OVERVIEW OVER THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF EUROPEAN FUNDING PROGRAMS

PRIVIRE DE ANSAMBLU ASUPRA OBIECTIVELOR PRINCIPALE ALE PROGRAMELOR DE FINANŢARE EUROPEANĂ

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Abstract: *Structural and Cohesion Funds are financial instruments through that the EU acts to achieve the three objectives of Cohesion Policy by implementing Operational Programs to eliminate economic and social disparities between regions, in order to achieve economic and social cohesion.*

Key words: *objectives, European funding, programs*

INTRODUCTION

European Union is one of the most prosperous regions in the world. Upon a further broadening of its with 10 new members, on May 1, 2004, has the power of an internal market of 25 Member States with over 454 million inhabitants living in 254 regions. But not all Europeans have the same advantages and chances of success in socio-economic terms. The difference is made on area where they live - if is a prosperous or poor area, an expanding area or economic decline, urban or rural area on the outskirts of the European Union or in one of its economic centers. Under these conditions *economic and social cohesion is needed, is also one of the main objectives of the European Union*.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The authors of the paper were used as methods of work: data collection, processing, analysis, observation and their interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Economic and social cohesion policy of the European Union is, above all, a policy of solidarity, and has three objectives:

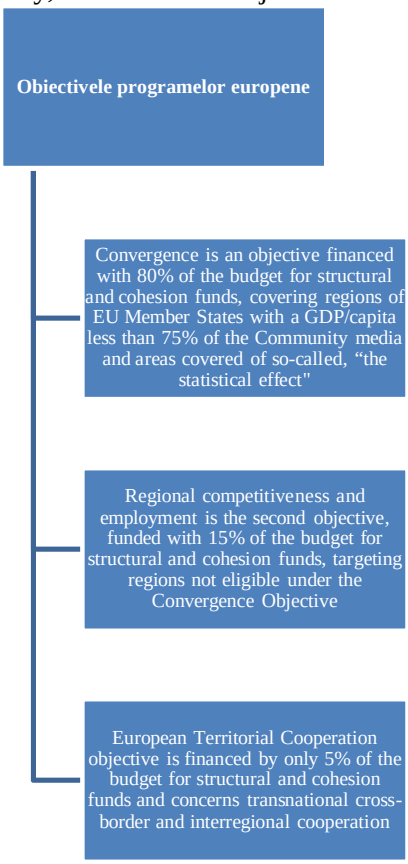


Fig. 1. The goals pursued by European Programs

A. Convergence is an objective financed with 80% of the budget for structural and cohesion funds, covering regions of EU Member States with a GDP/capita less than 75% of the Community media and areas covered of so-called, “the statistical effect";

B. Regional competitiveness and employment is the second objective, funded with 15% of the budget for structural and cohesion funds, targeting regions not eligible under the Convergence Objective;

C. European Territorial Cooperation objective is financed by only 5% of the budget for structural and cohesion funds and concerns transnational cross-border and interregional cooperation.

According to Article 159, Community acts through Structural Funds, Cohesion Fund and other financial instruments to support achievement of these general objectives. Tasks, priority objectives and organization of the Structural Funds are defined by the Council, at the European Commission proposal and in agreement with the European Parliament.

Implementation of pursued objectives by the European Programs is based on a number of principles, as follows:

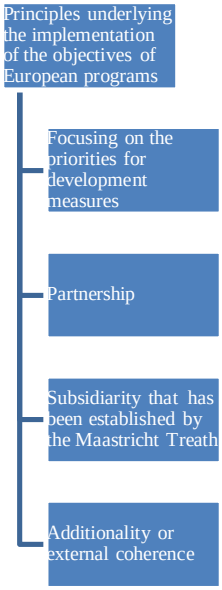


Fig. 2. Principles underlying the implementation of the objectives of European Programs

a. Focus on the priorities for development measures. Intervention is focused on those areas or populations facing the greatest difficulties.

Application of concentration principle allowed a limited number area of intervention;

b. The partnership involves a closer collaboration between the Commission and relevant authorities at national, regional or local level in each Member State of the preparatory phase to the implementation of measures;

c. Subsidiary which was established by the Maastricht Treath. In general terms, this means that a higher authority can not act if a goal is achieved satisfactorily at a lower level, the consequence of this is that it is up to management authorities designated by Member States to select projects that will receive funding and supervise their implementation;

d. Additionally or external coherence due that EU structural aid should be additional and not replace resources already committed by national, regional and local authorities to develop their regions and labor markets.

Working with European funds complying respect of two main charges: [6]

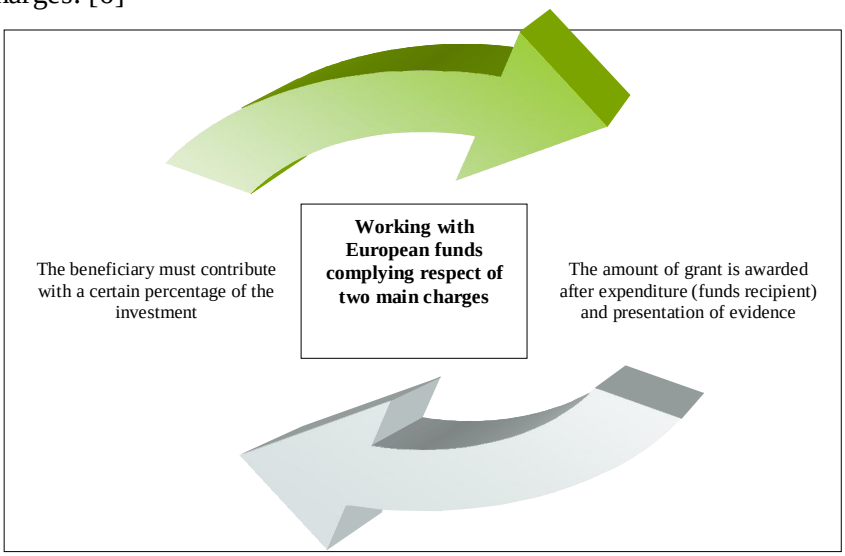


Fig. 3. Conditions regarding European funding programs

1) The beneficiary must contribute with a certain percentage of the investment;

2) The amount of grant is awarded after expenditure (funds recipient) and presentation of evidence.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the most debated aspects of the recent expansion of the European Union (EU) in May 2004 and January 1, 2007 is financing the new Member States. Given the limited size of the EU budget, regional and cohesion development policies are facing fundamental challenges due to gain of economic and social disparities. Experience of former socialist countries shows that the transition has deepened regional disparities because new market forces have gradually replaced the factors that controlled the economy. The basic problem is whether, after a period of increasing regional disparities, will launch a process of " space economic convergence" on long term.

Romania was able to access only 13.7% of nearly 20 billion euro provided by the European Union. Even if Romania has almost 20 billion euros of EU funds in 2007-2010, our country had the lowest percentage of absorption of these funds. Thus, Romania has managed to attract only 13.7% of these funds, while Estonia and Lithuania were absorbed 34.7%, respectively, 33.6% of the money.

Experience gained in the pre-planning period to achieve strategic planning, investments and adequate financing plans are basic ingredient in the integration into the community area.

European institutions are open to Romania, there are significant funds for regional development, which can be accessed and this depends only on how Romania fails to implement, to draw up development projects and access funds allocated for this purpose.

The measure on which Romania uses technical and financial support from the European Union will unfold over the years and will be measured by the speed at which the Romanian economy will adapt and will operate according to European system.

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