



UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ



GUVERNUL ROMÂNIEI



2 Introduction

2.1 Background and context

This report is part of the Ex-ante Evaluation of the Partnership Agreement (PA), commissioned by the Ministry of European Funds to the Consortium Ecorys Nederland – L&G Business Services srl.

The Ex-ante Evaluation of the PA 2014-2020 is delivered under the framework agreement no. 23/22.08.2011 for the evaluation of structural instruments during the period 2011-2015, lot 1 – evaluations, subsequent contract no. 5.

The objective of the ex-ante evaluation of the PA is defined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) as:

“to bring a real added value and to improve the quality of the documents that are to be negotiated with the European Commission (EC), according to the new draft regulations on the funds of the Common Strategic Framework (CSF) 2014-2020 and to make value judgments and recommendations regarding the programming related aspects, issued by experts independent of those involved in programming”.

The ToR defines three specific objectives of the assignment:

- To ensure the internal and external coherence of the PA;
- To ensure the adequate administrative capacity of the authorities and beneficiaries for a good implementation of the CSF funds;
- To ensure adequate electronic systems for the exchange of information between the authorities and the beneficiaries.

The present report contributes to the second objective of the assignment.

The implementation of the 2007-2013 programmes raised concerns regarding the current administrative capacity of the authorities and beneficiaries involved in the EU funds³ management, because the low performance of the operational programmes, the slow implementation, low absorption of funds and the corrective measures applied by the European Commission.

The preparations for the 2014-2020 period has already started and the Romanian authorities have to undertake the appropriate measures to ensure the system for the implementation of the CSF funds will have sufficient administrative capacity for delivering the expected outputs and achieve the EU policies objectives.

This current report aims to inform the Ministry of European Funds on what has worked and what did not work in the system, which weaknesses have to be addressed, and which strengths could be used in building the administrative capacity for the 2014-2020 period.

³ By EU funds we refer in this report the following: Cohesion Policy Funds (European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund, and European Social Fund), the Common Agriculture Policy Fund (European Agricultural Rural Development Fund) and the Common Fisheries Policy (European Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Fund).