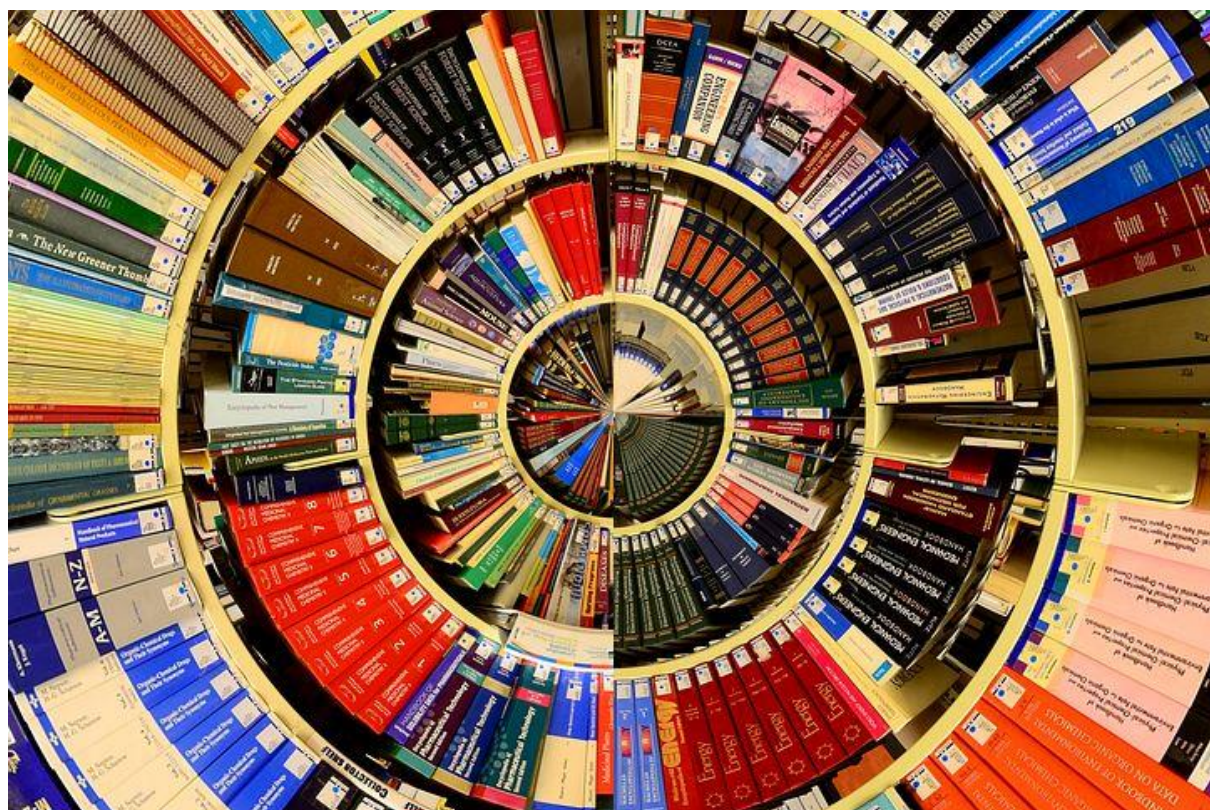


REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

PP5 – North-East Regional Development Agency

Draft 1

14 December 2021



Research &
innovation



Contents

- Part I General information 3
- Part II Policy context 3
- Part III Action envisaged 4
 - III.1 Background 4
 - III.2 Details on the Action 5
 - Sub-Action A1 5
 - Sub-Action A2 7
 - Sub-Action A3 8
 - Sub-Action B. 8
 - Sub-Action C 10



Part I: General information

Project: TraCS3

Partner organisation: North-East Regional Development Agency (PP5)
(North-East RDA)

Country: Romania

NUTS2 region: North-East

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Part II: Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed:

- Romania's Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2014-2020, Priority Axis 1 "Technological Transfer";


respectively:

- North-East Romania's Regional Operational Programme 2021-2027, Priority Axis 1 "Development of research and innovation capacities and adoption of advanced technologies" (the axis that continues PA1 of the ROP 2014-2020).

Policy owner:

- For ROP 2014-2020: The Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration;
- For ROP 2021-2027: North-East RDA

TraCS3-objective for North-East RDA: As an Intermediary Body for ROP 2014-2020, North-East RDA has aimed to improve the implementation of the PA1, supporting the improvement and the development of the capacity and the performance of existing research and innovation (R&I) infrastructures and by fostering the establishment of new innovation infrastructures, drawing on the experience exchanges and the lessons learnt during the TraCS3 project.



Regional R&I stakeholders have been involved in TraCS3 activities, their input being constantly observed in the various phases of the implementation of the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP 2014-2020, also in the communication with the Managing Authority of the policy instrument.

This input is all the more important in the current programming period, since North-East RDA has become Managing Authority in 2020, in charge with the elaboration of the current Regional Operational Program 2021-2027 and of the corresponding Application Guidelines). In its new quality of Managing Authority, North-East RDA has the possibility to better and faster align the policy instrument to the regional needs and capacities.

Part III: Action envisaged

Developing an interactive map of the R&I services offered by the regional infrastructure, and connecting this map to a virtual space for brokerage and partner search

III.1 Background


The departing point of the TraCS3 Regional Action Plan for North-East Romania is the **gap analysis** conducted in Semester II (December 2018 – May 2019), aimed to seize possible discrepancies among the innovation infrastructure of the partner regions, and also, between the actual and the desired situation of the research & innovation (R&I) facilities of each region.

14 stakeholders from North-East Romania joined this study, by answering a survey aimed to:

- identify the innovation and technological transfer facilities active in the regional S3 areas;
- explore specific gap analysis indicators;
- identify examples of good practices (successful innovation projects developed within the respective facilities).

Discussions of the results with the regional stakeholders revealed a number of challenges confronted by the owners of the R&I infrastructure in North-East Romania, and also allowed a **preliminary mapping of the services offered by these facilities** to internal and, possibly, external users. Though indicative and useful at the moment, this map had a number of limitations:

- the number of respondents (not all relevant infrastructure owners answered the survey);
- the questions of the survey were not region specific, all partner regions using the same survey, with the same type of indicators, so to enable an inter-regional comparative



analysis; thus, it may be possible that some information particularly relevant for specific regions was not covered by the survey, hence, not mapped;

- though the survey addressed the R&I services offered by the respondent facilities, the respective questions were too general and lacked a quantitative or qualitative assessment of the declared services;
- for the purpose of the analysis, the questions were focused on the perception and the needs of the infrastructure owners, and not on the perception and the needs of the users.

Drawing on the results of this gap analysis and on the subsequent discussions with the stakeholders, also, in line with its role of facilitator of the interaction among the players of the regional innovation ecosystem, North-East RDA wishes to improve this map and transform it into an instrument that better meets the needs of both providers and users of the R&I services in North-East Romania. This new instrument aims to improve the visibility of the regional offer of R&I services and to provide a virtual space for partners identification, so to eventually increase the number of project applications in the field of innovation and technological transfer, submitted for financing through the Priority Axis 1 of the ROP 2021-2027.

III.2 Details on the Action

The action that will be implemented in North-East Romania will have two main phases:

- A. Mapping the research, development & innovation (RDI) services offered by the regional infrastructure;
- B. Connecting the map of the RDI services offer to an online platform for the brokerage of RDI services, recently developed (to a smaller scale) by North-East RDA.

Sub-Action A1: Elaboration of a set of criteria for inclusion on the map of RDI services providers

The purpose of this sub-action is to establish the eligibility criteria that must be accomplished by the regional RDI facilities, in order to be included on the map. These criteria will observe:

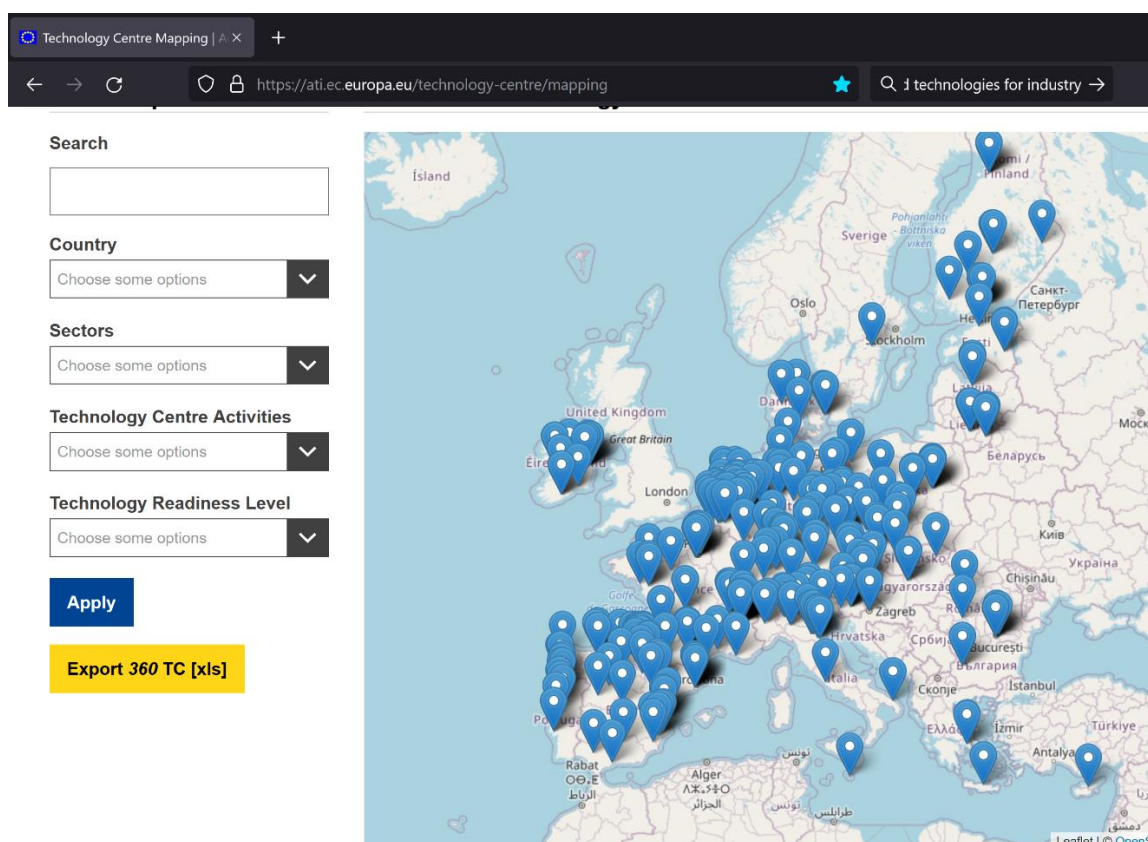
- a) *The regional needs for technological transfer* → drawing on:
 - the priorities of the Strategy for Research and Innovation for Smart Specialisation of North-East Romania (RIS3 Nord-Est);
 - the results of a previous study conducted in the region in this topics (i.e., Loeffler, J. (2017). *Analysis of needs, offers and gaps for Innovation & Technology Transfer services for companies in the North-East region of Romania*. Steinbeis Europa Zentrum, Contract N° CCI 2016CE16BAT071);
 - the types of RDI and technological transfer activities eligible for financing under the Regional Operational Programme of North-East Romania (the policy instrument addressed within TraCS3).

b) *The most recent qualitative and quantitative requirements for the inclusion on the Romanian National ESFRI Roadmap*

- the criteria for the inclusion on the ESFRI National Roadmap have been updated in 2021 by the national administrators in charge;
- while only a few facilities from the region were included in the previous edition of the National Roadmap (2017), their number has increased in the 2021 edition.

c) *European best practices for mapping technological transfer facilities*

- one such reference is the European Commission's initiative [Advanced Technologies for Industry \(ATI\)](#), see figure below);
- unfortunately, at present, no infrastructure from North-East Romania is included in the European map.



Source: <https://ati.ec.europa.eu/technology-centre/mapping>, retrieved on 26 Nov 2021

Based on these references, we intend to elaborate a set of criteria that will be adapted to the realities of the region. Since North-East Romania is classified as a *moderate innovator*, it is possible to establish a more inclusive regional set of criteria, in order to better serve the needs of the stakeholders. However, during Sub-Action A1, we expect to identify in the region facilities that accomplish the *ATI* criteria, and we will forward their coordinates in order to be included on the European map.

Players involved and their role:

- a) North-East RDA:
 - to conduct desk research and elaborate a first draft of the set of criteria for inclusion on the regional map of providers of RDI services;
 - to discuss the draft with the relevant stakeholders;
 - to elaborate a survey aimed to identify the regional offer of RDI services;
- b) Regional stakeholders (owners of RDI infrastructure, members of the Academic Advisory Commission of the Regional Innovation Board of North-East Romania, other relevant members of the innovation ecosystem) → to provide feed-back on the above-mentioned set of criteria.

Time frame:

January – May 2022

Costs:

Working time of North-East RDA, as well as the input of the stakeholders.

Sub-Action A2: Conducting a regional survey for the identification of the RDI services providers

The purpose of this action is to identify the actual offer of RDI services provided to the industry by the regional infrastructure.

Players involved and their role:

- a) North-East RDA:
 - To disseminate in the region the survey elaborated during Sub-Action A1;
 - To collect and analyse the answers; to assess the infrastructures and the services that comply to the selection criteria;
 - To the extent that potential candidates will be identified in the region, to send proposals for the inclusion of the RDI facilities from North-East Romania on the European Commission's *ATI* map for technological transfer.
 - To draw and make public a report on the results of the survey.
- b) Regional stakeholders:
 - To participate in the survey and provide the necessary data for the assessment of their offer of RDI services;
 - To provide feed-back on the report regarding the results of the survey.

Time frame:

June – September 2022

Costs:

Working time of North-East RDA, as well as the input of the stakeholders.

Sub-Action A3: Drawing an interactive digital map of the regional offer of RDI services for the industry

Facilities that comply to the selection criteria will be placed on an interactive digital map that will provide information on their offer of RDI service.

The map will be realized on the [MapHub](#) Platform.

Players involved and their role:

- a) North-East RDA → to elaborate the digital map and introduce on it the relevant information;
- b) Regional stakeholders → to check their data introduced on the map and provide feedback on the functionalities of the map.

Time frame:

October 2022 – January 2023

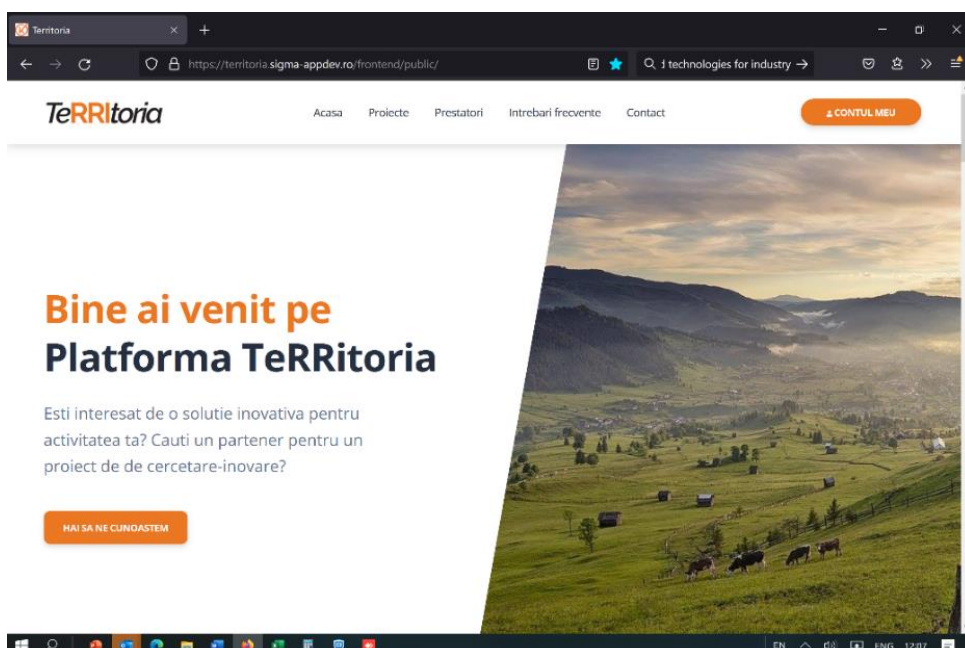
Costs:


Annual subscription to MapHub Platform – already acquired by North-East RDA, who is using the platform for other projects.

Working time of North-East RDA, as well as the input of the stakeholders.

Sub-Action B: Extension of the online brokerage platform for RDI services

North-East RDA has recently created a digital platform for the brokerage of RDI services, as part of a territorial experiment developed within the Horizon 2020 Project *TeRRitoria – Territorial Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) through the involvement of local R&I actors* (Feb 2019 – Feb 2022, Grant no. 824565), in which North-East RDA is a partner.





Because the scope of TeRRItoria in North-East Romania was narrower, encompassing only two micro-regions from the mountain area, the Platform was focused on the needs of the potential beneficiaries from the respective two communities, and only on two regional S3 priority areas, i.e., tourism and agri-food.

After February 2022, when *TeRRItoria* project ends, North-East RDA intends to extend the scope of the brokerage platform, in order to include all the priority areas of RIS3 Nord-Est (7 sectors) and serve potential beneficiaries from the whole region.

A direct *connection to the digital map of the RDI service providers* will be introduced in the platform, so to increase the visibility of the mapped entities. Also, mapped entities will have the opportunity to register on the platform and start searching potential beneficiaries for their services and/or potential project partners.

The platform will also provide additional information on the available resources for the development of innovation projects in the S3 areas.

For the time being and on a short term, the platform is administrated by North-East RDA. However, on a longer term, a transfer of this task towards another stakeholder in the region would be desirable.

TraCS3 stakeholders have already been presented this Platform and informed about the opportunity contribute to its optimization with their feed-back and suggestions.

Players involved and their role:

- a) North-East RDA
 - to develop and extend the platform;
 - to further present it to the regional stakeholders, collect their feed-back, and adjust the platform accordingly;
- b) Regional stakeholders
 - to provide feed-back on the functionalities of the platform, as well as suggestions for optimization.
 - any voluntary support to the development of the platform will be sought and welcome.


Time frame:

March 2022 – January 2023

Costs:

Working time of North-East RDA, as well as the input of the stakeholders.

If possible, an additional financing source will be searched for the further development of the platform. However, the simple extension of the scope of the platform does not require additional funds.



Sub-Action C: Promotion and usage of the digital map and of the brokerage platform for RDI services

Players involved and their role:

- a) North-East RDA
 - will promote the platform on all its communication channels;
 - will assist stakeholders (both potential providers and potential beneficiaries of the RDI services) in using the two digital tools: the map and the platform;
- b) Regional stakeholders
 - to use the map and the digital platform;
 - to update their profile information, when necessary;
 - to contribute to the promotion of the two digital tools.

Time frame:

January – May 2023

Costs:

Working time of North-East RDA, as well as the input of the stakeholders.

If possible, an additional financing source will be searched for the further development of the platform. However, the simple extension of the scope, *in se*, does not require additional funds.

Date

Signature

Stamp of the organisation