOBILITY

The development of cross-border mobility implies the choice of sectors which, in view of the analysis, may lead to its creation, strengthening and maintenance.

Cross-border workers live in one of the EU or EFTA countries and work in another, hired or self-employed in a country other than their country of domicile. This also covers those working in a country other than the place of residence of their family but for a period of up to one year or working in another country but returning to their main place of residence for a certain period of time. In recent years, the idea of digital jobs, which allow for cross-border mobility without the need for physical relocation, as well as more flexible forms of physical cross-border mobility in the form of daily travel, is gaining popularity.

Since 2009, cross-border mobility in the EU is determined by wage differences and, to a lesser extent, by the level of unemployment. Due to the low difference in the average pay in Teleorman and Plevna, as well as its similar growth rate, this element, inherent in mobility itself, is not currently a leading factor.



The proposed “interlink” approach between the two large agglomerations also suggests that the two regions can establish asymmetric relations between themselves depending on the target agglomeration. In the case of the particular cross-border region, this would allow the creation of two types of economic agglomerations maximizing the maximum resource potential of the two regions and increasing employment opportunities for disadvantaged people.

MODEL OF ECONOMIC AGGLOMERATIONS (MALMBERG, SOLVELL, ZANDER) APPLIED TO THE PLEVEN-TELEORMAN CROSS-BORDER REGION

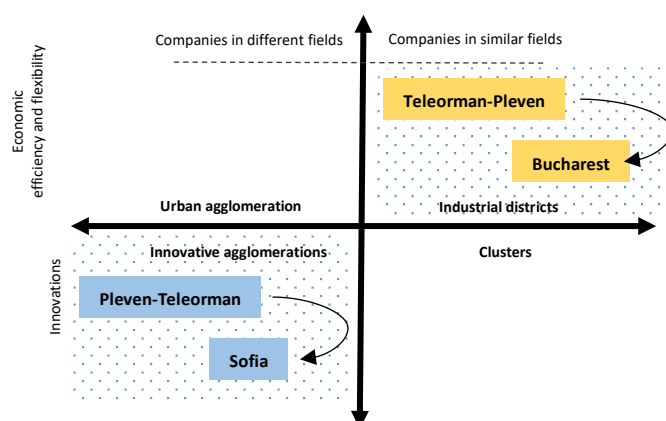


Figure 2 Model of Economic Agglomerations (Malmberg, Solvell, Zander) applied to the Plevan-Teleorman cross-border region, own

Although, Teleorman-Pleven, aimed at attracting industrial activities that want to move from Bucharest and thus optimize their costs. Attracting a business in Teleorman from Bucharest County in the field of industrial production, which would also affect wages (the average wage in Bucharest is 75% higher than in Teleorman). This implies the creation of transparency in the labour market in Plevan for Romanian entrepreneurs, which can be a resource base for the provision of specialists as an industrial region, as well as the creation of programs for the vocational training of the disadvantaged to address the needs of the potential business in Teleorman. Potential also includes the creation of a joint investment platform, Teleorman-Pleven, led by the administration and with the support of the two



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regions' business promoting the resource base (labour force), which provides the cross-border region and creates conditions for specialization in certain industries in both regions.

In contrast, the expressed scientific potential, concomitant deindustrialisation, the health potential in the Pleven region as well as the growing number of elderly people in the whole cross-border region, requiring innovative approaches to their care, give reason to assume that the healthcare sector may be the basis of construction of Pleven-Teleorman as an innovative agglomeration aimed at Sofia and in particular North West Bulgaria. Creating jobs in social welfare and health care would help create jobs for disadvantaged people. In view of the specificity of the activity, there will be programs for their re-qualification and training in Bulgarian and Romanian. Potential opportunities exist also in the creation of start-up companies for the involvement of disadvantaged people in entrepreneurial activities (in view of the orientation of the OP "Innovation and Competitiveness" towards Northwest Bulgaria, giving priority to the health and biotechnology industry, as well as opportunities for creation of venture capital funds).

Both types of agglomerations would lead to the development of the tourism sector, which would create employment opportunities for disadvantaged people as well as the creation of a sustainable model of entrepreneurship in the micro-segment. As far as the development of cross-border cooperation for the creation of tourism products is currently geared towards the historical one, the development of an agglomeration would lead to the enhancement of business and leisure tourism. Tourism is the backbone of cross-border employment and sets relatively low entry barriers to the employment of disadvantaged people.

IV. MEASURES

A. GENERAL STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

The data and conclusions in the analysis clearly outline the direction in which measures to promote cross-border mobility between Pleven District and Teleorman County should be developed. Mobility provides social and economic benefits. Enhanced labour mobility across the EU will expand employment opportunities for workers and help employers better and



faster fill vacancies. This contributes to the development of a European labour market with a high level of employment. The labour market conditions found in the analysis in the two border regions clearly define them as low-mobility, due to a number of problems, such as lack of attractive jobs, relatively low growth, low R & D investment, demographic problems related to negative migration and aging of the population, language barrier, poor transport connectivity.

The practical **lack of resource cross-border mobility** (or its extreme limitation) is the underlying barrier to the self-sufficiency of disadvantaged people to be able to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the cross-border region. The creation of the resource requires the active involvement of local authorities in shaping its framework, an expectation that is also determined by the EU's experience.

On its part, self-sufficiency is strongly conditioned by the establishment of conditions for the integration of disadvantaged people into the labour market. This in essence means ensuring basic conditions for **increasing employment** and encouraging the development of this group. In the context of the cross-border region, this could be seen as creating favourable economic conditions for co-development and, at the same time, **promoting entrepreneurship**, including among disadvantaged people. In the medium term, this would lead to the possibility of encouraging development, in removing reliance on promotion itself.

Based on the findings of the strengths and weaknesses analysis, the overall goal of this strategy can be formulated as:

Creation of conditions for activation of cross-border labour mobility in Pleven District and Teleorman County.

At this stage in the development of the labour market in both regions, the strategic framework in which to develop cross-border labour mobility initiatives should be oriented not so much to the direct stimulation of mobility but rather to the creation of conditions for mobility, through interventions in the economic and social environment. Targeted interventions, coupled with positive, albeit less dynamic, changes in the competitiveness of



both regions ensure long-term sustainable socio-economic development, a more dynamic labour market and, hence, opportunities for effective labour mobility.

The overall objective of the strategy will be realized through two specific sub-objectives covering two of the main aspects of the environment in which cross-border labour mobility is developing: the labour market situation and the state of the links between the regions. The third aspect of the environment can be treated as a horizontal one that refers to common problems for both regions in the absence of a sufficiently precise analytical basis and capacity to create and implement regional development policies, lack of pro-innovative infrastructure

The specific objectives are:

- 1. REINFORCEMENT OF THE LINKS BETWEEN THE TARGETED REGIONS;**
- 2. PROMOTING LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES;**
- 3. ENHANCING CAPACITY OF REGIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES.**

The description of the general and specific objectives presents the general framework and vision of how to prepare, in the medium term, an appropriate environment for effective labour migration in the targeted cross-border regions - Plevna District and Teleorman County, thus creating conditions for workers' access to mobility services and further integration into labour markets.

B. REINFORCEMENT OF THE LINKS BETWEEN THE TARGETED REGIONS

JUSTIFICATION

Developing a strategy or a system of measures to stimulate cross-border mobility should take into account the maturity of the relations between the different regions. Cross-border mobility between Plevna and Teleorman is extremely low, but it is still possible to find and stimulate prospective co-operation sectors and topics whose addressing will lead to a further deepening of relations. This development should be seen as a process that needs to



be relevant incentives to result in effective cross-border mobility. The system of indicative measures should be thematic oriented towards the development of promising cooperation sectors in both regions. Traditional sectors that give the modern economy of Pleven and Teleorman lose their importance and do not allow for accelerated development. It is important to note the activation of R & D in the Pleven region as part of the Northwest Planning Region, where for years funds from the Operational Programs have been prioritized. The health care, based on the Medical University and the Medical College in Pleven, is important for the development of R & D in the region of Pleven, as leaders in high technology medicine in Bulgaria.

The demand for new sectors or cross-sectors is an alternative to development and a possible approach to establish cross-border cooperation and mobility. Following the findings of the analysis, several themes and sectors can be highlighted, within which interventions would contribute most effectively to strengthening the ties between the two regions.

1.1. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES IN SECTOR ECONOMY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- 1.1.1. Common investment platform for both areas (cross-border region);
- 1.1.2. Organizing economic forums;
- 1.1.3. Programs for youth internships;
- 1.1.4. Platforms for the exchange of commercial information;
- 1.1.5. Programs to finance start-up innovative manufacturing and services.

1.2. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES IN TOURISM SECTOR

- 1.2.1. Information platforms for tourist attractions and accommodation;
- 1.2.2. Forums for sharing good practice;
- 1.2.3. Joint tourism products;



- 1.2.4. Initiatives to improve the transport connectivity of the regions;
- 1.2.5. Diversification and development of new tourism products in order to overcome the recession in the sector;
- 1.2.6. Language education.

1.3. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES IN SECTOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

- 1.3.1. Stimulating start-up companies in the field of health services and social care;
- 1.3.2. Forums and an online platform for exchange of good practices;
- 1.3.3. Stimulating the active participation of the Medical University in Pleven in programs and initiatives for cross-border development of the sector.

1.4. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES IN SECTOR SCIENTIFIC AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

- 1.4.1. Stimulating start-up innovative companies, incl. through specialized funds;
- 1.4.2. Technology Transfer Centres;
- 1.4.3. Platforms for the exchange of good practice and information of scientific value.

C. PROMOTING LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

JUSTIFICATION

The population of both regions shows a tendency for a general reduction in the 2014-2017 period, with a focus on young and working population and an increase in the population to 64 years. The decrease is significantly above the average in both countries and affects both urban and rural environments. Foreign investment is weak.

The analysis of employment in both regions shows that Teleorman County has increased the number of employees (2017 vs. 2014), but less than South Muntenia and Romania. There is a



decline in employment in agriculture and the sectors that provide a major impetus and which surpass the pace of growth in the country and the region for development are trade and human health and social work. Pleven District reported a decrease in employment in the period 2014-2017, including compared to North West Bulgaria. This is strongly expressed in agriculture and administrative and support activities. Positive signals are given by the trade, transport and storage sectors. Pleven has a demand for machine operators, installers and low-skilled workers.

Labour demand in Teleorman is in services, trade and security as a priority seek qualified. An important aspect of job mobility, beyond the attractiveness of jobs, is the social environment and access to health and social services, transport, culture and communications, as well as the possibility of family mobility.

Changes in employment in the future will be affected by the progressively decreasing population of both areas.

MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

- 2.1. Improving the link between education and the labour market;
- 2.2. Measures for continuous monitoring and analysis of the dynamics of the labour market;
- 2.3. Measures for upgrading and lifelong learning;
- 2.4. Increasing jobseekers' awareness of their opportunities and rights in cross-border mobility;
- 2.5. Measures to stimulate self-employment;
- 2.6. Improvement of the information and analytical basis for the labour market and the attitudes and motivations of its participants in terms of labour supply and demand, mobility opportunities and the factors that influence.



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D. ENHANCING CAPACITY OF REGIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

JUSTIFICATION

The contemporary requirements for the formulation and implementation of regional development policies, incl. and cross-border policies within the EU imply a strong regional capacity. In both regions, given their slow development, it is a problem to create and retain local capacity. The traditional centralization and isolation of development policies in the recent past has not yet been overcome as a practice and attitude in the institutions of local self-government, and the change requires considerable effort, time and investment.

Structural problems in the economy - state ownership, market and political changes, obsolete technologies, economic efficiency, etc. create additional problems in forming a clear vision to serve as a basis for market strategic planning and implementation of development policies. Institutional and civil partnerships are not what is necessary for effective cross-border cooperation.

MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

- 3.1. Joint interinstitutional initiatives for the continuous exchange of information and best practices in the field of development policies;
- 3.2. Measures to increase capacity and more actively involve civil society and business structures in the development and implementation of regional development policies;
- 3.3. Trainings and information campaigns for institutions and organizations involved in the process;
- 3.4. Establish and implement tools for cross-border exchange of experts from the administration and civil structures.



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V. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR SUB-PROGRAMMING IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The EU membership enables large-scale funding for development policies through Union funds. The fundamental idea behind the so-called "Cohesion Policy" of the EU is to overcome the negatives of the uneven development of the regions and their economic and social cohesion. Its aim is to narrow the gap and to overcome the barriers to economic and social development of the Member States and their individual regions by means of targeted funding for multi-annual programs so that they can reach the EU average levels of development.

In this context, it is important to also position the structure for programming, implementation and monitoring of the Joint Development Strategy. The concept of such a structure must necessarily be tailored to a number of factors specific to the two regions, such as the level of development of relations, the degree of centralization of processes (the possibility of autonomous decisions at regional level), the capacity of the administration and stakeholders, degree of civic participation in decision-making processes, etc. The detailed analysis of these factors is a task far beyond the scope of this document, but several starting points can be inferred from which a basic organizational structure can be established

Co-operation in the economic and social context between the two regions is not sufficiently active. This is because of the lack of adequate transport links, the relatively weak economic development, the language barrier, etc. This is because of the lack of adequate transport links, the relatively weak economic development, the language barrier, etc. Some of them are related to the historically determined traditions of both sides to strong centralization, which to some extent has not yet been overcome. Another problem is the insufficient local capacity, which also determines the poor citizen participation in the process of programming and implementation of the development strategies. Another difficulty is the nature of the current strategy, due to the need for common organization and coordination between the two regions of Pleven and Teleorman, which have relative differences in the regulatory framework. Despite the difficulties with a view to the effective implementation of the



strategy, it is necessary to create a model of general coordination between the two regions with the necessary balance between the administration and the civil society structures.

In connection with the above, it is proposed the creation of a separate unit, combining local administrations and institutions associated with the policies of the labour market, employers' organizations and other non-governmental bodies engaged in vocational training, the problems of the labour market and cross-border mobility. The aim is to achieve maximum representativeness and to unite the local expertise potential. The unit has to coordinate each of the stages of the project cycle, starting with the development of the technical documentation on the specific measures in the strategy (sub-programming), through the implementation and control procedures, the coordination of the implementation and monitoring evaluations.

The main initiators of such a structure can be municipalities. The core functions of the Joint Co-ordination Unit are as follows:

1. Formulating common policies for the development of the labour market. This includes coordination of analyses, formulation of objectives, priorities and measures, broad consultation with stakeholders.
2. Preparation and organization of the implementation of specific measures.
3. Establish a system for technical and financial performance reporting
4. Coordination of performance monitoring
5. Coordination of independent assessments (preliminary, ongoing and follow-up) and setting up a mechanism to reflect their findings and recommendations.
6. Overall coordination of stakeholder involvement in all elements of the project cycle.
7. Establish and maintain information database
8. Consultancy and information support for the beneficiaries, etc. Stakeholders.
9. Ensure consistency of strategic interventions with national and European guidelines and requirements.



VI. SYSTEM FOR COORDINATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation system is an obligatory part of any strategy. The aim is to be able to trace the implementation, ensure its correctness and relevance to objectives, and identify problems and adjust the strategic and technical part of the interventions as necessary. The system is subject to the requirement of efficiency and effectiveness of inputs.

Measuring the effects of implementing the strategy is done through two co-applied approaches - external independent evaluation and internal monitoring. As far as external independent evaluation is done as a rule by an independent structure proposed and secured its methodology, internal monitoring required by the creators of the strategy developing a system of indicators to measure the degree of implementation of the objectives and serve as a basis for making external independent evaluation of the implementation of the strategy.

PRODUCT INDICATORS	IMPACT INDICATORS
Number of supported projects / initiatives	Number of participants in specific initiatives
Number of investment platforms created	Number of platform users
Number of organized forums	Number of participants in forums
Number of organized youth internships	Number of trainees
Number of platforms created for exchanging business information	Number of tourist visits
Number of innovative start-ups financed	Share survivors after three years
Number of information platforms for tourism	Number of tourists
Number of organized good practice forums	Number of participants
Number of joint tourist products	Number of tourist visits
Number of transport connectivity initiatives	Shortage of trips in hours
Number of new tourist products	Number of tourist visits
Number of language courses	Share successfully completed and passed an exam; Speak language.



Number of backed start companies in health services and social care	Share survivors after three years
Number of forums held	Number of participants
Number of online platforms	Number of active users
Number of technology transfer centers created	Number of transferred technologies
Number of R & D platforms	Number of active users
Number of initiatives to improve the link between education and the labour market	Share realized in a completed specialty
Number of measures for continuous monitoring and analysis of the dynamics of the labour market	
Number of measures to improve qualifications and lifelong learning	Reduce the share of unemployed people from vulnerable groups.
Number of measures to raise awareness of jobseekers	Increasing cross-border mobility and awareness.
Number of measures to stimulate self-employment	Increase the number of businesses created and the share of survivors
Number of joint institutional initiatives	
Number of initiatives for active participation of CG and business	Increasing the effectiveness of the partnership.
Number of trainings	
Number of information campaigns	
Number of expert transfers	

Table 26 Product Indicators and Impact Indicators

Each of the measures proposed in the strategy implies the existence of a system of indicators, which is elaborated in detail in the framework of the sub-programming process. Sources of information on monitoring and evaluation are two main types - internal and external:



ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ СЪЮЗ
ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ФОНД ЗА РЕГИОНАЛНО РАЗВИТИЕ
ИНВЕСТИРАМЕ ВЪВ ВАШЕТО БЪДЕЩЕ!



БЪЛГАРСКО ПРАВИТЕЛСТВО



- Internal administrative data from project implementation
- National and regional statistical offices
- National and Territorial Units of Employment Agencies
- Registry agency
- Target research among beneficiaries, customers and stakeholders.

VII. INDICATIVE SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The funding of the activities under this strategy is strongly linked to the financial framework for the programming period 2021-2028 as well as to the relevant national regional development strategies and plans which are documents of a higher hierarchical order. As far as there is no finalized European and resp. a national strategic framework, a comprehensive indicative timetable cannot be prepared. In this case, the Joint Coordination Unit should adopt the established practice of the national operational programs to prepare annual indicative work programs on the strategy containing the specific measures, budget and timeframe. The measures and initiatives proposed in the strategy allow for sufficient flexibility in the timing of their implementation and can be implemented according to their degree of readiness and funding within the 2021-2028 strategy.