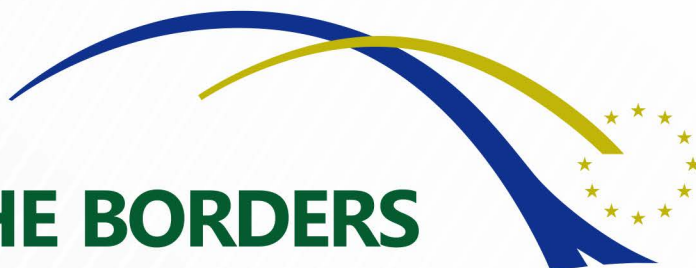


Central European Service for Cross-Border Initiatives
European Institute of Cross-Border Studies



CROSSING THE BORDERS

Studies on cross-border cooperation within the Danube Region

Case Study

Ruse – Giurgiu

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1. Introduction

The cross-border cooperation in the Danube region is very attractive and fruitful topic in the recent years. However, when we research this region, we have to keep in mind some geographical attributes that shape the region and its structure. In general, the cross-border collaboration between both countries (Bulgaria and Romania) is relatively poor, and for a long period, the Danube River was rather a “boundary” phenomenon than a possible development corridor.

The particular report concerns Bulgaria and Romania. Both countries have a common history and geography, but it is very often presented in a controversial and propagandist way, serving the political regimes. Both countries experienced a common Ottoman Empire period during their history; consequently, formation and crystallization of their national identity have happened in the last 140 years. Bulgaria and Romania are very typical example of local political context in Eastern Europe. After the Ottoman period, these two states were often enemies in the subsequent conflicts.

Even in the period of “Cold War” when Romania and Bulgaria were located in the same ideological space, an active and cohesive border region policy was not developed. Subsequently, the border regions and territories remained heavily isolated and now they are the poorest and depopulated areas in both counties. What is more, the Danube River added to this negative development because it is the natural border, and for a period of a century, Bulgaria and Romania constructed only one bridge over the Danube River on more than 450 km length. Although, since 1989 there have been very strong political changes and for the recent 10 years, especially after the accession period in the EU, Bulgaria and Romania have established better conditions for initiatives directed to border regions.

Simply, numerous projects were approved with the aim to “start” the cross border cooperation between Bulgaria and Romania in the period 2007-2013. The current research investigates not only the activities performed in particular regions and implemented by particular programs, but the given case study also discusses some “forward and backward linkages” that are needed to be stressed in the area of the cross border cooperation.

More or less, the current project report illustrates that the situation is relatively “inactive and dependant by the current EU project financing.

2. Cross-border cooperation development

2.1 Cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria and Romania - Ruse district and Giurgiu County

2.1.1 Cross-border Cooperation Programs - successful instrument for cross-border partnership

The geographic position of Ruse district, within the northern part of Bulgaria, and of Giurgiu County, within the Southern part of Romania, determines their involvement in the CBC¹ Program between both neighboring countries.

Romania – Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program for the period 2007-2013 is the first program which addressed the Bulgarian-Romanian border area as an internal border of the EU. The program is based on widely accepted objectives in the area of cohesion policy at European level for cooperation at different territorial levels - cross-border, transnational and interregional. In this regard the program is aimed to support joint activities between both countries at different development spheres, like economic, social, environmental protection, etc. The ultimate objective of this CBC in the EU is the achievement of sustainable territorial development - within national territories and at cross-border level /cooperation with neighboring regions/.

The Program for CBC development in the period 2007-2013 was a continuation of the PHARE CBC Program (2003-2006) with name PHARE CBC Joint Programming Document Bulgaria-Romania. One of the key issues of the program is to apply a unified approach regarding to CBC development.

¹ cross-border cooperation /CBC/

2.1.1.1 CBC Bulgaria and Romania - the beginning /2003-2006/

The PHARE CBC Joint Programming Document between Bulgaria and Romania 2003-2006 was based on the following strategic framework:

Table 1: Strategic framework of the Joint Programming Document Bulgaria-Romania for the period 2003-2006

Joint Programming Document Bulgaria-Romania
<p>Priority 1. Improving infrastructure - 5 priority objectives are defined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The continued development of the transport in the border region and across the border in support of tourism and economic development; • Increased cross-border contacts between people in the border regions; • Improvement in the general quality of life of those living and working in the joint border region; • Improvement in the efficient management of the border crossings; • Increase of cooperation between businesses across the border, including cooperation on supply of materials, marketing and transport of goods to market.
<p>Priority 2. Economic development - 1 priority objective is defined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To achieve economic and social cohesion and to promote competitiveness within the eligible area.
<p>Priority 3. Environmental protection and management - 4 priority objectives are defined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the economic and social development of the region; • Counteract those factors which restrict and limit the potential of the Region as a proper place either to live/work or Region to visit; • Protect, restore and manage environmentally important habitats and other natural assets; • Facilitate the collection and monitoring of key environmental indicators.
<p>Priority 4. People to person's actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on a wide range of activities aimed at CBC development and partnership established in the area of cultural exchange, education, health, sport and leisure time, etc.
<p>Priority 5. Technical assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding actions in all priorities.

Source: Joint Programming Document, Bulgaria/Romania, 2003-2006

That means this Joint Programming Document was based on 5 development priorities, including many objectives and measures aimed at increasing of CBC actions in different

development areas - infrastructure, economic, development, environmental protection, and people to a person's actions. Improvement of transport accessibility within the CBC region was the main attention of the Document's strategic framework, moreover, it emphasized economic and social cohesion; the competitiveness of the region /focusing on SME sector/; and nature protection management.

The territorial scope of the eligible area includes 15 administrative units /corresponds to the NUTS III level/:

- *The following 8 districts in Bulgaria:* Vidin, Vratsa, Montana, Veliko Tarnovo, Pleven, Ruse, Dobrich and Silistra/;
- *The following 7 counties in Romania:* Mehedinti, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Calarasi and Constanta.

The four year implementation period /2003-2006/ of the Joint Programming Document between Bulgaria and Romania can be characterized by the following kind of pros and cons:

Positive key moments in the Bulgarian-Romanian CBC region's development:

- Defined common vision for CBC region development, focusing on economic, social and territorial cohesion between the border regions within both countries;
- Successful implementation of joint projects with significant public importance between Bulgaria and Romania in the area of different development spheres;
- Commonly accepted approach with the aim to improve economic, social and territorial cohesion at cross-border level;
- Building of administrative capacity at regional and local level in the field of CBC development and partnership establishment.

Critical issues concerning the Joint Programming Document implementation:

- CBC project implemented in the period 2003-2006 are characterized by their "case by case" realization, i.e. firstly, they are "border oriented" than achievement "joint cross-border character";
- The inexperience of partners / actors that participate in the CBC actions and initiatives;
- Difficult implementation of some infrastructure CBC projects because of problems in the area of project management;
- Insufficient results are achieved in the area of priority 2, need to reconsider the strategic framework for joint actions aimed at cross-border economic development.

2.1.1.2 CBC Bulgaria and Romania 2007-2013 - lessons learned and best practice

If we take into account all the pros and cons of the Romania - Bulgaria Cross-border Cooperation Program for the period 2007-2013, the following “lessons learned” can be identified in the process of CBC Program development:

- *Raising awareness of stakeholders / participants about the existing opportunities for CBC between both countries;*
- *Involvement of all relevant stakeholders: actions focused on local participation, encouragement of joint activities, decentralization in decision-making;*
- *Project sustainability: elaboration of feasibility- and pre-feasibility studies which concern specific forms of analysis as CBA /Cost-benefit analysis/, IRR /Internal Rate of Return/, project durability, etc.;*
- *Providing of technical assistance for successful project management and realization;*
- *Encouraging activities in communication and exchange of information between the stakeholders / participants aimed at improving the coordination at cross-border level.*

The strategic keywords of the framework for the programming period 2007-2013 were the following: transport accessibility, information availability and dissemination, sustainability, environmental protection, economic development /enhancement of comparative advantages and reduction of disadvantages/, coherence in the sphere of social and cultural aspects of development /see Table 2/.

The defined strategic framework was based on the following key moments:

- Overcoming of the barriers in different development areas between both countries;
- Achievement of objectives and implementation of measures with the aim of territorial cohesion between the CBC region;
- Encouraging the implementation of joint activities in the area of environmental protection.

Table 2: Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2007-2013 - overall and specific objectives

Overall strategic objective:
“To bring together the people, communities and economies of the Romania-Bulgaria border area to participate in the joint development of a cooperative area, using its human, natural and environmental resources and advantages in a sustainable way”
Specific Objectives:
1. Improved access to transport infrastructure within the eligible area to facilitate the mobility of goods and people
2. Improved availability and dissemination of information on joint opportunities within the border area
3. Sustainability of the intrinsic value of the area’s natural resources from prudent exploitation and effective protection of the environment
4. Sustainable economic development of the border area of joint initiatives to identify and enhance comparative advantages and to reduce disadvantages
5. Social and cultural coherence strengthened by cooperative actions between people and communities

Source: Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2007-2013

Five specific objectives of the program are characterized by the following features:

- Specific objective 1 “Transport”: transport accessibility plays a fundamental role in the process of CBC development.
- Specific objective 2 “Communication”: communication represents a crucial importance for the achievement of other specific objectives;
- Specific objective 3 “Environmental protection”: it takes into account the crucial need for environmental protection;
- Specific objective 4 “Economic development”: it increases CBC region's competitiveness; joint activities implementation aimed at sustainable socioeconomic development;
- Specific objective 5 “Social and cultural coherence”: aimed at overcoming the barriers existing in the sphere of regional integration with social and cultural effect.

Based on the overall and specific objectives that were defined, Romania - Bulgaria Cross-border Cooperation Program 2007-2013 supported projects realized in the area of the following 4 Program Priority Axes:

Program Priority Axes defined in the Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2007-2013

Priority Axis 1. Accessibility

- Key words: transport mobility improvement, transport accessibility, information and communication infrastructure.

Priority Axis 2. Environment

- Key words: sustainable use / protection of natural resources, environmental protection, efficient risk management promoting.

Priority Axis 3. Economic and Social Development

- Key words: cohesion in the economic and social sphere of development, joint identification and enhancement of the CBC region comparative advantages.

Priority Axis 4. Technical Assistance

Source: Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2007-2013

2.1.2 The role of Euroregion Danubius Association, an NGOs in CBC development - Ruse District and Giurgiu County

Striving for CBC development is also reflected in the NGO sector for partnerships on both sides. In this regard, we should consider their role as a “success factor” for CBC development.

The Euroregion “Danubius” Association was established on 9th of May 2002 by the Regional Administration Ruse and Giurgiu County Council. The Association is registered as an independent legal entity - a private entity for the public benefit / organization in the NGO sector/. In 2005, the Danubius Euroregion joined the Association of European Border Regions /AEBR/, and since November 5, 2009 it has been an associate member of AEBR.

The Euroregion Danubius Association actively participates in many cross-border initiatives between the Ruse district and Giurgiu County, and it plays an important role in CBC development. The Association participates as a project partner or as a participant which supports the project implementation /coordination, logistics, translation/.

In other words, the Euroregion Danubius has been working and making significant efforts in order to make this Association as the most responsible non-governmental organization in the area of CBC. The main development spheres of cooperation, supported by the Association, are the following: economic development, transport, environmental protection, education, labor market, culture and agriculture.

Financing of the Association is carried out through:

- Dues;
- Projects;
- Consulting services;
- Donations/Grants;
- Courses in Romanian languages;
- Other sources.

The Association participates in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region /EUSDR/ elaboration. The key moments defined by the Euroregion Danubius are the following:

- Striving for competitiveness;
- Development of Integrated transport systems;
- Activities focused on monitoring of the environment;
- Protection of the Danube River, conservation of biodiversity, prevention of trans-boundary pollution and reduction of the risk of flooding;
- People to people actions, administrative capacity at local and regional level, encouragement of cultural exchange.

Taking into account the needs of the local residents and the development possibilities within the CBC region, the Euroregion Danubius Association defined the following 4 main development topics:

1. Creation of better conditions for socioeconomic development;
2. Territorial developers focused on the infrastructure and accessibility;
3. Polycentric network system for living development;
4. Environmental monitoring.

Subsequently, the main activities of the Euroregion Danubius Association can be grouped into the following five areas:

Euroregion Danubius Association - main activities in the area of CBC development

- Supports central and local authorities in their implementation of the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation;
- Supports local communities and authorities to find solutions for to common cross-border issues /e.g. The problem with border charges of the Danube Bridge/;
- Encourages, consults and coordinates CBC between the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Romania in the following spheres of development: economic development, transport accessibility, environment, education, culture, labor market, healthcare, agriculture;
- Supports partnerships between its members: exchanging information, coordination and consultation, establishment of joint teams;
- Study the feasibility of implementation of projects under various programs and initiatives for CBC, as well as programs and initiatives that can contribute to a better socioeconomic development of border regions.

Source: http://www.ruse.bg/zone/admin/uploads/images/ER_DS_bg_short_1.pdf

One of the most successful project where the Euroregion Danubius participated was the project “Development and promotion of church cross-border tourist route”. It was financed under the PHARE Program for CBC development between Bulgaria and Romania. The main focus of the project was to take into account the existing potential of religious tourism and its possible development within the CBC region. Implementation was undertaken by two project partners.

The final result of the project elaborated a religious tourist route at cross-border level, including the territory of the Ruse District in Bulgaria and Giurgiu County in Romania. On the other hand, this project played a role of successful starts of cross-border initiatives between both countries in the area of tourism sector.

Project name: “Development and promotion of church cross-border tourist route”

Financing / Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Financing:</u> under the PHARE Program CBC BG-RO 2004</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u> Euroregion “Danubius” and Giurgiu County Council</p>	<p><u>The results:</u> developed tourist route between the Medieval monastery complex near Ivanovo village /Ivanovo municipality, Ruse district/ and the rock monastery “St. Dimitar Basarbovski” /Ruse municipality/, through the Orthodox churches of Ruse and Giurgiu in the monastery in Comana /Giurgiu County/.</p>

Projects under Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2007-2013

In this section of the case study, those projects are going to be presented where the Euroregion Danubius Association participated. The project “Tour Net - Promotion of cross-border networking for development of a common Bulgarian-Romanian tourist products” is the next project of the Association. The project attempted to promote cross-border cooperation and cross-border network within the field of tourism.

Project name: “Tour Net - Promotion of cross-border networking for development of a common Bulgarian-Romanian tourist products”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Business Support Center for Small and Medium Enterprises - Ruse</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u> Giurgiu County Council, Academy of Economic Studies Bucharest - Territorial University Center - Giurgiu, Association Euroregion “Danubius”</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 473 908,77 EUR</p> <p><u>Project focus:</u> Development of different tourist oriented products and services at cross-border level.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 31st August 2010 – 29th February 2012</p>

The project attempted to promote and increase the overall competitiveness of the region. Project implementation focused on six specific objectives:

- Promoting the establishment of a cross - border network in the tourism sector;
- Mapping of the available tourism resources within CBC region;
- Elaboration of common informational and promotional materials;
- Elaboration of common services;
- Development of common tourism strategy which will promote the existing possibilities for tourism sector development;
- Development of common strategy aimed at the common tourism cluster establishment.

The next successful project was the “Joint actions for management of emergency situations in case of hydro-meteorological events and accidental water pollutions”. It concentrated on environmental issues, pollution monitoring, contamination prevention and crisis management in the cross-border region. The following common activities were included in the project with the aim to improve the risk management:

- Preparation of maps /utilizing geographic information system - GIS/ assessing flood risk within the region and forecasting the potential risk factors;
- Purchase of special equipment /boats, vehicle/ aimed to increase the capabilities in the field of rescue and intervention activities;
- Bilingual web portal development which provides easily accessible information /in real time/ for all authorities and general public from Bulgaria and Romania;
- Elaboration of joint activities for information and training in the area of efficient management of emergency situations.

Project name: “Joint actions for the management of emergency situations in case of hydro-meteorological events and accidental water pollutions” /JAMES/

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Giurgiu County Council</p> <p><u>Project partner:</u> Directorate Civil Protection - Ruse District</p> <p>Euroregion “Danubius” role: assists in the project realization /logistics, translation/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 4 717, 915,25 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main objective:</u> Monitoring and decision support system creation for emergency situations /in the area of hydro- meteorological threats and water pollution/ within CBC region Giurgiu-Ruse.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 28th July 2011 – 27th January 2014</p>

The next project, implemented in 2010/2011 concentrated on cross-border cooperation among public schools, among their pupils, and the project aimed to establish sustainable partnership relations in the area of education, youth and sports activities within the CBC region. It was an important CBC development with focus on “people for people” actions with participants from the Bulgarian municipality of Tsenovo and the Romanian Local Council of Comana.

The main focus of the project was designed to create conditions in the area of cooperation between the youth living in both territorial border units. The activities implemented during the project, were the following:

- Cultural-educational training of highschool students within the target region;
- Organizing of the seminar for 40 highschool students from Bulgaria and Romania;
- Performing various actions with cultural-educational and sport character in highschools.

Project name: “Cross-border initiative for cooperation between public schools from two municipalities in region Ruse - Giurgiu in creating sustainable partner relations for extracurricular activities with the accent on sport and leisure of students from public schools”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Project lead partner:</u> Tsenovo municipality /Ruse district, Bulgaria/</p> <p><u>Project partner:</u> Local Council of Comana /Giurgiu County, Romania/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 191 569,00 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main objective:</u> Creation of common awareness of regional identity within the CBC region through providing conditions for cooperation between young people.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 12th August 2010 – 11th August 2011</p>

Priority axis 1, defined in the Romania - Bulgaria Cross-border Cooperation Program 2007-2013, concentrates on “accessibility” within the CBC region. In this regard, the next reflected project is named as the following “Roads management in the Giurgiu – Ruse cross-border region – a

successful strategy”. It focused on the issue of road management and its possible development in the cross-border region.

The project realization can be summarized: application of common geospatial solution in the sphere of road network management within the CBC region /such as the elaboration of a pilot project in the area of digital and satellite technology.

Project name: “Roads management in the Giurgiu - Ruse cross-border region - a successful strategy”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Project lead partner:</u> Giurgiu County Council <u>Project partners:</u> Regional Administration - Ruse, University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev”</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 1 444, 203,60 EUR <u>Project focus:</u> Common study development regarding the road and communication infrastructure characteristics within the CBC region Giurgiu - Ruse. <u>Duration:</u> 17th September 2010 – 16th March 2012</p>

Furthermore, one of projects with the highest value /over 7.5 million Euro/ was under the Priority axis “Accessibility”. The project focused on the issue of transport infrastructure within the CBC region, its management, its modernization and establishment of sustainable/durable coordination between both regions.

Project name: “Rehabilitating the access infrastructure for the development of the cross-border cooperation within the Giurgiu - Ruse area”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Project lead partner:</u> Giurgiu County Council <u>Project partner:</u> Slivo Pole Municipality /Ruse district, Bulgaria/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 7 561, 489,46 EUR <u>Project main objective:</u> Development of sustainable and durable CBC within the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu through updating and modernization of the transport infrastructure. <u>Duration:</u> 26th August 2010 – 25th December 2012</p>

The next CBC project named as “Insuring an efficient management of the joint intervention in an emergency situation in the Giurgiu-Rousse cross-border area”, designed the creation of joint infrastructure at a cross - border level in the area of emergency situations. The project focused on the question of coordination and management of intervention activities in the CBC region for the achievement of better monitoring, management and prevention of situations with emergency character.

The project implementation included the following objectives and activities for their achievement:

- Objective: Increasing the response capacity and operative interventions at cross-border level
 - Activity: Building of Giurgiu - Ruse Centre for Cross-border Coordination and Management of Intervention
 - Activity: Donation of specific equipment in case of disasters
- Objective: Increasing of management efficiency in case of emergency situations
 - Activity: Elaboration of Communication and Information System, technical and logistical support of the management efficiency
 - Activity: Conducting of joint activities between the CBC regions, with the aim to raise the awareness and improve the skills /training activities/ in case of emergency situations.

Project name: “Insuring an efficient management of the joint intervention in an emergency situation in the Giurgiu-Rousse cross-border area”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Project lead partner:</u> Giurgiu County Council <u>Project partner:</u> Regional Police Directorate - Ruse to the Ministry of the Interior</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 5 633, 877,89 EUR <u>Project overall objective:</u> Achievement of efficient joint management within the CBC region through activities that improve monitoring, management and prevention in the area of emergency situations. <u>Duration:</u> 17th September 2010 – 16th March 2013</p>

Utilization of existing potential for the tourism sector and its development within the Ruse-Giurgiu cross-border region were the main objects of the project implementation named as “Eco-tourism: A perspective for development of two small cross-border communities”. The project’s main idea corresponds to the endogenous potential of the territory, and it supported the development of tourism. Another important moment was the creation of the conditions for development of an alternative type of tourism - ecotourism.

Project name: “Eco-tourism: A perspective for development of two small cross-border communities”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Project lead partner:</u> Vetovo municipality /Ruse district, Bulgaria/ <u>Project partners:</u> Gostinu Local Council /Giurgiu County/, “Club, Friends of Public’s Park of Rusenski Lom” /Ruse district/, Association “Young people with young ideas” /Ruse district/</p>	<p><u>Project focus:</u> Creation of conditions for implementation of joint cross-border initiatives within the target region aimed at tourism sector development. <u>Duration:</u> 9th August 2011 – 8th February 2013</p>

The main focus of one of the CBC projects implemented in the period 2007-2013 was based on the following key moments: “ecologic cross-border operations” and “business integrated zone”. This project is implemented under the Priority axis 3 - “Economic and Social Development” of the CBC Program between Bulgaria and Romania. Its main objective was the creation, development and implementation of instruments for analysis of socioeconomic development within the CBC target region. One of the project key activities was the elaboration of the GIS regional map.

Project name: “Ecologic Cross-Border Operations for a Business Integrated Zone - Eco Biz”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Project lead partner:</u> Giurgiu County Council <u>Project partners:</u> Business Support Centre for Small and Medium Enterprises /Ruse district/, University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev”, Research-Development National Institute for Textile and Leather Bucharest /Romania/, National Agricultural Research-Development Institute Fundulea /Calarasi, Romania/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 1 413, 998,09 EUR <u>Project main objective:</u> Creation, development and implementation of instruments being used for socioeconomic development analysis. <u>Duration:</u> 28th June 2011 – 27th January 2013</p>

The project’s main focus was to provide adequate support for the CBC through promotion of local products, and to increase the level of investment in the region Giurgiu - Ruse in order to create a positive image and to reduce disadvantages within the region. Implementation of Eco Biz project is associated with the following activities implemented and results achieved:

- Created specialized software for the analysis of social and economic development of the region Giurgiu - Ruse, including socioeconomic and GIS maps of the region;
- Establishment of four information points to provide information to those who wish to start an Eco business within the CBC region;
- Joint exhibition for bio /organic/ products and environmental business solutions in the regions of Ruse and Giurgiu;
- Organized 10 local seminars in settlements within Giurgiu County;
- Visited 10 Eco farms in Romania to collect information on best practices;

- Conducted training among companies about the concept and dimensions of Eco business;
- Elaborated common marketing strategy for the development of eco-business in the border region Ruse-Giurgiu. This strategy is based on the results from the *Study on the ecological business dimension in Giurgiu-Ruse region* which was developed during the project implementation.

As a result of project implementation: *companies can use the services of specialized software developed for socioeconomic analyses for free. This software provides free qualified information and consulting services in the area of environmental business and job opportunities and management of company documents and information.* This can be done with free registration in the system. Without registration only specially developed GIS maps of regions Ruse and Giurgiu can be viewed. The web address of the specialized software system is <http://ecobiz.smebg.net/>.

3. Determination of geographical confines

3.1 Ruse District and Giurgiu County - geographical confines

The Ruse district is located in the northern part of Bulgaria. To the North, the district is bordered by the Republic of Romania, to the East – it has common border with the districts of Silistra, Razgrad and Targovishte, and to Southwest-West it is bounded by the district of Veliko Tarnovo (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Ruse district borders

Specific geographic location of the Ruse district within the Republic of Bulgaria has created favorable conditions for its development. The region has a role of a center with significant importance which performs important functions in several different spheres - transport, economics, logistics, culture, etc. The Northern boundary of the Ruse district has a strategic importance - the Danube River creates opportunities for cross-border and transnational cooperation and partnership.

The second longest river in Europe - the Danube River runs through the territory of the following countries: Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Ukraine. 6 Danube ports function within the Bulgarian territory which are characterized by their international importance, to be specific, Vidin, Lom, Samovit, Svishtov, Ruse and Silistra. The total number of the Bulgarian ports on the Danube River is 16.

The Port of Ruse is the biggest port on the Danube River within Bulgaria which predetermines its crucial role in the national transport system. The port plays the role of an important multimodal transport center providing transport connection between water, rail and road transport, and it has a direct connection to the national railway and road network.

Two Pan-European transport corridors, which cross the Republic of Bulgaria, pass through the territory of the Ruse district. These are the transport corridors № 7 and № 9:

- **Trans - European transport corridor № 7** - Rhine - Main - Danube connecting the Black Sea and the North Sea /with a total length of 2 300 km/;
- **Trans - European transport corridor № 9** - which starts from Helsinki /Finland/ and passes through the territory of Viborg, St. Petersburg, Pskov, Moscow and Kaliningrad within Russia, Kiev and Rozdilna in Ukraine, Kishinev /Moldova/, Bucharest /Romania/, Ruse, Veliko Tarnovo, Stara Zagora and Haskovo within Bulgaria, and up to Alexandroupolis in Greece /see Figure 2/. The Trans - European transport corridor connects the Baltic Sea and the Aegean Sea.



Figure 2: Transport corridors crossing the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria

http://www.espon-interstrat.eu/admin/attachments/NRDS_2005_-_2015_Bulgaria_summary_En.pdf

The strategic location of Ruse region determines the construction of the Danube Bridge /the first within the territory of Bulgaria/ which connects the country with the Republic of Romania. The Danube Bridge /also known as the Friendship Bridge/ connects the Bulgarian city of Ruse and the Romanian city of Giurgiu. Its construction began in 1952 and the Bridge was opened to transport in 1954. The Transport connection between both neighboring countries is characterized by two lanes of road and railway traffic. The last rehabilitation within the Bulgarian part of the Bridge was in 2011. This bridge is one of the two bridges in Bulgaria crossing the Danube River. The second one connects the cities of Vidin /Bulgaria/ and Calafat /Romania/, called as “The New Europe Bridge”, was officially opened in June 2013.

On the territory of Ruse district, a border checkpoint /BCP/ Ruse operates which connects the Bulgarian city of Ruse with the Romanian city of Giurgiu.

Territorial scope of the Ruse district includes 83 settlements, 9 of which are suites and 74 are villages. The district consists of the following 8 municipalities /Local Administrative Units - LAU 1 level, EUROSTAT/ - Borovo, Byala, Dve mogili, Ivanovo, Ruse, Slivo pole, Tsenovo and Vetovo.

Table 3: Administrative-territorial units included in the territorial scope of Ruse District and Giurgiu County

Ruse District - 8 municipalities	Giurgiu County - 1 municipality
Municipalities: Borovo, Byala, Dve mogili, Ivanovo, Ruse, Slivo pole, Tsenovo, Vetovo	Municipality: Giurgiu

Source: Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program

Five from these eight municipalities within the Ruse district are directly located on the Bulgarian-Romanian border /bounded by the Danube River/ and have a common border with the national border with Republic of Romania. These are the following municipalities: Tsenovo, Borovo, Ivanovo, Ruse and Slivo pole /in direction from West to East/.



Figure 3: Municipalities /LAU 1 level/ included in the territorial scope of Ruse district

Source: <http://www.ruse-bg.eu/>

The city of Ruse is the biggest Bulgarian city within the territorial scope of the CBC region /target region/. Its population was 149 642 people in 2011² which is 63,6% of the population at district level /235 252/ and 2,0% of the population at national level /7 364 570 in 2011/. According to

² Number of population in 2011 - according to the last official census in the Republic of Bulgaria

the last official census in the Republic of Bulgaria, population at district level represents around 3.2% of the total population in the country.

Table 4: Number of population and population density in Ruse district and Giurgiu County in 2011

Territorial Unit (level NUTS 3)	Population		Population Density /per/km2/
	Number	% of total population in the country	
Ruse District	235 252	3,2%	83,9%
Giurgiu County	265 494	1,3%	75,3%

Source: Eurostat, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/>, National Statistical Institute, <http://www.nsi.bg/>

Giurgiu County is located in the Southern part of the Republic of Romania and it includes the territory of one municipality, namely, Giurgiu. The same named city of Giurgiu is the county's capital city. 2 other cities /Bolintin-Vale and Mihăilești/ and 51 communes are included within territorial scope of the county. .

Regarding the administrative territorial structure of the Republic of Romania, it should be noted that the communes represent the lowest level of administrative subdivision within the country. On the other side, town and cities have a status of "city" or "municipality". According to the communes' number of population, we should mention that when the commune's population exceeds 10 000 people, the commune usually receives a city status. According to the Statistical Office of the EU /EUROSTAT/ communes and cities within Romania correspond to the Local Administrative Units - LAU 2 level.



Figure 4: Geographical location of Giurgiu County /left/

Figure 5: Administrative map of the Republic of Romania /right/

In 2011, 54 655 people lived in Giurgiu, which is 20,6% from the number of population at county level /265 494/, the value at county level forms 1.3% of total number population of the Republic of Romania /see Table 4/.

To the South, Giurgiu county borders Bulgaria /districts of Ruse and Silistra/ and both cities of Ruse and Giurgiu are twinned. The distance between the city of Ruse and the city of Giurgiu is about 13 km and this proximity creates very good conditions for the CBC and partnership establishment in different development spheres aimed to increase economic, social and territorial cohesion between both countries. The transport connection between both cities is carried out through road and railway transport.

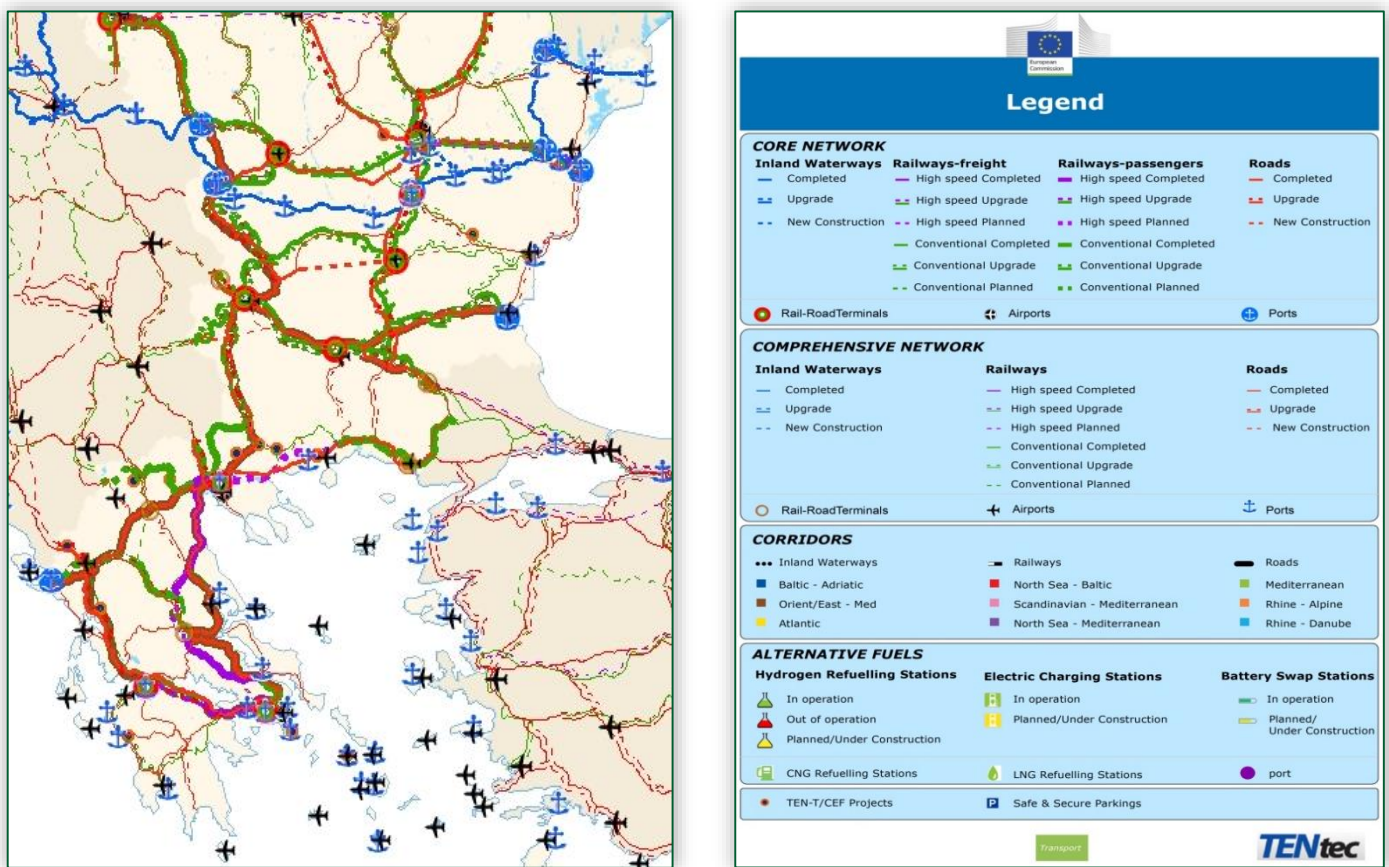


Figure 6: Railway lines in the Eastern Balkans

Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/transport/infrastructure/tentec/tentec-portal/map/maps.html>

In terms of the effort to improve the transport accessibility both within Bulgaria and at cross-border level, one of the Bulgarian national priorities in the transport sector is to construct a high-speed railway line between the cities of Ruse and Giurgiu which will pass through the Danube Bridge. Implementation of this priority has been associated with the need to rehabilitate the railway line of Ruse-Varna. According to information provided by the National Railway Infrastructure Company - NRIC /Bulgaria/, the value of the rehabilitation will reach

nearly 750 million Levs without VAT. It is expected, that the realization of this large-scale infrastructure project will be financed under the new Operational Program “Transport” for the period 2014-2020. The ultimate objective achievement - to start a high-speed train in the direction of Bucharest-Giurgiu-Ruse-Varna will have a great importance for the transport accessibility improvement within the target CBC region.

3.2 Ruse District and Giurgiu County as part of the Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program

Geographical confines of the area are one of the longest borders within the EU. The border extends 610 km, while 470 km is demarcated by the Danube River. The target CBC region defined within the program is located in the Northern part of the Republic of Bulgaria and in the Southern part of the Republic of Romania along the national border between both countries.

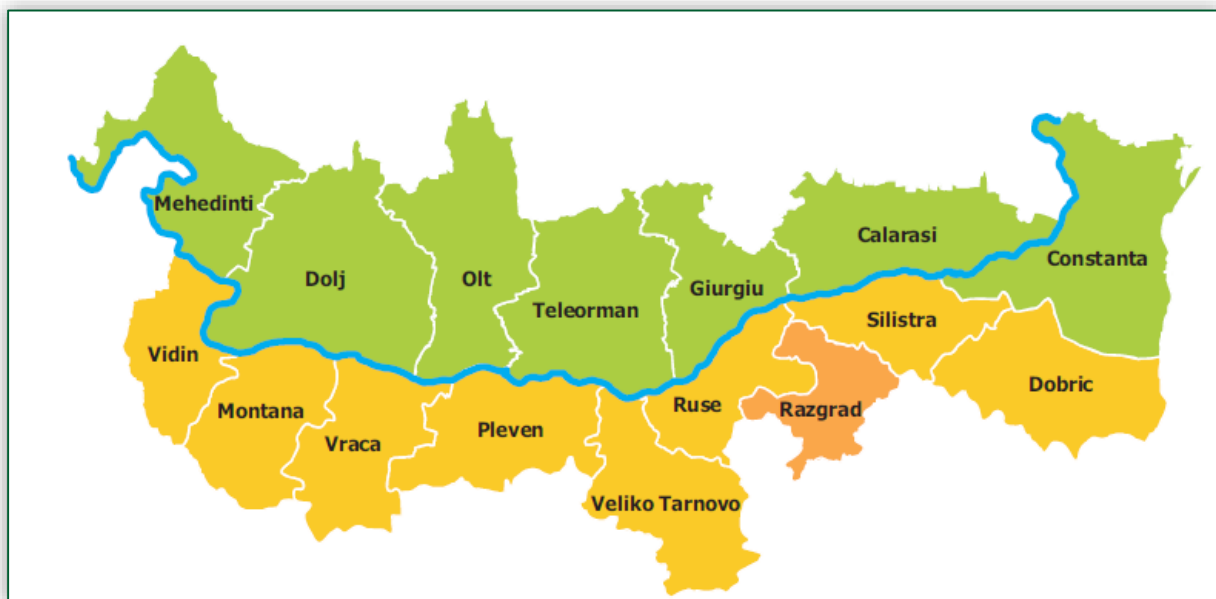


Figure 7: Territorial scope of Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2007-2013

Source: <http://www.cbcrromaniabulgaria.eu/>

Romanian-Bulgarian CBC region includes 15 administrative units that corresponds to the NUTS III level /EUROSTAT³/. These administrative units /7 in Romania called as counties and 8 in Bulgaria named as districts/ belong to the territorial scope of 6 regions from NUTS II level /see Table 5/.

³ see <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/>

Table 5: Romanian and Bulgarian administrative units included in the Romania - Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program 2007-2013

The Romanian territory included in the CBC Program - 7 counties	
3 counties /NUTS III level/ Mehedinti, Dolj and Olt	within territorial scope of the Oltenia South West Development Region of Romania /NUTS II level/
3 counties /NUTS III level/ Teleorman, Giurgiu and Calarasi	within territorial scope of the Muntenia South Development Region of Romania /NUTS II level/
1 county Constanta /NUTS III level/	within the territorial scope of the South East Development Region of Romania

The Bulgarian territory included in the CBC Program - 8 districts + 1 /	
4 districts /NUTS III level/ Vidin, Vratsa, Montana and Pleven	within territorial scope of the North West Planning Region of Bulgaria /NUTS II level/
3 districts /NUTS III level/ Veliko Tarnovo, Ruse and Silistra	within territorial scope of the North Central Planning Region of Bulgaria /NUTS II level/
1 district /NUTS III level/ Dobrich	within territorial scope of the North East Planning Region of Bulgaria /NUTS II level/
1 district /NUTS III level/ Razgrad	within territorial scope of the North Central Planning Region of Bulgaria /NUTS II level/

In regard to the program eligible area, we should mention that Razgrad district has been included in the CBC region /see Figure 7/. Therefore, the territorial scope of the CBC region includes 16 administrative units.

The territory of the Razgrad district was not included in the territorial impact scope of the Joint Programming Document between Bulgaria and Romania for the period 2003-2006. Concerning the Romanian cross-border region included in the program 2007-2013, no changes were made in the eligible area.

Table 6: Area /km2/ and percentage /%/ of CBC region included in the Romania - Bulgaria CProgramer Cooperation Programme

	Area /km2/	% of the total country / CBC territory
Romanian CBC area	39 317	16,5% of Romania's territory / 54,7% of the CBC territory
Bulgarian CBC area ⁴	32 613	29,4% of Bulgaria's territory / 45,3% of the CBC territory
CBC region - total area	71 930	-

Source: <http://www.cbromanibulgaria.eu/>

⁴ The area of Bulgarian CBC region includes 9 administrative units /districts/ - Vidin, Vratsa, Montana, Pleven, Veliko Tarnovo, Ruse, Silistra, Dobrich and **Razgrad**. The last one district Razgrad is included in the CBC region by using the flexibility rule provided by Article 21 (1) of the ERDF Regulation.

The total territory of Romania is 238 396 km², and 39 317 km² is included in the Romania - Bulgaria Cross-border Cooperation Program. The total CBC area within the Bulgarian territory, defined in the program's territorial scope, is 32 613 km², which forms 29,4% of the national territory /111 001,9 km²/ /see Table 6/.

3.2.1 Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu in the context of the CBC Program Bulgaria and Romania

Besides the analysis of Ruse District and Giurgiu County a further successful and significant project should be mentioned, namely "Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning". This project was implemented in the period February 2011 - August 2012 under the financial support of the CBC Program between both countries with the following participants: Ruse municipality as the lead partner and Giurgiu municipality as the second project partner.

First of all, it should be pointed out that in the European policy "Euroregion" is considered to be a structure of transnational cooperation between two or more territories located in different European countries. Euroregions usually do not correspond to any legislative or governmental institution, they have no political authority and their work is limited to the competencies of local and regional authorities that constitute them. Transnational and cross-border cooperation is always a "bottom-up" initiative, irrespective of the level of decentralization. The need for cooperation of local authorities /cities, municipalities or group of municipalities/ lead to the creation of associated regional groupings, which often exceed the limits of several administrative regions. The Euroregions cover parts of the country that are relatively distant from the central government.

That means the Euroregion has been created with the aim to promote cooperation in cross-border areas, to encourage common cross-border interests, to stimulate welfare of the border population and to balance the development on both sides of the border.

Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu has an area of 517,8 km² and it includes the city of Ruse in Bulgaria and the city of Giurgiu in Romania, as well as other 13 settlements in the territorial scope of Ruse municipality. The greater part of the Euroregion area is located in Bulgaria, specifically, 469,2 km², which is 90,6% of the total Bulgarian area, and the Romanian part represents 48,6 km² which is 9,4% of the total territory of Romania. 219,622 inhabitants lived within the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu in 2011, and 92% of them lived in urban areas. The most important cities are the cities of Ruse and Giurgiu.

The General objective of the project was the issue of sustainable development within the Bulgarian-Romanian CBC region through the introduction of new models for cooperation and

establishment of platforms for partnership development. The main activities of the project were the following:

- Development of Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan;
- Elaboration of Investment profile of Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu.

Furthermore, the Investment profile was elaborated which presented the attractive domains of the region to the potential investors, like competitive advantages of the cross-border area, economic structure of the region and its key elements, infrastructure, support services and local cultural traditions.

What is more, Ruse has a well-developed infrastructure that enables transport operations to take advantage of the geographical location. The railway infrastructure in Ruse serves more than 1/3 of the Bulgarian external trade, the most important railway lines Ruse are the following ones: Gorna Oryahovitsa and Ruse - Varna.

Today we can explicitly claim that the strategic geographical position of both cities has been the decisive determinant which strengthened the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu as an important transport, distribution and logistics center. The two municipalities have developed all kinds of transport with the exception of the air transport.

3.2.1.1 Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu – a brief historical overview

Up to this moment, the presentation of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu was done in terms of its inclusion within the scope of the CBC Program between Bulgaria and Romania. However, it is important to emphasize that conditions for cooperation can be found also in the past. Subsequently, a little historical overview is given about this specific cross-border region.

Even in ancient times the Danube River was a basis for cooperation. During the heyday of the Roman Empire, strategic locations were fortified. And gradually, historical names started to be mentioned concerning both cities on both sides of the Danube. Several similarities in the structure of the medieval fortresses from the 13th up to the 14th century proposed a scientific hypothesis that those cities were part of a unified fortification system of the medieval Bulgarian Empire. Furthermore, Ruse has a century-old tradition as a port since the Roman times, which continued to exist during the Turkish domination. And in the 19th century, a constant circulation of ship passengers, goods and/or mail took place between the two cities. Moreover, there are religious similarities in both cities too. Both cities have a common patron, namely St. George, to whom the main churches are dedicated.

Ruse and Giurgiu have the advantage that they are situated on the same road, rail and river transport system. Giurgiu is served by four railway stations, and the city is a port of Bucharest. This is confirmed by the creation of the first railway line, the first telegraph connection, connection to a phone network and construction of a modern port in 1905.

4. CBC Bulgaria and Romania - good practices

This part of the case study includes the implemented projects within the defined CBC region. On the one side, the implemented projects between Ruse-Giurgiu will be briefly described and characterized, on the other side, the analysis includes also projects implemented in cooperation between the Ruse district and other territorial units located in the southern part of the Republic of Romania.

That means the analyzed projects were implemented with the financial support of the Romania-Bulgaria Cross-Border Cooperation Program for the period 2007-2013. This program had four priority axes; nevertheless, the case study investigated the projects implemented under the Priority Axes 1, 2 and 3.⁵

These projects are separated into three groups depending on the specific priority axes on which they have been realized:

- Priority Axis 1: "Accessibility"
- Priority Axis 2: "Environment"
- Priority Axis 3: "Economic and Social Development"

4.1 Projects implemented under the Priority Axis 1: "Accessibility"

Priority Axis "Accessibility" included achievements in the area of a wide range of activities, concerning different development spheres. In this regard, we can mention the following key moments of the Priority Axis 1, transport accessibility, road infrastructure improvement, development of communication networks and connections, elaboration of common strategy aimed at sustainable territorial development at cross-border level, elaboration of innovative online project concepts, etc.

CBC project under implementation

One of the ongoing projects is "CBC LIVE /Cross Border Cooperation Live Interaction Videoconferencing Network". Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry plays the role of the lead partner and the project focuses on the development of communication networks and fostering connections between the targets of the cross-border regions. In this regard, two specific project objectives are defined:

- Activation and encouragement of the CBC development within the region through upgrading of the existing networks and ICT facilities;
- Improvement of interregional communication and sustainable linkages at cross-border level through innovative pilot solutions for ensuring easy transport access.

⁵ The official website of the Programme did not contain information about the 4th priority axis.

Project name: CBC LIVE /Cross Border Cooperation Live Interaction Videoconferencing Network/

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u> Romanian Association for Technology Transfer and Innovation, Vratsa Chamber of Commerce and Industry /Bulgaria/, Calarasi Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture /Romania/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 812 202,40 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main objective:</u> Communication networks and foster connection development at cross-border level.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 31st May 2014 – 30th November 2015</p>

Rehabilitation and modernization of infrastructure were the object of the next CBC project.

Project name: “Rehabilitating and modernization of access infrastructure to The cross border area Giurgiu - Ruse”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Giurgiu County Council</p> <p><u>Project partner:</u> Municipality of Borovo /Ruse district, Bulgaria/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 4 926, 737,92 EUR</p> <p><u>Project focus:</u> to improve and modernize the transport infrastructure within the Bulgarian-Romanian CBC target region.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 14th August 2014 – 13th January 2016</p>

Completed CBC projects

The number of implemented projects, under the Priority Axis 1, “Accessibility” of the CBC Program between Bulgaria and Romania, are 5 with a total value of 23 490 772,57 Euro.

The main focus of the project was aimed to improve the transport accessibility of the Euro-region Ruse-Giurgiu to the Trans European Transport Corridor № 9. This priority corresponds to the important role of the transport infrastructure condition in the process of the target CBC region development. In this regard, the project activities included: infrastructure modernization and traffic system optimization.

Project name: “Improvement the accessibility of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu With Pan-European Transport Corridor № 9”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Ruse municipality</p> <p><u>Project partner:</u> Giurgiu Municipality</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 6 790, 140,63 EUR</p> <p><u>Project focus:</u> Transport, infrastructure development within the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 14th July 2012 – 13th January 2015</p>

One of the most successfully realized projects for CBC development was the “Common strategy for sustainable territorial development of the cross-border area Romania-Bulgaria” which had a total value over 6,8 million EUR. Project implementation included 12 project partners, 8 from Bulgaria and 4 from Romania /with the lead project partner Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration from Romania/.

Project name: “Common strategy for sustainable territorial development of the Cross-border area Romania-Bulgaria”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration from Romania</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Regional Development from Bulgaria • Romanian Association for Electronic and Software Industry - Oltenia Subsidiary • Association Center of Consultancy and Projects Management - Europroject /Romania/ • National Agency of Land Improvements /Bucharest, Romania/ • District Administration Pleven /Bulgaria/ • Human Resources Development Agency - Ruse • Business Support Center for Small and Medium Enterprises - Ruse • Agency for Sustainable Development and Eurointegration - Ecoregions /Bulgaria/ • Bulgarian Association for Alternative Tourism • Veliko Tarnovo Municipality /Bulgaria/ • Association of Danube River Municipalities “Danube” /Bulgaria/ 	<p><u>Budget:</u> 6 889, 500,70 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main focuses:</u> Striving for sustainable territorial development within the CBC region between Bulgaria and Romania.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 10th February 2012 - 9th February 2014</p>

The project's main focus concentrated on the elaboration of a common strategy for sustainable territorial development of the CBC region. The project's general objective was to evaluate and assess the overall state of development in the region within the terms of social, economic and territorial aspects. Furthermore, evaluation of economic competitiveness, as a prospect for the future development, was another key moment of the project.

Project implementation included the following activities aimed at the sustainable territorial development achievement:

- Elaboration of Territorial Development Strategy with support of sustainable spatial and economic development within the CBC area;
- Building up of a comprehensive and operational territorial data base for the CBC target region;
- Development and implementation of efficient and sustainable territorial monitoring instruments;
- Elaboration of pilot projects in its role as the main input for the future project implementation /striving for sustainability over time/;

Activities aimed at: increasing the awareness within the CBC region as regards to the existing common problems, information about sustainable solutions applying, actions for promotion of the region.

Another successful project was the "Rehabilitating the access infrastructure for the development of the cross-border cooperation within the Giurgiu - Ruse area". Its implementation was between the period 26th August 2010 – 25th December 2012, with the participants Slivo pole municipality in the role of the lead partner /Ruse District/ and Giurgiu County Council /Giurgiu County /. The project budget was 7 561, 489,46 EUR.⁶

Another implemented project, under the Priority Axis "Accessibility", was the "Roads management in the Giurgiu - Ruse cross-border region - a successful strategy"⁷. The project had a total value of 1 444, 203,60 EUR and it was implemented in the period 17th September 2010 – 16th March 2012.

The next project was the "Innovative Online Projects Concept" under the CBC Program, implemented during the period 30th June 2010 – 29th December 2011, with the participants from Bulgaria and Romania. The main activities were focused on the following key moments: *to raise awareness about the cross-border cooperation and its importance and impact /information access and dissemination/, partnerships establishment /possible opportunities for*

⁶ For a detailed information about this project see section 'The role of NGOs in CBC development between Ruse District and Giurgiu County'

⁷ The detailed analysis of the project can be found in the chapter 'The role of NGOs in CBC development between Ruse District and Giurgiu County'

partnerships establishment to be identified/, *cohesion in the social and cultural sphere* / realization of joint activities at cross-border level/.

Project name: "Innovative Online Projects Concept"	
Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> The Center of Consultancy and Projects Management - Europroject /Olt, Romania/</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u> The Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Vratsa /Bulgaria/ and Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 805 438,18 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main focus:</u> Elaboration of an IT concept which aims to bring together the CBC region with respect to the social, economic and cultural cohesion.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 30th June 2010-29th December 2011</p>

4.2 Projects implemented under the Priority Axis 2: "Environment"

Priority Axis 2 and the project under this axis take into account the crucial role of the environmental protection, successful and sustainable development within the CBC region. In this regard, the project activities concern the following main topics at cross border level: environmental management and protection, prevention of environmental disasters, increasing of the capacity for emergency situations response, etc.

CBC projects under implementation

There are 2 projects with current status "under implementation" with a total value of 6 719 190, 66 EUR. These projects should be completed in 2015.

"Network and web platform to improve the public awareness of environmental management and protection in the cross-border area Giurgiu-Rousse and adjacent cross-border area" is one of the ongoing project. The lead partner is the National Institute of Research-Development for Machines and Installations Designed to Agriculture and Food Industry, whereas the University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev" and Club Friends of Public's Park of Rusenski Lom are the project partners. The project concentrates on increasing the public awareness, sensibility about the environmental management and protection within the target CBC region.

The project includes the following activities:

- *Environmental knowledge transfer* between different stakeholders /medium of teaching, organizations with environmental impact, etc.
- *Establishment of Romanian-Bulgarian scientific partnership* aimed at transfer in the area of the environment /technology and knowledge transfer/ between different target groups related the environmental sector.

Project name: “Network and web platform to improve the public awareness of environmental management and protection in the cross-border area Giurgiu-Rousse and adjacent cross-border area”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> National Institute of Research-Development for Machines and Installations Designed to Agriculture and Food Industry /INMA/ - Bucharest</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u> University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev”, Club, Friends of Public’s Park of Rusenski Lom</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 954 757,66 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main focus:</u> Implementation of activities aimed to increase the sensibility of people about the role of environmental management and protection within the CBC region.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 13th June 2014 - 12th December 2015</p>

“Common Action for Prevention of Environmental Disasters” is the next ongoing project, which should end in 2015. The project focuses on the implementation of joint activities at a cross - border level for environmental disaster prevention. The overall objective is aimed to improve the institutional and technical capacity for prevention and emergency response in the CBC.

The main object of the project is based on the flood risk, specifically; the project aims to optimize decision-making process in order to ensure sustainable development. On the other hand, it is important to increase the awareness of different stakeholders / participants in the sphere of flood risk. On this base, the project realization includes activities: providing of information about the impact of floods on the environment, as well as information concerning the importance of the measures aimed to environmental protection.

Project name: “Common Action for Prevention of Environmental Disasters”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> National Agency of Land Improvements /Romania/</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u> Ecolinks - Gsuproos /Ruse, Bulgaria/, Foundation for Democracy, Culture and Liberty /Calarasi Branch, Romania/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 5 764 433 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main focus:</u> Environmental disaster prevention in case of flood, through joint project activities at cross-border level.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 31st August 2013 – 30th August 2015</p>

Successfully completed CBC projects

There are 9 successfully implemented projects which were financed under the Priority Axis 2 “Environment”, total value of the projects was 19 753 141, 02 Euro. The following part of the case study collected these projects and it attempts to give a brief description about the aim/objects of these projects.

“Enhancing the operational, technical capacities for emergency situations response in Giurgiu-Ruse Cross-Border area” was a successful project, it was aimed to increase the current efficiency in the process of emergency response within the territory of CBC region. District

Directorate of the Ministry of Interior - Ruse was the lead partner in the realization of the project. In this regard, it should be mentioned that the public authorities in the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu were the main target group of the project.

The project implementation included the following 3 specific objective achievements:

- *Specific Objective 1:* Improving the condition of the existing fire emergency-rescue fleet and equipment of the rescue teams operating within the CBC region;
- *Specific Objective 2:* Ensuring of compatibility of fire extinguish equipment and emergency-rescue equipment in the region;
- *Specific Objective 3:* Development of capacity for forecasting and management, quick response in case of epidemiological risk to the population.

Project name: “Enhancing the operational, technical capacities for emergency situations response in Giurgiu-Ruse Cross-Border area”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> District Directorate of the Ministry of Interior - Ruse</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u> Giurgiu County Council</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 5 843, 603,20 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main focus:</u> To increase the capacity of the responsible public authorities within the CBC region in the area of emergency response situations.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 27th October 2010 – 26th April 2013</p>

Another successfully realized project is the “Joint actions for the management of emergency situations in case of hydro-meteorological events and accidental water pollutions - JAMES”⁸. This project was implemented between Giurgiu County Council /as the lead partner/ and Directorate Civil Protection - Ruse District /project partner/ between 2011 and 2014. The total value of the project amounts to 4 717, 915,25 EUR.

Two project partners from Ruse district /Business Support Centre for Small and Medium Enterprises Ruse; Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry/ participated in the realization of project named “Integrated systems of monitoring and controlling wastewater, the quality and security of textile products commercialized in Romania and Bulgaria” The project’s main activities were aimed to establish a joint strategy /short, medium and long-term/ with focus on the environmental protection within the CBC region. This strategy is concentrated on different points such as in the sphere of environment as natural resources, efficient valorization, modern technologies promotion, etc. Other activities implemented during the project realization were the following: development of common systems in the sphere of environment monitoring and

⁸ For project details see the chapter 'The role of NGOs in CBC development between Ruse District and Giurgiu County'

control, elaboration of common informational and promotional materials in the area of environmental issues. These main activities correspond to the striving for sustainable development within the target CBC region.

Project name: “Integrated systems of monitoring and controlling wastewater, the quality and security of textile products commercialized in Romania and Bulgaria”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> National Research & Development Institute for Textiles and Leather, Bucharest /Romania/ <u>Project partners:</u> Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest /Romania/, Business Support Centre for Small and Medium Enterprises Ruse, Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 722 280,51EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> To encourage CBC region development which to be based on the joint striving for environmental protection /monitoring, control/. <u>Duration:</u> 3rd September 2011 – 2nd March 2013</p>

Concerning the projects, realized under the Priority Axis 2 “Environment”, we should mention the CBC project with title “REACT - Integrated system for dynamic monitoring and warning for technological risks in Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area”. University of Ruse” Angel Kanchev” was the project partner.

The project’s main focus was based on four specific objective achievements:

- *Specific objective 1:* Focused on the need for increasing of the institutional capacity of the local public administration and business community in case of accidental industrial pollution;
- *Specific objective 2:* Aimed at planning capacity of the joint intervention development. It should be established on the base of the risks assessments generated by accidental industrial pollution;
- *Specific objective 3:* Local public administration capacity development in the area of the prevention and reaction in case of accidental industrial pollution;
- *Specific objective 4:* Raise the awareness of different stakeholders about the risks of accidental industrial pollution.

Project name: "REACT - Integrated system for dynamic monitoring and warning for technological risks in Romania-Bulgaria cross-border area"

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> National Institute for Research and Development in Electrical Engineering /Bucharest/ <u>Project partners:</u> The National Research & Development Institute for Industrial Ecology /Bucharest/, National Research and Development Institute for Gas Turbines /Bucharest/, University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev", Association of the Danube River Municipalities "Danube" /Pleven, Bulgaria/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 983 908,67 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> Joint activities realization aimed at increase the capacity of different stakeholders within the CBC region in case of accidental industrial pollution. <u>Duration:</u> 8th July 2011 – 7th January 2013</p>

Sustainable development of the CBC region between Bulgaria and Romania was reflected in the implementation of project aimed to establish an ecological corridor based on the idea for reasonable management and use of the natural resources within the region. The project realization included the following two activities:

- Establishment of long lasting partnership aimed to increase the ecological corridor management capacity and to implement the management plans of protected areas within the region;
- Implementation of activities with the aim to increase the incomes of people who live in the protected areas and protected territories within the CBC target region.

Project name: "Cross-border ecological corridor Ruse-Giurgiu"

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Club Friends of Public's Park of Rusenski Lom - Ruse <u>Project partners:</u> "Green Romania Ecological Society" Association /Giurgiu, Romania/, Ecolinks - Gsuproos /Ruse, Bulgaria/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 321 077,16 EUR <u>Project main objective:</u> To encourage the CBC target region sustainable management and use of natural resources through ecological corridor establishment. <u>Duration:</u> 16th October 2010 – 15th April 2012</p>

Some of the most important results from project implementation were the following:

- Construction of an ecological corridor between both neighboring areas. In future, the achieved result will significantly influence the rational management, use of natural resources and sustainable development of CBC region;
- Established long-term relations between the partners. These relations are able to build capacity to manage ecological corridor and performance management plans for the protected areas;

- Support for a specific target group - farmers, who work within the areas that have been mentioned /Natural Parks, Protected areas, areas within the territorial scope of NATURA 2000/.

The achieved results are associated with the implementation of the following specific activities:

- Management plans for the Protected areas were prepared and the Management plan of Natural Park “Rusenski Lom” was updated /developed plan for the forests management and similar management plan for the Natural park “Comana”/;
- Developed an analysis with the aim to help the training of the farmers cultivating lands within the region of NATURA 2000.

A further project was implemented between the period 2010 – 2013, “Insuring an efficient management of the joint intervention in emergency situation in the Giurgiu-Ruse cross-border area” with the participation of two project partners - Giurgiu County Council /the lead partner/ and District Directorate of Ministry - Ruse /in role of the another project partner/. The total value of the project amounts to 5 633 877, 89 EUR.⁹

Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry played the role of the lead partner during the implementation of the CBC project aimed to implement joint actions focused on the idea for eco-responsible cross-border SMEs. In this regard, the implemented main activities had an important role for successful achievement of project objective:

- Realization of activities for establishment of durable cross-border partnership in the area sustainable development within the region;
- The need to raise the awareness of different participants/stakeholders about their environmental performance in minimizing the negative impact on the environment.

Project name: Eco-Force: “Joint Actions for Eco-responsible Cross-Border SMEs”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ruse</p> <p><u>Project partners:</u> Bulgarian-Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry /Ruse/, Association for Sustainable Development Slatina /Olt, Romania/, Romanian Ecological Action Foundation /Dolj, Romania/, Idein Society /Ruse/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 371 931,40 EUR</p> <p><u>Project main focus:</u> Striving for sustainable development within the region based on the realization of activities aimed at environmental protection.</p> <p><u>Duration:</u> 1st June 2010 – 30th November 2011</p>

⁹ For a detailed analysis of this project see the chapter 'The role of NGOs in CBC development between Ruse District and Giurgiu County'

Implementation of this project led to the following results:

- Enhanced CBC and joint efforts in order to solve the common problems of the SMEs;
- Improvement of environmental performance of the SMEs and reduction of their negative environmental impact;
- Created a joint database in the area of ecology and a measure of environmental readiness.

This eco resource database contains full information on applicable legislation for Bulgaria and Romania with examples, case studies and best practices, information on waste management, voluntary instruments, sources of financing, calculator for carbon emissions, data on network Eco-Force - consultants, organizations and/or members.

This software is connected to the suitability of companies. It will allow a precise analysis of willingness to introduce environmental management systems /EMS/. Within the project, 100 companies were included for free in the pilot audit and received this software. Subsequently, environmental map of the companies and map of waste resources were elaborated.

Eco - mapping is a new systematic and accessible methodology used in the process of implementing an EMS in SMEs, which gives maximum amount prior information about the environmental impact of the company's activities, risk factors and potential discrepancies in which to take preventive or corrective action. Within the project, 25 companies were involved in its pilot implementation.

Based on the foregoing, we can conclude that the implemented project activities have led to the achievement of many important results relating to sustainable development of the SME sector within the CBC region Ruse-Giurgiu. I.e. these activities and results represent a good basis for future establishment and development of successful joint activities between different stakeholders from the SME and institutional sector at cross-border level.

The municipalities of Ruse and Giurgiu played the role of partners in the realization of project focused on the need for increase the existing capacity of the public-administration in Ruse and Giurgiu in point of view the striving for better joint risk management, prevention and environmental protection. This project was implemented under title "Improvement of the capacity of the public administrations in Ruse - Giurgiu Euroregion for better joint risk management, prevention and environmental protection", between the years 2010-2012.

The next project was the “Improvement of the capacity of the public administration” between two municipalities with the aim of risk management and environmental protection.

Project name: “Improvement of the capacity of the public administrations in Ruse - Giurgiu Euroregion for better joint risk management, prevention and environmental protection”	
Project partners	Project description
<u>Lead partner:</u> Municipality of Ruse <u>Project partners:</u> Municipality of Giurgiu	<u>Budget:</u> 595 945,76 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> Increase the capacity at cross-border level in the sphere of joint risk management, prevention and environmental protection. <u>Duration:</u> 28 th September 2010 – 27 th March 2012

University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev” was a partner in the project named as “Common strategy to prevent the Danube’s pollution technological risks with oil and oil products”. The project’s overall objective was to manage /effectively and timely/ pollution of the Danube River. In this regard, the project activities included: elaboration of a study in the area of existing possibilities; establishment of a common structure at cross-border level in order to manage the crisis situations; activities that include modelling and virtual simulation; development of a common strategy aimed to prevent technological pollution of the Danube River with oil products.

Project name: “Common strategy to prevent the Danube’s pollution technological risks with oil and oil products”	
Project partners	Project description
<u>Lead partner:</u> National Research & Development Institute for Gas Turbines COMOTI Bucharest /Romani/ <u>Project partners:</u> University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev”	<u>Budget:</u> 562 601,18 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> Implementation of activities aimed at efficient and timely manage of the risk of pollution of the Danube River with oil and oil products. <u>Duration:</u> 7 th September 2010 – 6 th March 2012

4.3 Projects implemented under the Priority Axis 3: “Economic and Social Development”

Successfully completed CBC projects

University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev” was a partner in the implementation of project named as “Cross-Border University Network for Intercultural Communication” which was focused on social cohesion between both countries. In this regard, the key moments of the project were the following: reduction and elimination of the negative cultural barriers among the people and

their perception, establishment of bilateral contacts between both countries /representatives from the university, business, and administration sector/, etc.

Project name: "Cross-Border University Network for Intercultural Communication"	
Project partners	Project description
<u>Lead partner:</u> University of Veliko Turnovo St. Cyril and St. Methodius <u>Project partners:</u> University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev", Ovidius University Constanta, Faculty of Letters, University of Craiova, International Elias Canetti Society, Ruse	<u>Budget:</u> 917 694,92 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> Realization of activities aimed at development of social cohesion between the both countries. <u>Duration:</u> 20 th May 2011 - 19 th November 2012

The same project partner University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev" participated in the implementation of another project. This project emphasized the establishment of new partnerships in the area of RDI activities at cross-border level. The project objectives were aimed to bring together business and research for accessing EU funds. In this regard, the key activities of the project were associated with the following results:

1. Joint network was formed by the specialists from all technological area /this result corresponds to the main objective of SANDI project/;

It should be mentioned that this result is characterized by its major future importance. The presence of the specialists from different entities will cover a large knowledge area by connecting different entities /research, university and economic agents/ in order to access and invest new funds in trans-border area.

2. Specific needs were identified at cross-border level;
3. Different events were conducted, e.g. workshops, conferences, etc. At these events, specific partners from the joint network were correlated, hence these events were utilized as network-building occasions

Analyzing the benefits of the project, it should be emphasized that the key moment is the consideration of local needs of the population and territory. In this regard, we can say that this project has really good opportunities for future successful development of cross-border activities and initiatives between the target stakeholders within the region. Moreover, an interactive website was elaborated which gives useful information about cross-border initiatives/activities about sustainable development, it informs about educational, research, business and authority issues, about the projects which are dedicated to the local needs and about future prospects of cross-border cooperation in the given area. Effective functioning of this website represents an important condition for the establishment of long-term partnerships in the area of RDI between business and research within Ruse and Giurgiu. The website can be found on the following URL-address: www.cbc-partners.ro

Project name: "Support Actions to create New RDI partnerships in trans-border area in order to bring together Business and Research for accessing European Funds - SANDI "

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> National Research and Development Institute for Gas Turbines - COMOTI /Bucharest, Romania/ <u>Project partners:</u> University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev"</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 540 382,47 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> Establishment of partnerships at cross-border level in the area of RDI. To bring together business and research within the CBC region. <u>Duration:</u> 12th July 2011 – 11th January 2013</p>

The following table describes the four principal domains of RDI, namely education, research, business and authority:

<p>Education:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This part presents relevant information about all Universities /and their facilities/ related to all the network fields. • Users are facilitated by the possibility to search for educational events, workshops, fairs and opportunities to work on National or European projects in collaboration with Research Institutes and Universities.
<p>Research:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It contains relevant information about all Research and Development Institutes with their facilities. • Searching for free training opportunities or even jobs for desired fields. • Possibilities for creation of partnerships and consortiums between Institutes and Universities in order to access EU Funds.
<p>Business:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging the gap between Research and Business plays the key moment for long-term results and achievement. • This part from the website presents many opportunities to find the "perfect" partner either as Company, Research Institutes and/or Universities in order to create future projects on EU Funds. • Options for business sector to search for the best experts in different fields in order to improve their business.
<p>Authorities:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This part consists very helpful information about all Authorities in the Cross Border Area. • Search options for general information about environmental EU legislation which must be applied. • Information about environmental monitoring related to soil quality, water quality, and air quality and noise control.

Source: <http://www.cbc-partners.ro/>

In other words, the website and its included database are proved to be very useful and applicable.

They contain valuable information about different partners in four key areas /education, research, business, authorities/. This website database includes information about the following key fields: education, research and development, health, industry, agriculture, transport, IT / telecom, commerce, tourism, finance, publicity, consultancy, environment, public administration.

Cross Border Cooperation Partners from Romania /from 8 territorial units/:

Information about the partners from Bucharest, Mehedinti, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Calarasi, Constanta.

Cross Border Cooperation Partners from Bulgaria /from 9 territorial units/:

Information about the partners from Vidin, Montana, Vraca, Pleven, Veliko Tarnovo, Ruse, Razgrad, Silistra, Dobric.

We can conclude that the results of this project represent a good starting framework for long-term /sustainable/ partnerships between Bulgaria and Romania and their cross-border cooperation. Inclusion of a database that contains information on a large number of cross-border partners from both countries /representatives from 17 territorial units/ substantially increased the sustainability and potential favorability of the project. On the other hand, the available information cover 14 key areas of development with the aim to establish long-term sustainable partnerships at cross-border level between different stakeholders from Romania and Bulgaria.

The next implementation project was named “Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning”, and it included the following two main activities: development of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan and elaboration of Investment profile of the Euroregion /for detailed analysis see section: 4.4/. The main object was to encourage sustainable development and to promote new models of cooperation and partnership. Two partners participated in the project.

Project name: “Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - integrated opportunity management through master-planning”

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> Municipality of Ruse <u>Project partners:</u> Municipality of Giurgiu</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 949 944,48 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> To encourage the sustainable development within the CBC region through establishment of new cooperation models and partnership platforms. <u>Duration:</u> 18th February 2011 – 17th August 2012</p>

Under financing support of the CBC Programme between Bulgaria and Romania /Priority Axis 3 “Economic and Social Development/ the project “Ecologic Cross-Border Operations for a Business Integrated Zone - Eco Biz” was implemented in 1 413 998,09 EUR. University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev” was the project partner.¹⁰

Other implemented project included various fields. Promotion of tourism is at the center of cross-border cooperation because it is able to positively influence the economic and social status of the local people. The project attempted to introduce several innovative solution into tourism sector and it reflected sustainable development.

Project name: “PROmotion of TOURism through Flexible Business Support - PRO TOUR”	
Project partners	Project description
<u>Lead partner:</u> Association for Economic Development Svishtov /Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria/ <u>Project partners:</u> Constanta Maritime University, Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry, The Center of Consultancy and Project Management - EUROPROJECT /Olt, Romania/, Pleven Chamber of Commerce and Industry /Bulgaria/	<u>Budget:</u> 452 246,24 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> To encourage the introduction of innovative solution in the tourism sector and elaboration of models for sustainable development of the local economic system. <u>Duration:</u> 5 th August 2011 – 4 th December 2012

What is more, several other projects were implemented with the aim of territorial cooperation; sustainable development, human resources, renewable energy and employment promotion; cross-border business cooperation and its promotion.

Project name: “Bulgarian-Romanian Area Identities: A Neighbourhood Study /BRAINS/”	
Project partners	Project description
<u>Lead partner:</u> Academy of Economic Studies Bucharest Territorial University Center, Giurgiu <u>Project partners:</u> University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev”	<u>Budget:</u> 986 856,16 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> Territorial cooperation <u>Duration:</u> 12 th July 2011 – 11 th January 2013

¹⁰ For a detailed information about the project, see section ‘The role of NGOs in CBC development between Ruse District and Giurgiu County’

Project name: "Romanian - Bulgarian joint cooperation for a long-term and sustainable development of the young human resources in the field of the renewable energy technologies, in order to overcome the socio-cultural barrier and to open common opportunities for getting a job and their employment along the cross-border area"

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> National Institute for Research and Development in Electrical Engineering ICPE - CA /Bucharest, Romania/ <u>Project partners:</u> University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev", Naval Academy "Mircea cel Batran" /Constanta, Bulgaria/, Association Municipal Energy Agency /Ruse/</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 945 837,18 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> Sustainable development – human resources, RES, social issues <u>Duration:</u> 8th July 2011 – 7th January 2013</p>

Project name: "Cross Border Cooperation Fairs-CBC Fairs"

Project partners	Project description
<p><u>Lead partner:</u> The Center of Consultancy and Project Management - Europroject /Olt, Romania/ <u>Project partners:</u> Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Vratsa, Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry</p>	<p><u>Budget:</u> 1 167 548,18 EUR <u>Project main focus:</u> Cross-border business cooperation <u>Duration:</u> 21st July 2011 – 20th January 2013</p>

4.4 Best practices for future CBC Projects

One of the most successful project was the "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning". This project included the development of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan and elaboration of Investment profile of the Euroregion. In this regard, analyzing the best practices collection in the period 2007-2013, the *Strategy for promoting the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu* should be mentioned

Table 7: Development vision of The Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu defined in the elaborated Investment Profile of the CBC region

Development vision: "Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu become to 2020 the most attractive investment destination of the Bulgarian-Romanian border, competitive economic zone connected with the network of urban centers on the Danube River"

Logistics and Transport Center: The Euroregion will be the focus point of the European network of road, railway and waterway, intersection point of the main flow of goods and people to Asia Minor.

Tourist Center: The region Ruse-Giurgiu will become a major destination for tourists from Bucharest and Northeastern Bulgaria for recreation and practice of sport, fishing and tourism.

Agri-food Center: In 2020, the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu will be the main place for supply of agricultural products, fish, fresh and organic food for consumers in Bucharest and a major hub of grain in the Balkans.

Energy Centre: The Euroregion will attract the interest of investors interested in the production of energy from renewable sources /solar and biomass/ at low prices.

Industrial Center: In 2020, the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu will be the most attractive place for industrial enterprises in terms of its strategic location, accessibility, local resources, modern business infrastructure, low operational costs and closeness to emerging markets.

Source: Investment profile of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu /elaborated within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/

The development vision defined in this Investment profile corresponds to the key moments which are based on the following strategic document for regional development at European level:

Strategy "Europe 2020"

- *Smart growth* – based on knowledge and innovation;
- *Sustainable growth* – more efficient and environmentally-friendly utilization of resources;
- *Inclusive growth* - economy with high employment rates.

EU Strategy for the Danube Region

EU Strategy for the Danube Region based on the following key moments:

- *Provide connectivity in the region:* mobility improvement, multimodal transport development, renewable energy use, tourist and cultural activities encouragement;
- *Environmental protection within the Danube region:* improve water quality, management of environmental risk, maintenance of biodiversity, natural resources, and soils;
- *Ensuring of prosperity in the Danube region:* promote an economy based on science, education and information society, supporting the competitiveness of the companies, development and investment in human resources;
- *Development of the administrative capacity, cooperation and security improving.*

The strategic framework defined in the Investment profile of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu includes the following hierarchically related elements: one overall objective, three specific objectives and measures for their achievement.

Table 8: Strategic framework for the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu development /overall and specific objectives/

Overall objective: “Attracting new investments and development of the business relations within the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu by improving the opportunities available and development of high quality services in support of investors”

Specific Objective 1: Attracting of new investments in the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu

- Defined 4 measures for objective achievement:

- 1.1. Encouraging major projects of local participants
- 1.2. Establishment of strategic partnerships
- 1.3. Providing infrastructure that is efficient and adequate of the investment projects
- 1.4. Providing incentives for investment

Specific Objective 2: Providing of support services to existing and potential investors

- Defined 5 measures for objective achievement:

- 2.1. Informing investors for the way of implementation and development of investment projects
- 2.2. Providing access of existing and potential investors to services
- 2.3. Simplification and harmonization of the rules and procedures at local level
- 2.4. Providing of a skilled workforce in accordance with the actual requirements of the business environment
- 2.5. Increase the administrative capacity of local governments to attracting and promoting investment

Specific Objective 3: Establishment of a favorable image of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu as a strategic place for investments

- Defined 5 measures for objective achievement:

- 3.1. Collection, processing and dissemination of important information to potential investors
- 3.2. Announcement the Euroregion as an attractive place to invest
- 3.3. Partnerships between the institutions
- 3.4. Exchange of good practices for encouraging the investments with other countries
- 3.5. Creating a consolidated database for potential investors with opportunity to find partners

Source: Investment profile of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu /elaborated within the project “Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning”/

ERGO MasterPlan

The Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan which was developed under the CBC Programme between Bulgaria and Romania, plays the role of unique strategic document for development of the target region. This cross-border Masterplan included 10 significant *joint* projects between the CBC, discussed and adopted by communities in both cities of Ruse and Giurgiu.

The project, defined within the ERGO Masterplan, focused on different development areas:

- **Economic:** Priority projects, in the sphere of economy, aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the CBC region: producing establishment, support for the SME sector;
- **Transport:** Priority projects, in the field of the transport system, focused on the following key moments: improving transport accessibility at cross-border level, development of effective transport system within the urban areas;
- **Energy:** Priority projects, in the sphere of energy, focused on energy efficiency, increasing of energy efficient buildings, generating energy from renewable sources , energy management, energy saving, generation of energy from waste;
- **Tourism / Urban development:** Priority projects, in the sphere of tourism and urban development, concentrated on the attractiveness of urban centers - visitor centres, green zones, city centers refurbishment /real estate sector/.

It is very important to mention that those 10 project profiles, which were elaborated within the Masterplan, play the role of "Pre-Feasibility Studies", i.e. this stage included all steps of the so-called "Definition" stage. Future steps concerning the evaluation of the defined projects may be realized by the elaboration of full "Feasibility Studies". In other words, "Pre-Feasibility Study" played the role of starting point for the next stage.

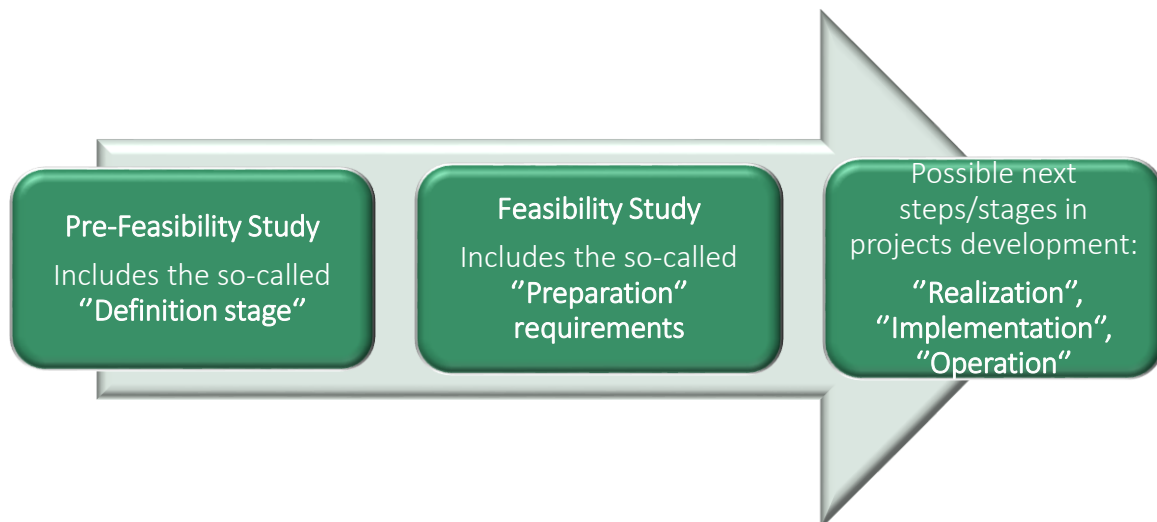


Figure 8: Steps of evaluation of the Priority projects defined in the ERGO Masterplan

Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/

The next possible steps/stages in the projects realization, could be the following:

- **"Realization"** stage which includes the elements: Technical Realization Scheme, Business Plan, and Implementation Plan.

- **“Implementation”** stage which concerns: Detailed Planning, Production/Construction, and Implementation.
- **“Operation”** stage which includes 2 elements: Operation and Optimization.

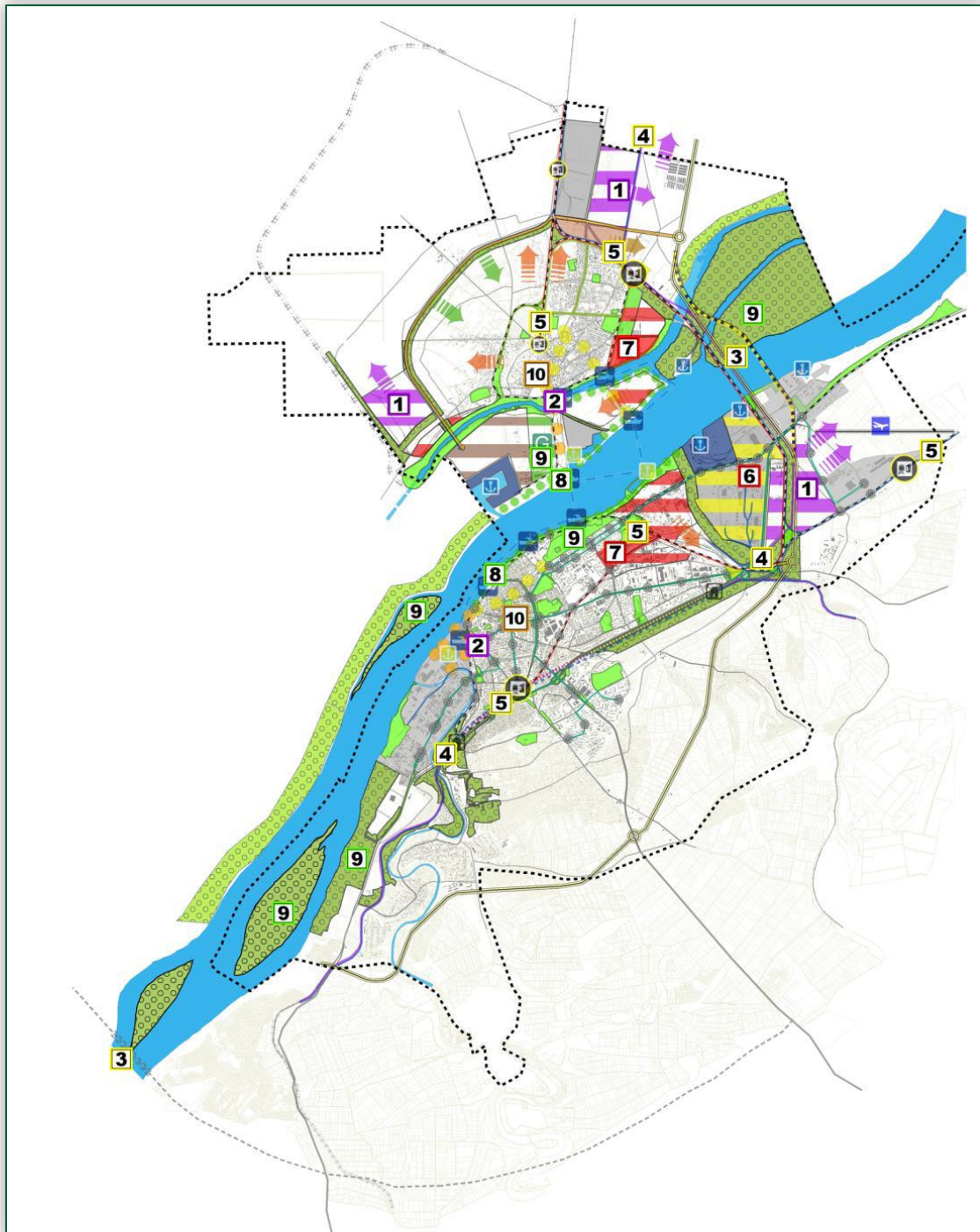


Figure 9: Territorial scope / Location of the 10 cross-border Priority Projects defined within the ERGO Masterplan

Legend of used colors:		
1.	Development sphere: Economy	Project/Object: Mega-Site /s/
2.	Development sphere: Economy	Project/Object: Cross Border Business-Incubators
3.	Development sphere: Transport	Project/Object: New Danube Bridge /s/
4.	Development sphere: Transport	Project/Object: High-Speed Train
5.	Development sphere: Transport	Project/Object: Integrated City Train / Tram
6.	Development sphere: Energy	Project/Object: Energy Management / Waste to Energy
7.	Development sphere: Energy	Project/Object: Active Energy Dwellings
8.	Development sphere: Tourism	Project/Object: Visitor Centres
9.	Development sphere: Tourism	Project/Object: Green Zones
10.	Development sphere: Real Estate	Project/Object: City Centres Refurbishment

Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/

Priority Project 1. Mega - Site /s/

As regards to the defined Priority Project 1, we should mention the following characteristics:

- **Concerning the current situation in economic development within the CBC region:** lack of jobs at local level /including attractive working places within the region/ → need for action to end this trend.
- **Concerning the Priority Project 1:** it can be expected that attraction of a big company into the region will have significant impact on the employment/unemployment structure and it will stimulate the economic growth within the region.
- **Expected results:** labor demand for the needs of the relevant proceeding, as well as demand for local service suppliers.
- **Type of production:** According to the ERGO Masterplan, car production is the most suitably within the territorial scope of the Euroregion.

Priority Project 1: Mega site /s/	Project main focus: Producing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifics: Attraction and establishment (at least one) production. The most promising is the <i>car manufacture</i>. • Space requirement / Value of investments: Necessary area of <i>300-400 ha</i>; estimated investment is around <i>300-500 million EUR</i>. • Location: Suitable parcels can be identified east from city of Ruse and north or west from city of Giurgiu. • Financing / Realization: Private sector investment. Realization with public and EU support /subsidies/. For example from the European Investment Bank. • Human Resources: Employment of 4 000 to 5 000 workers, opening up 2 000 jobs to service providers /hotels, restaurant, personal services, etc. /. 	

The expected needs of an enterprise for car production, like area, communication, electricity were determined as suitable:

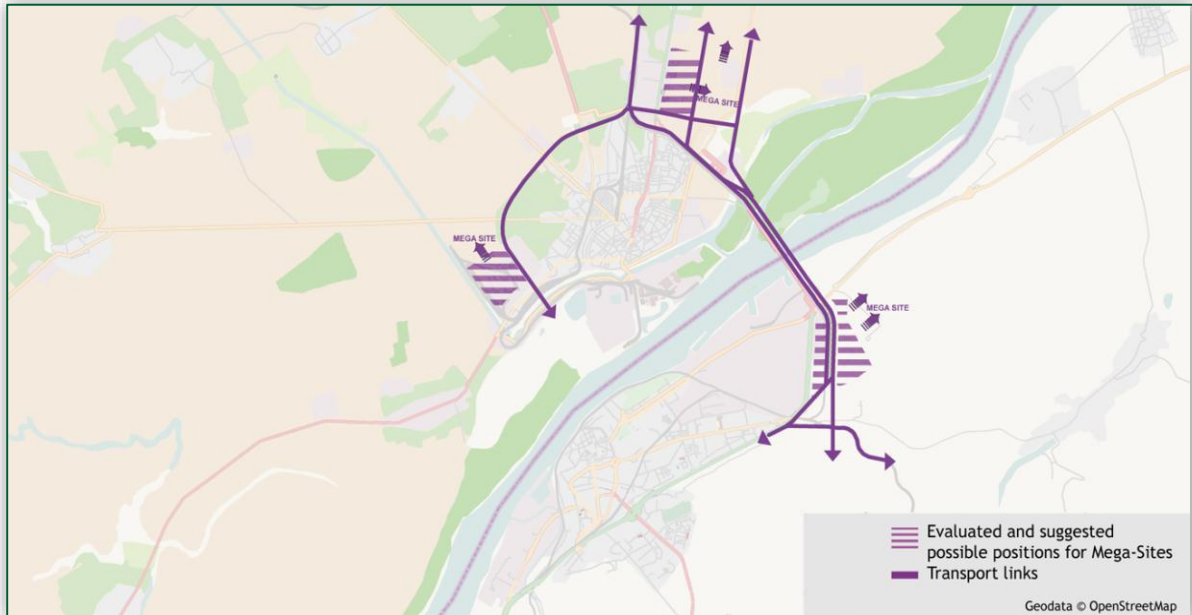


Figure 10: Potential location of cars production enterprise within the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu
 Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project
 "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-
 Planning"/

Priority Project 2. Cross - Border Business-Incubator /s/

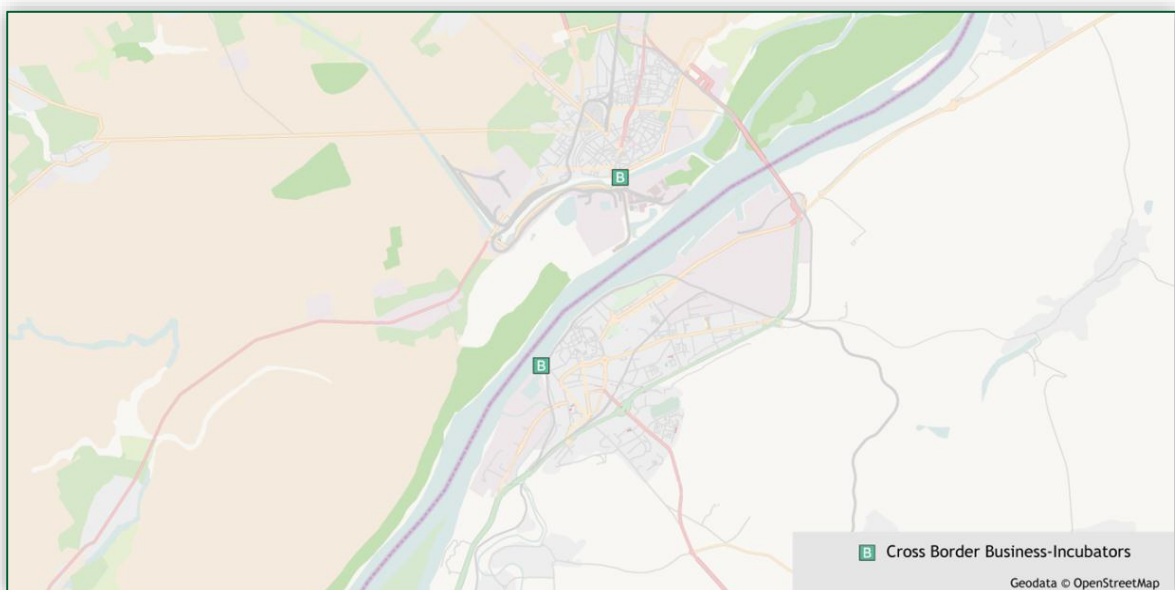
The main focus of Priority Project 2 takes into account the important role of the SME sector and its economic development within the defined CBC region. The project is named as "Cross-border business incubator/s/", it is aimed to increase the competitiveness of small and medium enterprises within the Ruse-Giurgiu Euroregion.

- Features in the functioning of SMEs: most of the economic/business companies and entities operate only on the territory of their own country, i.e. on the relevant national market → need for action to support the business activities within the Ruse-Giurgiu CBC region.
- Concerning the Priority Project 2: cross-border business incubators should play the role of an important assisting element which supports the SMEs in the process of overcoming the national market borders.

This support could be in different spheres: information providing, know-how, training opportunities, conduction of events which informs about the characteristics of different markets, "best practice" collection and exchange, implementation of successful initiatives at

cross-border level, legal and tax consulting, consulting in the area of tenders applications and calls for proposals, support in the area of marketing and communication.

- Necessity of business incubators: approximately 140 companies are interested in the creation of cross-border business incubators /100 companies in Ruse and 40 companies in Giurgiu/ within the CBC region. It can be estimated that 20-30% of these interested companies will be real candidates.
- Should be carried out: elaboration of a precise Feasibility Study and evaluation of financing opportunities /different subsidies/.



*Figure 11: Potential location of Cross-border Business Incubators within Ruse and Giurgiu
Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/*

Priority Project 2: Cross-Border Business-Incubator /s/

Project main focus: Support of start-up SMEs oriented to external markets

- **Specifics**: Support for start-up of SMEs by putting forward and initial development of their business which is oriented to markets outside the country's territory.
- **Space requirement / Value of investments**: Necessary area for Ruse 5 000-8 000 m² and 2 000-3 500 m² for Giurgiu. An overall investment is about: 11,8 million EUR for Ruse and 5,14 million EUR for Giurgiu.
- **Location**: Western Port Zone Ruse /Bulgaria/ and Entrance in the Free Trade Zone Giurgiu /Romania/
- **Financing**: Public investments / national and EU support

Priority Project 2: Cross-Border Business-Incubator /s/

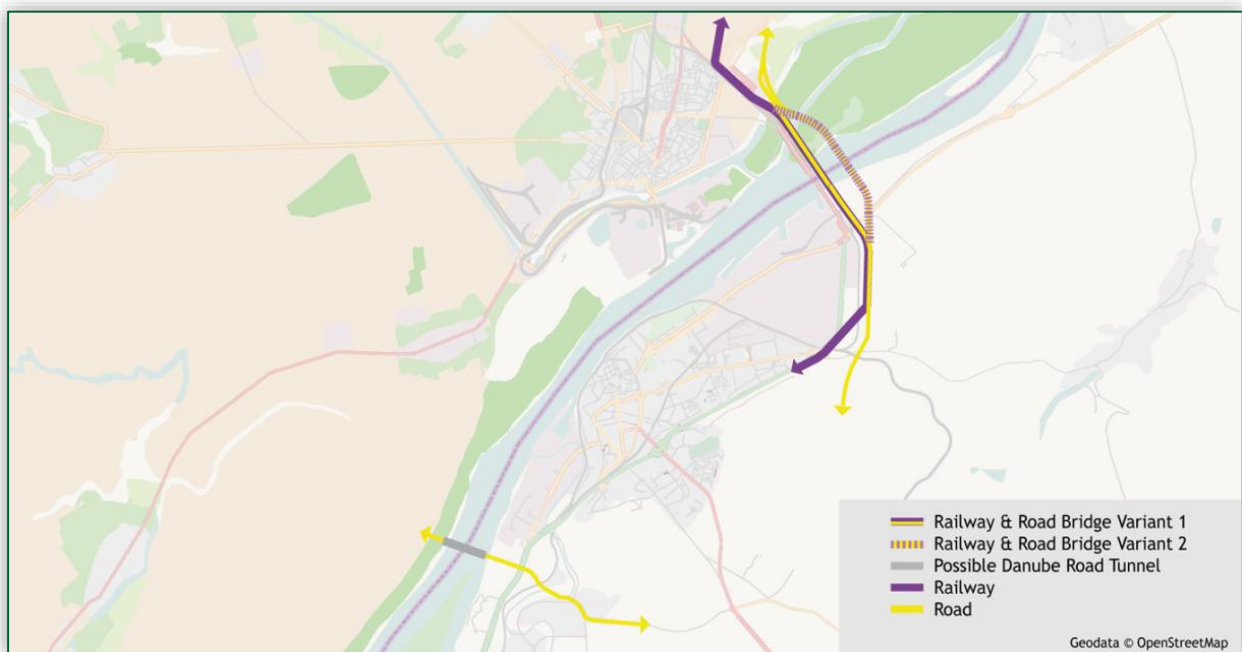
Project main focus: Support of start-up SMEs oriented to external markets

- **Human Resources:** 10-12 employees for Ruse and 4-5 for Giurgiu. Creation of total 300 new jobs within 5 years.

Priority Project 3. New Danube Bridge

As regards the particulars of the defined project /especially the need for its realization/, we should note the following specifics:

- Need for the Priority Project realization: According to the information provided in the ERGO Masterplan, the existing Danube Bridge connecting Ruse /Bulgaria/ and Giurgiu /Romania/ is not able to serve the traffic volumes in the direction of the Trans-European corridor № 9 from Kiev /Moscow/ to Istanbul. Consequently, the need for construction of second Bridge on the Danube River is identified, and this construction could generate future development of the target CBC region.
- Results: The Bridge should provide a high-speed transport connection which includes both road and railway connection. As an optimal variant is defined construction of a highway with two lines in each direction, as well as a high-speed two rail lines.



*Figure 12: Potential location of the new Danube Bridge between Ruse and Giurgiu
Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/*

- Return on investment /ROI/: Estimated investment for the construction of the new Danube Bridge is around 300 million EUR. On the other side, it is estimated that 10 million number of vehicles will cross the Bridge annually. In this regard, if the taxes /bridge toll/ will be around 5 Euro, the annual revenue will amount to 50 million EUR. That means one year income from the bridge tax could return 17% from the total investment of the Bridge.

Priority Project 3: New Danube Bridge	Project main focus: Construction of new Bridge on the Danube River which connects Ruse and Giurgiu
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifics: Requirement for road facility over the Danube River for the purposes of future highway and high speed railways. To build additional bypass road for both cities for both types of transport. • Space requirement / Value of investments: The Bridge would be 3,5 km / 900 meters above the water/. Estimated investment is about 300 million EUR. • Location: East from the existing Danube Bridge Ruse - Giurgiu. Possible alternatives to be examined. • Financing: Loans provided for long-term period /for example from the European Investment Bank/. These loans can be combined with other different private and public funds, as well as direct private investments. • Human Resources: Requirement for at least 1 000 workers from construction companies /over 3 to 5 years during the construction/, and 200 permanent workers for future needs. 	

Priority Project 4. High-Speed Train

This Priority Project is based on the idea to provide a high-speed rail way connection between Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey. In this regard, the fast and secure transport connection between the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu and Bucharest /the Romanian capital with population of 3 million people/ and Istanbul /in its role as a mega city/ will have a significant impact on future development of the target CBC region.

The length of the planned railway line is above 700 km with the following stops along the route:

- Ploiesti /Romania/ → Bucharest Otopeni Airport /Romania/ → Bucharest Gara de Nord /Romania/ → Bucharest South /with possibilities for stop at eventual new airport/ → Giurgiu /Romania/Ruse Airport / - in case of any future existence → Ruse → Veliko Tarnovo /Bulgaria/ → Stara Zagora /Bulgaria/ → Haskovo /Bulgaria/ → Edirne /Turkey/ → Istanbul Ataturk Airport /Turkey/.

Provision of safety, comfort and fast mode of transport, with travel time between Bucharest and Ruse less than one hour, will be the most important results of this high-speed train. Moreover, one of the project's main idea is the new railway station in Giurgiu /under the Priority Project 4/.

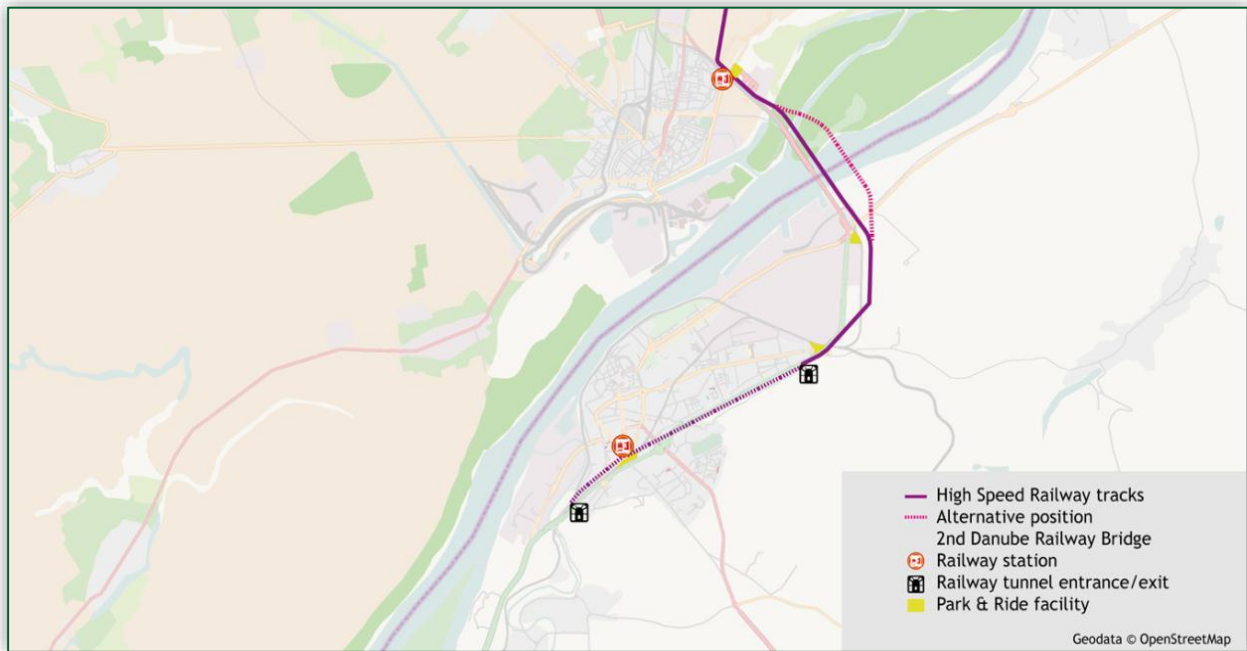


Figure 13: Potential location of the high-speed railway line between Ruse and Giurgiu
 Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/

With respect to this project, it should be noted that despite its great importance for the Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu and its future development, the decision on its implementation will be taken at national and/or at transnational level. In this regard, its future financing is considered to be a combination between consortium of development banks /for example World Bank, European Investment Bank/, private banks specialized in the area of infrastructure, as well as large investment funds.

Priority Project 4: High-Speed Train	Project main focus: Providing of fast and secure railway transport in direction Bucharest - Giurgiu - Ruse - to Istanbul /at a later phase/
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifics: Fast and secure railway connection from/to Bucharest, at a later stage from/to Istanbul is needed for improvement of internal and external market. • Characteristics: Maximum speed of 220-250 km/h, average speed 150 km/hour; 700 km from Bucharest /Ploiesti/ to Istanbul; less than 1 hour from Ruse/Giurgiu to Bucharest. 	

Priority Project 4: High-Speed Train	Project main focus: Providing of fast and secure railway transport in direction Bucharest - Giurgiu - Ruse - to Istanbul /at a later phase/
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location: East from Ruse / Giurgiu, and at a later phase south from Ruse. • Financing: Total amount of the project is around 3 billion EUR. 20-30% of the investment is directed to the territory between Bucharest - Ruse / Giurgiu. • Human Resources: 1 000 jobs in the construction. 	

Priority Project 5. City Train / Tram

Defined Priority Project 5 is focused on the existing transportation opportunities within the urban areas in the Euroregion. It covers two areas of development:

- *Transport sector* – improvement of transport mobility; development of public transport within urban area;
- *Environment* – providing effective means of transport, which do not adversely affect the environment.

The project’s main idea is that city trains should offer effective transport mobility, both inner-city transit and fast and easy intercity connection between both main cities, namely Ruse and Giurgiu. Subsequently, an elaboration of an integrated railroad concept on four levels is needed:

Need for Integrated Railway Concept at local, regional, cross-border and international level, characterized by the following structure:

1. **International High-Speed Train** /defined Priority Project 4/
2. **Intercity Trains** /from Bucharest to Giurgiu/Ruse and in future to Sofia, Varna or Stara Zagora/
3. **Regional trains** /from Giurgiu and Videle /Romania/ to the West; from Ruse along the Danube toward Silistra, etc./
4. **Local City Train/tram** /including connection across the Danube/

Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project “Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning”/

In regard of environmental protection, it should be mentioned that the project attempts to give incentives in order to decrease the use of private cars. It can be expected that the available effective, modern and comfortable means of transport, like city train / tram, will have a positive effect with the ability influence people and to be attractive for the travelers. In other words, the project and its implementation will stimulate people to leave their private cars when they enter into the cities.

Priority Project 5: City Train / Tram

Project main focus: Development of effective urban transport within the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu

- **Specifics:** Effective system for urban public transport in Ruse and Giurgiu. Necessity of precise coordination with other transport modes.
- **Characteristics / Value of investments:** City rings - 12 km. Branches across the Danube River and additional urban rings with total length of 30-40 km. Investment /rails and trains/ is around 200 million EUR.
- **Location:** Within the terrain of Ruse and Giurgiu.
- **Financing/Implementation:** Public platform companies. The project implementation may last to 3 years /period for delivery of trains/.
- **Human Resources:** 300-400 employees will be needed for both cities Ruse and Giurgiu in order to implement the project /including maintenance/.

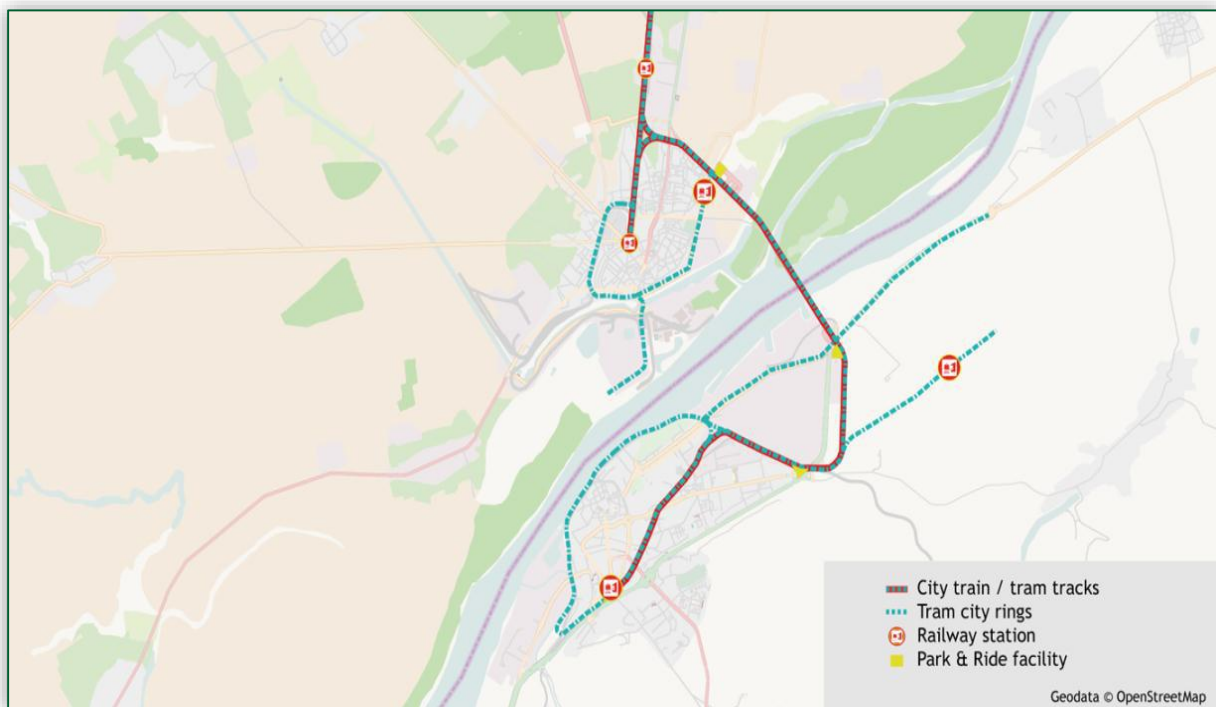


Figure 14: Potential route of the city train/tram system at local /inner-city/ and cross-border level /between the cities Ruse and Giurgiu

Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaboarted within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/

Priority Project 6. Neighborhoods with Green Energy

Defined Priority Project 6 focuses on increasing energy efficiency/development sphere "Energy". In this regard, the project corresponds to one of the priorities identified within the EU Strategy for the Danube Region aimed at "sustainable energy encouragement". The project is supports "good example" in the process of applying "best practices" in the field of the energy efficiency.

The project activities include 2 main groups: production of energy from RES /renewable energy sources/ and implementation of measures which are able to increase energy efficiency. The issue of energy efficiency focuses on the following two groups of consumers: public services and private households. In regard to the first group, it is necessary to promote energy management and to establish the energy issue as priority domain at municipal level.

Taking into account the existing potential and needs of the Euroregion Ruse- Giurgiu, in terms of the development sphere "Energy" within the ERGO Masterplan, the following suitable indicative agenda is defined:

Suitable Indicative Programme for Euroregion Ruse - Giurgiu in the development sphere "Energy" - 9 elements:

1. Measures for energy efficiency: in the area of both cities - construction of new buildings and with respect to the existing ones.
2. Production of required insulation materials to be realized within the Euroregion.
3. Implementation of an entire residential neighborhood with passive-houses /use of all renewable energy available/.
4. Consideration about the possibilities for solar energy generation.
5. Implementation of self-supplying settlements within the rural areas /evaluation of possibilities for using biogas or biomass/.
6. Consideration about the possibilities for implementation of waste-to-energy measures - for example a Central Incineration Plant for the whole Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu.
7. Implementation of measures aimed to increase energy efficiency in the public sector - establishment of energy management at municipal level. Reduction of public sector energy consumption.
8. With regard to both - public and private sector: there is a need for a programme for exchanging energy-wasting devices.
9. Informational programmes conducted /to raise awareness with respect to the energy efficiency/.

Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/

Priority Project 6: Neighborhoods with Green Energy	Project main focus: Energy Efficiency increase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifics: Demonstrating the advantages of energy efficient buildings and the opportunities to generate energy from renewable sources. Implementation of pilot projects within Ruse and Giurgiu. • Space requirement / Value of investments: Terrains from 15 ha within Ruse and Giurgiu which mean 150 each. Investment is estimated around 120 000 EUR per unit /average area of 75m²/. • Location: The locations for the pilot projects have already been identified. • Financing: Purchase of land by private equity, possibilities for public land use. Implementation period: the land can serve either as collateral for loans, co-financing /international financing institutions participate/, Real-estate leasing. • Human Resources: About 100 jobs in the construction companies. 	

Priority Project 7. Energy Management / Waste-to-Energy

The need for energy management in the public sector is associated with large losses of electricity at the municipal level /in the sphere of municipal services/. Inefficient production facilities /obsolete facilities/ cause significant energy losses up to 70%. Heating/cooling of public buildings, like hospitals, schools, administrative buildings, and their inefficient energy system generate significant problems for the budgets. Moreover, the role of municipality services /for example street illumination, public transport/ have significant impact on municipal budgets.

Priority Project 7: Energy Management / Waste-to-Energy	Project main focus: Energy saving
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifics: Energy management allows municipalities to save energy in different areas /street lighting, public transport, etc. /. Relevant investments are not available in budgets. • Value of investments: Expected savings is around 30% and even more. The first phase will require investment of around 80 million EUR for Ruse and 30 million EUR for Giurgiu. Besides, an additional possibility to obtain energy is the energy from waste. • Location: Station to generate energy from waste can be in the Thermo-Electric Power Station - Ruse. • Financing: Public-private partnership model. • Human Resources: About 150 qualified workers /construction/. 	

The project's main focus is aimed at implementation of energy management for the individual sectors /for example street illumination, heating of buildings, etc. /.

Energy Management Programme

- Includes the following different modular phases and work packages:

1st phase:

- **Monitoring** - continuous monitoring of all energy consumption/;
- **Electrical grids** - definition of an optimal future structure in its role of overall target objective, study the usability of existing grids, refurbishing/replacing present installations and/or completely new grid construction at municipal level;
- **Street illumination** - exchange of existing lamps to the LED-standard.

2nd phase:

- **Public transport** - increase the energy efficiency in both - different electric vehicles and motorized vehicles;
- **Energy efficiency** - improvement the electrical facilities in all types of buildings and services;
- **Building standards** – reduction of energy costs in the sphere of cooling and heating systems.

Possible 3rd phase:

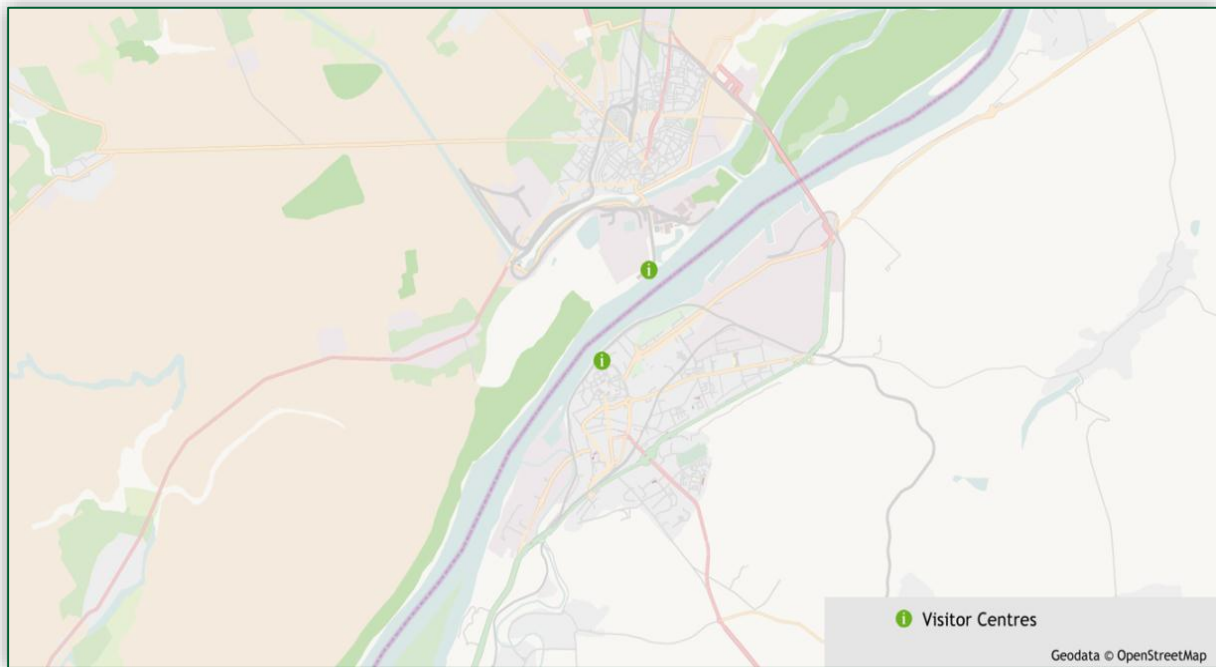
- **District heating** - saving energy by reconstruction of pipe-nets and heating-units;
- **Energy generation** /from RES/ - potential opportunities /for example: Photovoltaic-power stations, wind parks, hydroelectric stations/;
- **Centralized purchasing** - idea for joint purchasing of electricity.

Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project "Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-Planning"/

In regard to the production of an alternative energy, as potential variant is assessed the waste-to-energy programme implementation.

Priority Project 8. New Visitor Centre /s/

Defined Priority Project 8 focuses on tourism sector and its development within the CBC region. Main idea is aimed to increase the attractiveness of both cities, Ruse and Giurgiu, for the future visitors. With reference to the significant importance of the Danube River, the best potential place for construction of the visitor centres is along the Danube River /in the territory Ruse and Giurgiu/.



*Figure 15: Potential location places of Visitor Centres /one in Ruse and one in Giurgiu/
Source: Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations /ERGO/ Masterplan /elaborated within the project
"Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu Operations - Integrated Opportunity Management through Master-
Planning"/*

Priority Project 8: New Visitor Centre /s/	Project main focus: Increase the attractiveness of both cities Ruse and Giurgiu
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specifics: Cities of Ruse and Giurgiu want to welcome their guests perfectly. In this regard, the construction of new visitor centres should be used for guest's service and tourist attraction. ● Space requirement / Value of investments: Requirement for suitable terrains: 500 m² for each center. Construction and furnishing will amount to 1 million EUR. ● Location: At the entrances of both cities - Ruse and Giurgiu. ● Financing: Direct municipal investment, managed by company which is an external contractor. ● Human Resources: 3-5 permanent employees for each center. 	

Priority Project 9. Green Zones

This Priority Project is focused on the following two key moments: creation of recreation possibilities for the residents and visitors, as well as improvement the quality of life within the urban areas /urban development/.

Priority Project 9: Green Zones	Project main focus: Recreation places along the Danube
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specifics: To make the coastal areas of Ruse and Giurgiu into attractive places for recreation, this will be supplemented by city parks and clean natural areas in the suburbs. ● Space requirement / Value of investments: Length of the coastal areas of Ruse and Giurgiu - over 5 km each. In a first stage, each municipality should pay about 75 000 to 80 000 Euro for the international design competition. ● Location: Zones along the Danube River. ● Financing: Municipal investment and/or sponsorship. ● Human Resources: 50 workers (in each city) will be needed for maintenance and cleaning of coastal areas. 	

Priority Project 10. Refurbishment of City Centres

This Priority project is focused on the following approach in the area of urban development: first step - all industrial facilities should be relocated out of the centers, and second step - “the new”/free territory, which is obtained after relocation, can be used for building of complete blocks of residential or office buildings.

Priority Project 10: Refurbishment of City Centres	Project main focus: Improve the quality of buildings within the city centres in Rouse and Giurgiu
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specifics: 2 000 new apartments in Ruse and minimum 750 new apartments in Giurgiu should be built annually for the next 30 years with the newest energy-efficiency standards. ● Value of investments: Annual investment of about 100 million EUR for Ruse and 40 million EUR for Giurgiu. ● Location: Everywhere in the urban centers. ● Financing: Private investment with public support. ● Human Resources: Permanent workforce of at least 2,000 people. 	

5. Organisational and institutional structure, operation (level of institutionalisation)

Despite of the EU membership in the region, common cross-border organizational and institutional structure or any other legal form have not been created yet. This is the basic reason why the current case study about Bulgaria/Romania does not include any specific organization dedicated to cross-border cooperation, which are outside of the system of the IPA Programs and projects and funds. In other words, there separate administrative structures function on both sides of the border and these administrative structures deal with the issue of CBC, but without common organizational and institutional structure.

Different type of structures that exist and operate in the area of CBC between both regions of Ruse and Giurgiu, can be divided into two groups:

- First group: public administrations /local and regional authorities/
- Second group: Universities and organizations in nongovernmental sector which contribute to CBC establishment and development.

First group for Bulgaria /Ruse region/

Public administrations:

- Regional Administration Ruse, <http://www.ruse.bg/>
- Local Municipal administrations /8 municipalities in Ruse district/: Borovo, Byala, Dve mogili, Ivanovo, Ruse, Slivo pole, Tsenovo, Vetovo.

Within Giurgiu County, we can mention the following public administration structures contributing to the establishment of contacts /a wide range of different activities/ at cross-border level:

First group for Romania /Giurgiu County/

Public administrations:

- Giurgiu County Council, <http://www.cjgiurgiu.ro/>
- Giurgiu Municipality, <http://www.primariagiurgiu.ro/>
- Communes within Giurgiu County territory

The second group with organizational structures which operate within Ruse region is represented by the following units:

Second group for Bulgaria /Ruse region/ - Universities, NGO¹¹

- Association Municipal Energy Agency /Ruse/, <http://www.mea.bg/>
- Association of Danube River Municipalities "Danube", <http://www.adodunav.org/>
- Association "Young people with young ideas"
- Bulgarian-Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry /Ruse/, <http://www.brcci.eu/>
- Business Support Center for Small and Medium Enterprises - Ruse, <http://www.bsc.smebg.net/>
- Club Friends of Public's Park of Rusenski Lom
- Ecolinks - GSUPROOS, <http://www.el-gsuproos.org/>
- Human Resources Development Agency - Ruse, <http://www.hrda.smebg.net/>
- International Elias Canetti Society, <http://www.eliascanetti.org/>
- Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry, <http://www.rcci.bg/>
- The Euroregion "Danubius" Association - <http://www.ruse.bg/>
- University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev", <http://www.uni-ruse.bg/>

All organizations listed above, are characterized by their importance in the cross-border cooperation, initiatives and activity. Furthermore, all of these organizational structures have a significant role in successful implementation of many projects financed under the CBC Programme between Bulgaria and Romania in the period 2007-2013. That means there is a huge need for a further and deeper analysis which would investigate these organizations, their role, structures, activity, since this kind of research would profoundly influence, encourage and stimulate the future cross-border development in the target region.

¹¹ For a detailed analysis of all organizations, please visit the mentioned websites.

5.1 University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev”

In the period 2007-2013, University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev” participated in the implementation of 9 projects for CBC between Bulgaria and Romania /projects were financed under the CBC Programme between both countries/. This should be considered as a good example in the process of establishing of successful partnerships between scientific and management structures.

Implementation of joint activities at cross-border level between the University of Ruse “Angel Kanchev” and representatives of regional authorities from Romania - Giurgiu County Council, had a positive effect for cooperation between scientific and governance structures. The University also participated in joint realization of projects with Regional Administration Ruse and representatives of NGO sector.

University of Ruse played an important role in the realization of a common project with partners, like Academy of Economic Studies Bucharest and various German universities. The project -Bulgarian-Romanian Interuniversity Europe Center /BRIE/ represents one of the first sign of the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu. Bringing together the representatives of science and industry, BRIE represents a cross-border educational network in South Eastern Europe.

The Center’s main objective is to bring together institutions of higher education from both sides of the Danube River with a focus on inter-university and inter-cultural CBC. The Interuniversity Centre concentrates on the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu through generating, helping, deepening the relations in the sphere of science.

BRIE provides education in Masters Programs and interacts with businesses sector, politicians, public administrators, NGOs and with the media in order to respond to societal needs /university - public - private Partnership/.

This Centre is a project within the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, it was initiated by the German Rectors’ Conference at the end of 2000. The project was completed in 2002.

Bulgarian-Romanian Interuniversity Europe Center /BRIE/

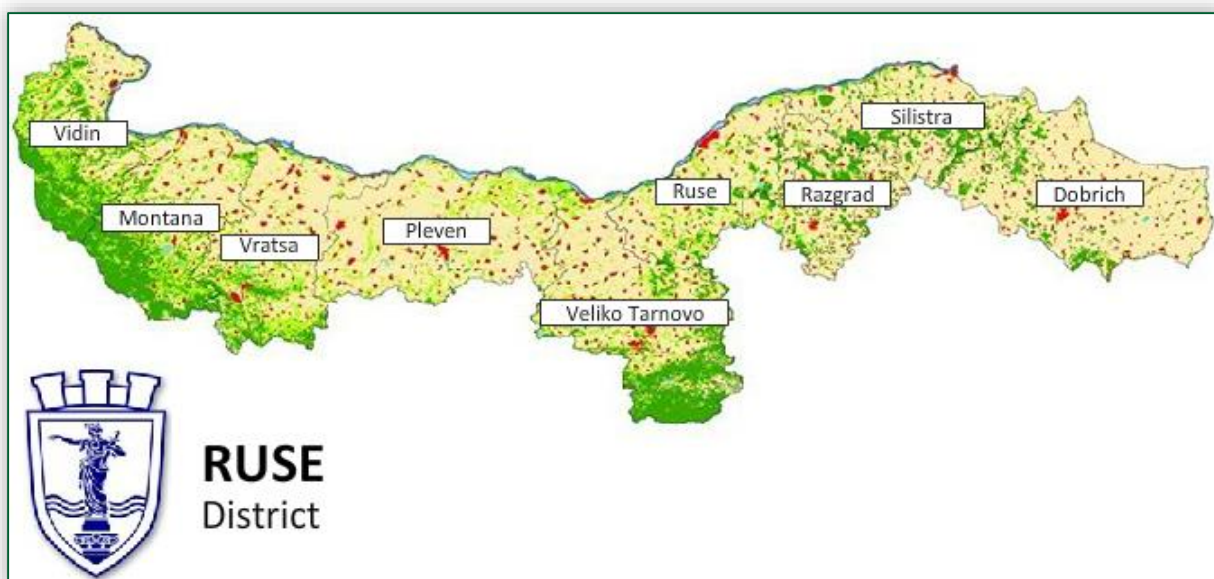
- **Main activities:** Development of human capital - training of professionals in order to overcome existing social and economic disparities with the other parts of Europe.
- **Role of the organizational unit:** Education in the following Master Programs: Master Program in European Studies and Regional Cooperation; Master of European Studies and Public Administration.
- Organizational structure:
 - **Board** - Rector of Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies, Rector of University of Ruse, Director of BRIE Centre at Bucharest Academy of

Economic Studies, Director of BRIE Centre at University of Ruse. The Board is chaired by one of the Rectors of the Universities and it rotates annually.

- **Commission** - BRIE - Ruse and BRIE - Giurgiu offices in their role of an executive body.
- **Advisory Board's President** - Prof. Dr. Rita Süßmuth /former President of the German Federal Parliament and former Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Women, Youth and Health/.
- In BRIE participate many international, Bulgarian and Romanian members.
- Location:
 - BRIE Bulgaria: Ruse 7017, Studentska Street №8 /the building of University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev"/
 - BRIE Romania: **BRIE main office /Bucharest/** - Academy of Economic Studies; address: Bucharest 4th district, Serban Voda Street № 22-24. BRIE Giurgiu Office - Giurgiu municipality, Bucuresti Street, bl. 202/5D /Casa Cartii/
- **Director: BRIE Ruse** - Assoc. Prof. Mimi Kornazheva; **BRIE Giurgiu** - Prof. Marius Constantin Profiroi

5.2 Association of Danube River Municipalities "Danube":

The Association of Danube River Municipalities "Danube" should be mentioned in current analysis because of its role in the process of CBC establishment between Bulgaria and Romania. 36 municipalities in Bulgaria participate as members of the Association, situated within the territorial scope of 7 districts /Vidin, Montana, Vratsa, Pleven, Veliko Tarnovo, Ruse, Silistra/.



Source: <http://www.adodunav.org/en/page/rusie>

Although this organization does not have a local character, nevertheless, we believe that it should be mentioned in this part of the analysis in terms of its important role in establishment of cross-border initiatives generally between Bulgaria and Romania.

5.3 Bulgarian-Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry /BRCCI/:

Another initiative supporting regional development /including at cross-border level/ is the Bulgarian-Romanian Chamber of Commerce /BRCCI/. This is cross-border business association with the aim to support Bulgarian and Romanian business communities in order to implement commercial partnerships, business contacts and information exchange. Its main objectives is to promote and develop economic relations between Bulgaria and Romania, and to promote opportunities for CBC with a view to successful integration of the businesses subjects of both countries on the European single market. Members of the organization are the leading Bulgarian and Romanian companies from different economic sectors - industry, transport, tourism, trade and services, as well as international companies and organizations with an interest in both neighboring countries.

Bulgarian-Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry /BRCCI/:

- Main activities: Support the local business community and municipalities in the region, to solve common problems, to achieve sustainable economic development and full integration of both parties in the European common market.
- Role of the organizational unit: Cross-border business association aimed at supporting the Bulgarian and Romanian business representatives in the process of trade partnership, business contacts and information exchange.
- Organizational structure /authorities and management/:
- Chamber's authorities are: General Assembly, Governing Board, Chairman of the Board, Control Board, Executive Director.
- At the moment, more than 120 Bulgarian and Romanian companies are members of the Chamber.
- Financing: dues; grants of funds, programs and foundations for implementation of own and joint projects; revenues from economic activity; interest and dividends; donations, etc.
- Location: Ruse 7000, 26 Aleksandrovska Str., floor 4, office 3 /the seat/.
- Since the beginning of 2013, BRCCI has a branch office in the capital city of Bulgaria - Sofia /aimed to facilitate contacts with companies based in the region/.
- Institutional form: Non-governmental organization /association/ non-profit organization, with an autonomous character for carrying out activity for private benefit. It was established in 2003.

The second group for Romania is presented by the following organizations which have important role in the process of CBC establishment and development:

Second group for Romania /Giurgiu County/ - Universities, NGO

- Academy of Economic Studies Bucharest Territorial University Center - Giurgiu
- “Green Romania Ecological Society” Association /Giurgiu/

In the period 2007-2013, these organizations participated in the implementation of joint projects with Bulgarian partners from Ruse region /representatives of various stakeholders - local and regional authorities, NGOs, scientific community, etc./.

5.4 Ruse Free Spirit City Foundation

Ruse Free Spirit City Foundation established in 2012 by decision of the Municipal Council of Ruse. The Foundation was defined as a legal entity for performing of public benefit activities. Its founder is Ruse Municipality.

Mission:

- The campaign is focused on the idea to regenerate the creative spirit city of Ruse and to turn it into a cultural center in the Danube region through uniting citizens, cultural communities, artists, professional unions, academic representatives, NGOs, international partners and the media.

Main objective of the Foundation:

- The Foundation aims to support and promote the implementation of activities that affirms the positions of Ruse as a city successfully combining tradition and innovation in the area of development of civil society, science, education, culture, heritage conservation, development of cultural tourism, literature and art, inventions and high technologies.

Spheres of activities:

- Civil Society Development;
- Science;
- Education;
- Arts and culture;
- Development of cultural tourism;
- Local Action Groups;
- Inventions and high technologies.

The Foundation is the creator of “The Faces of Ruse” fund, which stimulates the development of local talents in the following development spheres: science, education, art and culture and that with their achievements, promoting the city on a national and international level. The fund was established in 2014.

The Foundation is involved in supporting the implementation of large and innovative events that create so-called “Sense of community” aimed to affirm city of Ruse as a “port of free creative spirit”.

Ruse Free Spirit City Foundation plays an important role in the area of cross-border initiatives development. The organization’s activities in this area are aimed at creating international networks of partnering and promoting the city as a suitable destination for cultural tourism development.

In this regard, was developed strategic document “Strategy for investment and city marketing of Ruse Municipality for the period 2014-2020”, which outlines the overall vision to attract more tourists, foreign investors and qualified personnel within the region.

Budgeting and sponsors

The campaign Ruse Free Spirit City was launched in 2012 and managed to establish itself as a sustainable way for modernization of the cultural calendar in Ruse region by creating of cross-sector partnerships, including at cross-border level.

The budget of the Foundation in 2014 amounted to 248 780 Levs, including public and private funding. The budget of the Foundation in 2013 was the amount of 101 000 Leva /increase with 147 780 Leva, equivalent to over 100% in 2014/. The number of attracted private sponsors has increased from 8 in 2013 to 28 in 2014.

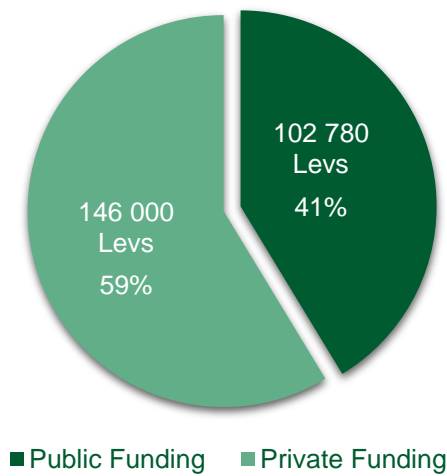


Figure 16: Budget of the Ruse Free Spirit Foundation in 2014

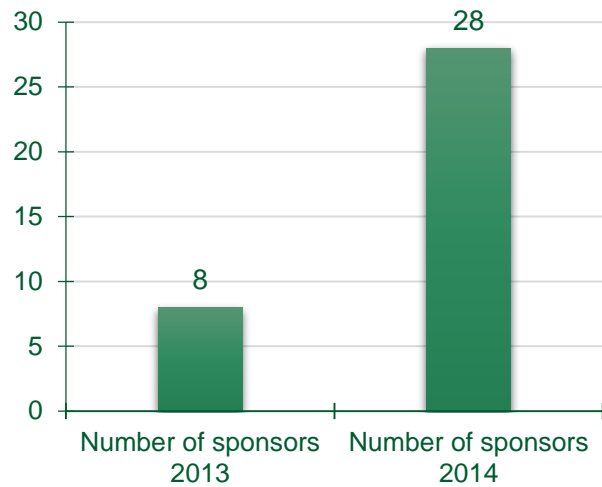


Figure 17: Number of sponsors of the Ruse Free Spirit Foundation

Source: Ruse Free Spirit Foundation, Annual Report 2014

Financing of local initiatives in Ruse municipality by Ruse Free Spirit City Foundation

The Foundation participates in projects with the following focuses:

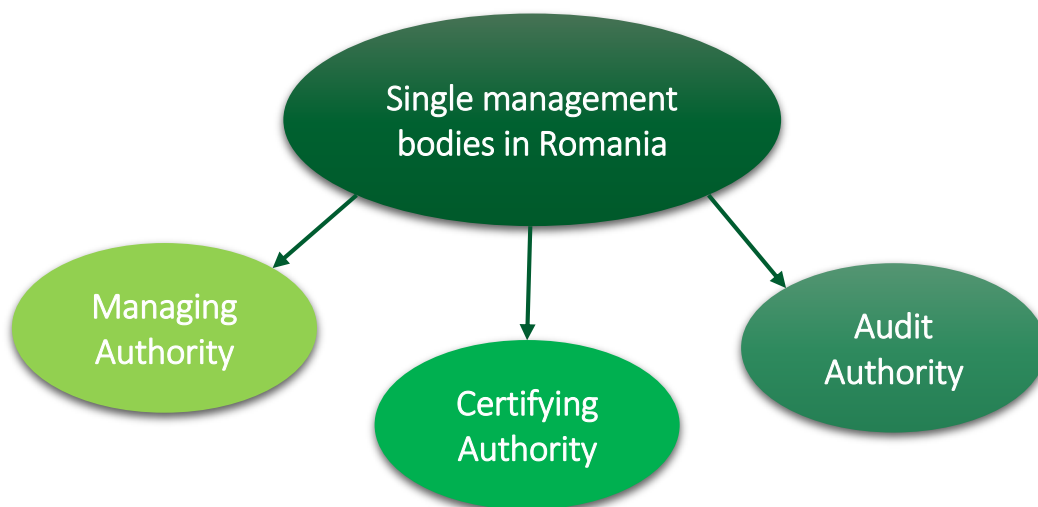
- creation and preservation of artworks;
- organizing events in the area of culture and art (festivals, workshops, concerts, exhibitions, etc.);
- research, documentary editions, publications, analyzes;
- production and distribution of printed and electronic publications;
- organizing conferences, trainings, seminars and other public events;
- inventions of social significance;
- introduction of innovative practices in various areas of public life;
- promoting the opportunities of city of Ruse as a cultural center of international level.

Financing of approved projects is implemented under the budget of the “Rousse Free Spirit City” for the relevant year, approved by the Municipal Council of Ruse.

6. Composition of the working organ

At the very moment it is obvious that there are only dedicated organs to CBC and each country is following its own legislation and priorities. Subsequently, establishment of an EGTC would be a very positive step ahead, which can be dedicated to CBC initiatives in any kind of fields and priority axes.

The mechanism for implementation and monitoring of Romania - Bulgaria CBC Programme which was established in both countries includes the following single and joint bodies:



Managing Authority:

- Responsible for managing and implementing the Programme in accordance with EC Regulations and the principles of sound financial management;
- Established within the Romanian Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration;
- The Bulgarian counterpart is the National Authority, represented by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works.

Certifying Authority:

- Responsible for certifying statements of expenditure and applications for payment before they are sent to the Commission.

Audit Authority:

- Responsible for ensuring that audits are carried out to verify the effective functioning of the management and control system of the Programme.

7. Main activity areas/profile

Main activities of the EGTC could be the following:

- Cross-border co-operation along internal EU borders;
- Transnational co-operation with ability to cover larger areas of co-operation in the Danube and the Mediterranean regions;
- Interregional co-operation programme (INTERREG IVC) and 3 networking programmes (Urbact II, Interact II and ESPON) cover all 28 Member States of the EU. They provide a framework for exchanging experience between regional and local bodies in different countries.

8. Management (incomes/expenses)

All the organizations mentioned above in the case study have own management and budget.

9. SWOT-analysis (specifically with a cooperation base, instead of a territorial base)

This part of the case study brings together all the acquired and collected information about the Ruse-Giurgiu cross-border cooperation and the information is reflected through categorization into four clusters. These clusters include the following, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the Ruse-Giurgiu cross-border cooperation, thus every possible aspect of cooperation is reflected.

	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Interior features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic position in the Balkans, the intersection of two pan-European corridors; • Proximity to the city of Bucharest, a market of 3 million inhabitants; • Over 75% of the transit of goods (worth around € 10 billion per year) and passengers of Romania, the Balkans and Asia Minor pass through the territory of the Euroregion; • Ruse is the main river port of Bulgaria; • The only international station located along the Danube River, between Belgrade and the Black Sea, is in Ruse; • Large-scale cultural events are organized every year in the Euroregion Ruse-Giurgiu; • The area is very fertile agricultural land of more than 450,000 hectares (72% of the total area); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative natural growth and migration - shrinking population; • Intensive labor migration especially to the major cities of Romania and Bulgaria, but also to other countries of Western Europe; • The number of certified producers of organic agriculture is very small; • Abandoned construction of shopping centers in consequence of global economic crisis; • Real estate market (especially housing) is in decline; • High percentage of outdated homes that do not meet modern standards; • Very small amount of energy is derived from renewable sources; • Skills in the workforce does not meet the needs of the modern economy;

	POSITIVE OPTIONS	NEGATIVE THREATS
Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of EU funding for major infrastructure projects and soft measures in agriculture, transport, human resource development, business support, tourism, protection of cultural and natural heritage, environmental protection, cross-border cooperation, renewable energy, communications, administrative capacity, etc. • Increasing trade-off between Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece; • Concession of the port and airport infrastructure in Ruse; • Methane gas Pipeline under the Danube; • Common projects of Romania and Bulgaria for the construction of new hydroelectric plants on the Danube; • Availability of green certificates for production and use of energy from renewable sources; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from the Asian producers; • Increasing labor costs in both countries will redirect investors to other destinations; • Migration of skilled workforce from the Euroregion will generate a deficit of workforce in certain areas; • Economic instability of the two countries could negatively affect local investment climate;

After enumeration of the SWOT analysis, the next part of the case study reflects the future goals and plans of the cross-border cooperation, where it attempts to indicate some hypothetical and the already existing future orientation of the cooperation.

10. Future plans and goals of the cooperation

- Fostering / establishment of Bulgarian-Romanian border networks
- Tourism development support:
 - Mapping of existing tourism resources in the border region;
 - Development of common information and promotional materials to promote tourism and tourism opportunities in the border region / border area /;
 - Development of joint services in support of the tourism business in the future network;
 - Development of joint / common / strategy to promote tourism for the entire area of the Danube area - Bulgarian and Romanian;
 - Development of strategy for common tourist cluster;
 - Improving the information providing business and attraction of investments;
 - Infrastructure to support the entrepreneurship;
 - Development of alternative and organic farming and aquaculture;
 - Continuous training and adaptation of vocational education;
 - Utilization of the Danube as resource for Developing Cruise Tourism, Water Sports and Fishing;
 - Initiating projects of regional importance.

The analysis of future plans and goals of the CBC between the district of Ruse and the region of Giurgiu should be carry out in terms of the financing opportunities that will be provided within the current programming period 2014-2020. Financing will profoundly influence the implementation of projects in the area of various development spheres, like social, economic and/or territorial cohesion between the two neighboring regions.

In this regard we should mention the new Cross-border cooperation Programme Romania - Bulgaria for the period 2014-2020. This Programme is the main source of financing projects for CBC development. On the other side, the specific geographic location of Bulgaria /bordered by the Danube River at north/ determines its inclusion in the geographical scope of the Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020 - a new ETC¹² programme.

¹² ETC - European Territorial Cooperation

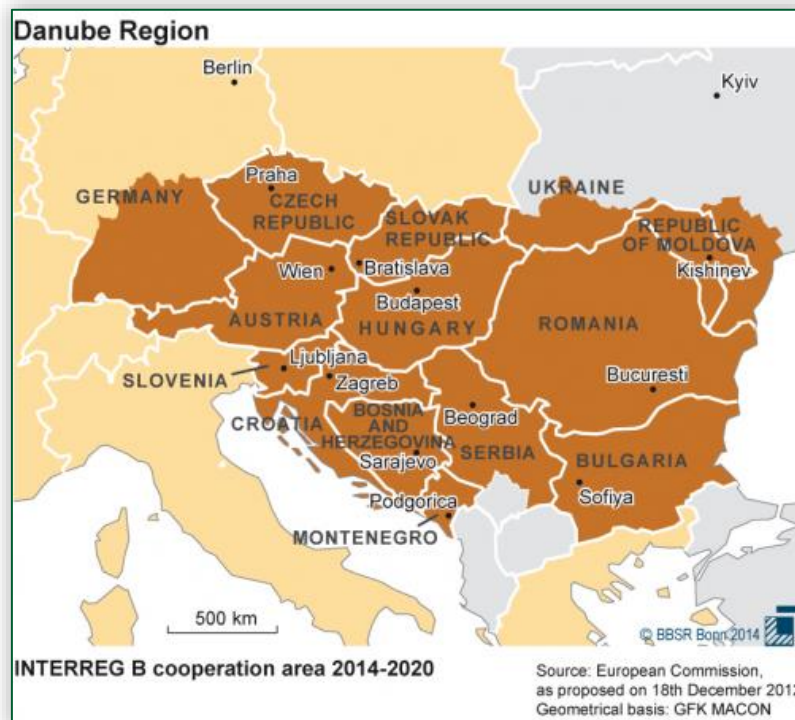


Figure 18: Geographical scope Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020

Source: http://www.southeast-europe.net/en/about_see/danubeprogramme/

Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020 is a part of the legislative package for Cohesion Policy for the current funding period. In the period 2014-2020, the present area of the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme covers three transnational programmes - Danube Transnational Programme, South East Gateway /renamed later on Adriatic-Ionian/ and Balkan-Mediterranean.

Areas of CBC are defined as priorities in the Danube Programme, it includes many traditional transnational development spheres: innovation, transport, environment, etc. This development areas will be supported under the following four priority axes that we re defined in the Programme:

Table 9: Priority axes of the Danube Transnational Programme 2014-2020

Priority axis 1	Innovative and socially responsible Danube region
Priority axis 2	Environment and culture responsible Danube region
Priority axis 3	Better connected and energy responsible Danube region
Priority axis 4	Well-governed Danube region

Source: <http://www.southeast-europe.net/>

In relation to the territorial scope of this study, we should analyze the possibilities of CBC development, which will arise from the Danube Programme action within our target regions, including the territory of Bulgaria and Serbia.

We should mention that in the Territorial Development Concept of Bulgaria for the period 2013-2025 the following strategic objectives were defined:

- Territorial cohesion;
- European integration, competitiveness and innovation;
- Environmental protection.

The Danube, as a potential for transnational development, is already included in the vision of the Spatial plan of Serbia. According to the document, the cross-border and transnational cooperation with the neighboring regions will get a particular emphasis in the future. Considering the expansion of ecological networks and protected areas, the planning material dedicates a great role to the Danube and to its tributaries. In other words, CBC and its development follow the strategic objective which aims to interconnect the Danube region and environmental protection with transnational focus.

The EU Strategy for the Danube Region was adopted in 2011. This Strategy has the same territorial scope as the Danube Transnational Programme /also known as the new Danube Programme/. However, the fact should be emphasized that the EU Strategy and the Danube Programme are two different instruments developed for similar aims but acting on different levels and principles.

Danube Transnational Programme	EU Strategy for the Danube Region
developed for similar aims but acting on different levels and principles	
transnational programme	macro-regional strategy
their matching territory and objectives provide great opportunities for cooperation between the two	
the Programme will contribute to the Strategy's thematic goals by implementing relevant cooperation projects, and it might also support the institutional cooperation of stakeholders and institutions of the Danube Strategy	

Source: <http://www.southeast-europe.net/>

The Danube region strategy covers the following 4 pillars and 11 priority areas:

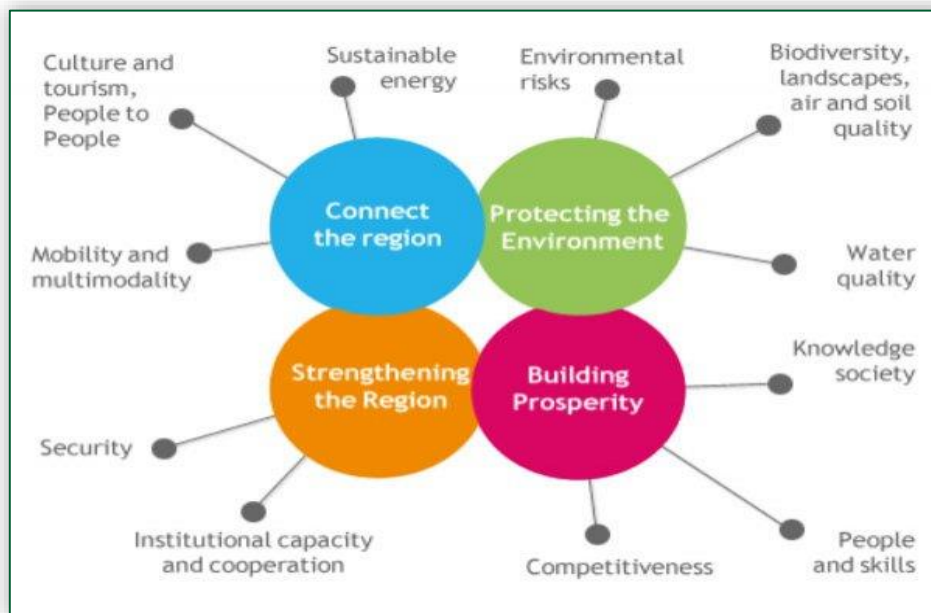


Figure 19: Pillars and priority areas defined in the EU Strategy for the Danube region /EUSDR/
 Source: <http://www.danube-region.eu/>

Each one from the 11 priority areas is managed by 2 Priority Area Coordinators /PACs/. With regard to the roles of Bulgaria and **Romania**:

- Priority Area Mobility Waterways, "To improve mobility and inter-modality of inland waterways", is coordinated by Austria and Romania.
- Priority Area, "To promote culture and tourism, people to people contacts", is coordinated by Bulgaria and Romania.
- Priority Area, "To manage environmental risks", is coordinated by Hungary and Romania.
- Priority Area of the EUSDR, "To work together to tackle security and organized crime", is coordinated by Germany and Bulgaria.

The new CBC Romania – Bulgaria for the period 2014-2020 aims to contribute to objectives which were defined in the Strategy "Europa 2020", explicitly, to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The CBC Programme also interacts with the EU Strategy for the Danube Region through an integrated approach addressing common territorial challenges.

The strategic framework of the new CBC Programme takes into account the need from increasing of cross-border network, interactions and connections in different development areas: social, economic, environmental within CBC region in the period to 2020.

The three thematic priority areas defined in the Programme framework which will provide opportunities for CBC development and partnership establishment between two countries in the sphere of tourism sector in its role as a priority sector within the CBC region; social integration - focusing on the need of investments in youth, education and skills; and actions in the area of environmental protection - taking into account the climate change challenge.

As a result of the foregoing, we can conclude that the current programming period 2014-2020 will provide good opportunities for CBC development and partnership establishment between the territory of Bulgaria and Romania. In this regard, we believe that the future efforts in terms of CBC between should be aimed at the utilization of the existing good potential for cooperation in different development areas: economic, social, environmental protection.

11. Summary

The recent case study has attempted to study, analyze and investigate a specific cross-border cooperation which has been formulating between Ruse and Giurgiu. Case study collected all the needed information about this cooperation. It approached the cross-border cooperation from several point of view, like geographical frontiers, geographic determinants of cooperation; historical determinants of cooperation; institutional determinants of cooperation, reflection of the already existing institutional attempts of the cooperation; enumeration of the most important and most successful implemented and ongoing projects between Ruse and Giurgiu. Furthermore, the case study analyzed the cross-border cooperation through SWOT approach, where strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were described; and finally the future aims and goals were characterized. Some of the most important SWOT finding are the following, strategic position of the cross-border region within the Balkans, the region is an important transport corridor are the most important strengths; negative natural growth and negative impact of the global economic crisis constitute the most pressing weaknesses; availability of EU funding, increasing trade-offs are the most important options; strong tendency for weak economic performance and outward oriented migration which causes significant brain-drain are the most causing threats for the cross-border cooperation.

The important role of the Association Danubius was also briefly characterized because, its activity is confirmed by its participation in the implementation of CBC projects including the territory of Ruse District and Giurgiu County. In this regard, it should be mentioned that it is a driver for successful projects under the financial support of Romania - Bulgaria Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013.

The PHARE Programme for CBC development between Bulgaria and Romania has a great significance in the region. The projects take into account the existing potential for tourism development within the CBC region. Final result of the projects elaborated a variety of touristic route at cross-border level including the territory of Ruse/Giurgiu. On the other hand, the successfully implemented projects under CBC have created the basic framework of successful cross-border initiatives between both countries in the area of tourism sector.

The ability of cooperation between Ruse/Giurgiu is influenced by several factors, either by historical linkages and connections, or through the capacity of these two regions to generate substantial interaction with the power to improve social, economic and/or cultural layers of the regions. This ability has been proved, either by implemented projects or by the still ongoing cross-border projects.

Transnational and cross-border cooperation is always a "bottom-up" initiative, where the local people articulate the need and desire for cross-border cooperation, irrespective of the level of decentralization. The need for cooperation of local authorities /cities, municipalities or group of municipalities/ leads to the creation of associated regional groupings, which often exceed

the limits of several administrative regions. It is important to underline that the region has the capacity and the need to establish a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation dedicated to Cross-Border initiatives. In addition, both countries may dedicate administration bodies to Cross-border initiatives and territorial cohesion.

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