



SARURE
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

Presentation of the Region of Western Macedonia

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Hellenic Republic
Region of Western Macedonia

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Region of Western Macedonia



- Situated in the North-West part of Greece.
- Bordering with F.Y.R.O.M. and Albania to the North.

Statistical Data of the RWM

- Surface area: 9.451 km²
- Population (2011): 282.120 inhabitants
- Capital city (Kozani): 70.000 inhabitants
- Population density: 30 persons/ km²
- GDP (2011): 5.100 million €
- GDP/capita (2011): 18.035 €
- Unemployment rate (3rd trimester 2016): 29,8 (%) [the highest unemployment rate in the country and one of the highest in Europe]

Unique characteristics of RWM

- **Population distribution: 56% of population lives in rural areas.**
- **82% of total surface is mountainous and semi-mountainous areas.**
- **Large percentage of surface waters (2/3 of greek surface waters).**
- **Very rich flora and fauna.**
- **Large scale mining activities.**
- **High pollution levels.**
- **In Western Macedonia, the mobility patterns are dominated by a high system dependency on road transport. The transport sector has the highest energy consumption rate in Greece (around 37%) and it emits 19% of CO₂ emissions, being the second largest source of CO₂ emissions after the power generation sector (data 2012, Ministry of Environment and Energy).**



General characteristics of RWM

- ***Cross border connection:*** the strategic geographical position greatly aids European absorption of local products and services.
- ***Accessibility:*** the region's geographical isolation was altered with the construction of Egnatia motorway and its vertical axes.
- ***Energy production:*** it contributes to over 50% of the nation's total energy production.
- ***Forest wealth & organic agriculture:*** rare ecosystems, potential for developing traditional organic crops.
- ***Cultural features:*** the cultural reserves are abundant and of significant archaeological, historical and folklore features.
- ***Tourism:*** important efforts taking place for the development of the mountain leisure tourism, ecotourism and winter tourism in the ski resorts of the area.

Presentation of the Organisation

- **It is a large public Organisation of second degree local Government and one of the 13 regional authorities in Greek territory.**
- **Its permanent staff is 620 people and also cooperates occasionally with external experts (outsourcing).**
- **The permanent staff is divided in all four regional units of Western Macedonia Region: Florina, Grevena, Kastoria and Kozani.**



Capabilities of the RWM

- All policy tool & EU projects related bodies and staff (RDF, Managing Authority, Region of Western Macedonia) are under the supervision and direction of the regional governor of Western Macedonia and are cooperating since 2000 to manage ESRF and ESF structural funds and all European Projects (Interreg, MED etc).
- The Region is the main strategic stakeholder in Western Macedonia responsible for all structural funds policy tools (ROP 2014-2020).
- The Regional Operational Programme 2014 – 2020 of the Region of Western Macedonia contributes towards achieving Europe 2020 targets for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth aiming to boost economic development, create jobs and help authorities and institutions to become more competitive and innovation driven. *The Region of Western Macedonia aims to achieve these goals through developing the regional innovation smart specialization strategy and managing actions under the Programme.*

Relevant previous work

- The Region has large experience in EU level initiatives. The last 10 years it has successfully implemented many EU projects tackling different issues of significant importance for the Region.
- It completed successfully the following projects from 2010 to 2016:
 - ✓ Related to energy and renewable energy sources: 1. BIOCLUS / FP7 (2010-2012), 2. PROFOR BIOMED / MED (2011-2014), 3. BIOENAREA / INTERREG IVC (2010-2013), 4. MARIE / MED (2010-2012), 5. GABE (2014-2015), 6. EMPOWER / INTELLIGENT ENERGY EUROPE (2012-2013), 7. SMART in MED / MED (2011-2013) and 8. SHARP (2010-2012).
 - ✓ Related to entrepreneurship: 9. LOCFOOD / INTERREG IVC (2012-2014), 10. DESUR / INTERREG IVC (2012-2014), 11. DIFASS / INTERREG IVC (2012-2014), 12. SMART+ / INTERREG IVB (2010-2013) and 13. INACT (2014-2015)
 - ✓ Related to culture: 14. HISTCAPE / INTERREG IVC (2012-2014)

State of rural retail at the Region

- ✓ **Rural retail businesses are supported only by general actions / measures supporting competitiveness and employment, with rural areas' special conditions not taken into consideration**
- ✓ **Rural retail is not a sector that has attracted attention for support. Efforts have been made rather on securing staying at rural areas of the branches of banks, post offices and public services (i.e. police). Such efforts failed due to harsh economic conditions and needs for cost savings at expenses of rural population well being**
- ✓ **Any attempts of rural retail businesses to enrich the services they could provide to local people was not supported by any organized initiative**
- ✓ **Planned activities /measures to support entrepreneurship and competitiveness of SMEs at rural areas, neglected the role of rural retail businesses on social cohesion and actual sustainable development**

Expectations from SARURE

- ✓ **Transfer good practices providing details on methodologies, context and economic and social conditions under which they have been implemented (and can be successfully adapted and transferred)**
- ✓ **Create synergies among various initiatives (that may seem incompatible) yet can enhance the whole entrepreneurship environment at rural areas, putting rural retail challenge at its real dimensions**
- ✓ **Provide concrete methodologies on how rural retail can be supported and the actual role can have in rural areas development in the new forthcoming programming period**

(i.e. Region of Western Macedonia is a core member in the joint initiative of European regions for transition to post lignite era. We can study how rural retail can be transformed to support population in villages (rural areas) that were so far dependent by population working to lignite power plants and mines)

New Projects, Funds Mobilization

- ✓ Revision of Regional Operational Programme provides an excellent opportunity for mobilization of available funds to formulate new projects
- ✓ Synergies will be sought among various territorial cooperation projects active in the Region of Western Macedonia (run by the region or other key stakeholders) through stakeholders meeting, where SARURE concept will be discussed under wider perspective
- ✓ Enrichment of existing initiatives such as CLLD/LEADER (International/national) to include rural retail in their activities in a way that both rural retail businesses and local communities will benefit in a win win situation
- ✓ Public – Private sectors partnerships will be sought **(expected also input from SARURE)**



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Thank you for your attention!

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