



**REGIONAL ACTION PLAN  
THE SOUTH-EAST REGION OF ROMANIA**



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## Part I – General information

**Project:** INNOTRANS - Enhancing transport innovation capacity of regions

**Partner organisation:** South-East Regional Development Agency – SE RDA

**Other partner organisations involved** (if relevant): n/a

**Country:** ROMANIA

**NUTS2 region:** SOUTH-EAST REGION

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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: Regional Operational Programme for 2014-2020, Priority Axis 1: Promoting technological transfer, Investment Priority 1.1, Operation C-SME investment for implementation of a research – innovation result in partnership with a TTC (Innovation and Technological Transfer Entity).**

Investments in research, innovation and entrepreneurship represent the core of Europe 2020 Strategy and also a key response of Europe to the difficulties created by the economic crisis. Regional Operational Program (ROP) is one of the key financing sources aiming to support regional development in Romania. In particular, ROP 2014-2020 aims to increase the overall economic competitiveness and improve the living conditions of local and regional communities by supporting the development of the business environment, infrastructure and services for the sustainable development of the regions so that they can effectively manage resources and capitalize on their potential for innovation and assimilation of technological progress.

The strategic document covers various fields, from innovation and technology transfer, public infrastructure and urban development, SMEs development etc.

At institutional level, the Managing Authority (MA) of 2014-2020 ROP is the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration (former Ministry of Public Works, Development and Public Administration). The South-East Regional Development Agency represents the Intermediate Body for 2014-2020 ROP in the South-East Region of Romania having

delegated tasks from the MA consisting in: launching and promotion of the calls for proposals, projects evaluation, carrying-out the projects contracting and monitoring phases.

2014-2020 ROP includes an entire axis dedicated to enhance technology transfer and innovation - Priority Axis 1 "Promoting technological transfer".

The specific objective of the priority axis/investment aims at increasing **innovation in companies** by supporting innovation and technology transfer entities in **areas of smart specialisation**. According to the South-East Region Smart Specialisation Strategy, one of the key economic areas with a potential for smart specialisation is **transport, specifically *Engineering and shipping with sub-areas: Construction and reparation of ships; Shipping transport.***

Shipping industry represents a vector of development for the South-East Region, in particular due to the geographic position of counties Constanța, Galați and Tulcea, but also due to the existence of a tradition in the field of ship building industry and ship repair services in the Region.

The sub-domain of construction and reparation of ships was selected as field of smart specialization considering the following arguments:

- Business is active in the field and contributes to the regional wealth;
- The ship industry represents a vector of development for South-East Region;
- At the regional level, there are education and research institutions in the field of ship industry;
- The existence of National Association of Shipbuilders in Romania (ANCONAV Association), member of SEA Europe Association;
- The comparative advantage of the region (analysed using the Revealed Export Advantage) in what concerns the category of products "Ships and floating structures".

Besides the construction of ships, in the shipyards of South-East Development Region (e.g Constanța Shipyard, Damen Shipyards Galați, Daewoo-Mangalia Heavy Industries, Midia Shipyard, Vard Braila, Vard Tulcea) are performed repairing activities for different types of ships, activities that contribute to the economic growth of the region.

The existing infrastructure related to ships repairs is one of the key strengths of the region. The infrastructure allows the development of shipping industry, increasing the number of jobs in the field, respectively contributes to the development of related industries.

The sub-domain of shipping transport is strongly related to the sub-domain of ship construction, but also to the harbor infrastructure existing in the Region, the most important one being: Constanta Harbor, Tomis Harbor, Braila Harbor, Galati and Tulcea Harbor, Mangalia Harbor.

According to the European Cluster's Observatory star rating, the South-East Region has three stars in the transport and logistics sector also due to the very high level of employment in the shipbuilding industry in the region. Two clusters have been also established in the SE Region: Romanian River Transport and Romanian Maritime Cluster.

Naval engineering has also been developed in the Region due to the fact that the area has high attractiveness for foreign direct investment, as well as the fact that there is an increased capacity to attract European funds and to implement projects in the naval field.

Therefore, the transport sector has a huge potential in the SE Region, but currently the public (and private investment) RTDI funding allocated to the sector is very low while the transport innovation infrastructure and capacities projects are poor.

Under Priority Axis 1 “Promoting technological transfer”, the proposed interventions aim to determine major improvements in terms of changing the structure of the RDI activities that rely on traditional industries characterized by outdated technologies and a weak demand of knowledge results. In this way, it ensures the technology flows and knowledge impact in the area of smart specialisation for growth and mobilization of innovative SMEs that have motivation and capacity to enter into the regional chains of economic value added.

SMEs are important players, but the ecosystem generally fails to connect competitiveness outcomes with RDI activities and there is no adequate transport innovation research infrastructure and capacity support in place.

A key direction is to facilitate the creation of high growth innovative enterprises, which has three structural challenges: development of an excellent research basis focused on smart specialisation areas; strengthen the entrepreneurship capacity with the aim of disseminating and fostering research and innovation in the economy; development of an appropriate framework conditions for innovation based on an overarching strategy supported by stakeholders.

Priority Axis 1 targets companies and other entities carrying out technological transfer activities or which created an infrastructure with the role of technological transfer. It aims to improve the collaboration between academia and SMEs and allow innovation transfer and know-how exchange in order to facilitate the access of products and services on the market.

Priority Axis 1 supports innovation through the following measures:

- 1.1. Creation and development of innovation and technology transfer infrastructures (TTI), including scientific and technological parks, i.e. construction, modernisation, extension and endowment with necessary equipment and software;
- 1.2. Acquisition of specific technological services, including specialised business consultancy;
- 1.3. Investment for SMEs to implement a research result – innovation in partnership with a TT1.

By using the available funds under Priority Axis 1, the eligible beneficiaries can apply for projects focused on innovation and smart specialization which are directly connected with innovation and a specific economic sector, such as transport and services, aiming to develop and enhance the competitiveness in the field of engineering and shipping transport or other connected sector, such as:

- Digitizing of shipping transport activities;
- Digitizing of harbor activities;
- Innovative projects to reduce pollution caused by harbor activity;
- Use of industrial robots for replacing the classic welding formula in the shipyard perimeter;
- Projects for preventing the transfer of contaminated liquid;
- Use of engines based on liquefied natural gas, in order to protect the environment;
- Use of unconventional materials in construction of ships.

The budget of the Priority 1 was divided between 7 less development regions in Romania. According to the budget distribution, the South-East Region has received an allocation of 17,753,329 euro (ERDF and National Budget):

NO	OPERATION TYPE	AMOUNT (euro)
1.1 A	ITT entities	5,131,333
1.1 B	Scientific and technological parks	5,077,102
1.1 C	SME-TTC partnerships	4,997,715
1.2	Lagging behind regions	2,547,179

Priority Axis 1 aims to increase economic competitiveness using technology transfer in order to increase the share of innovative SMEs. A specific intervention in terms of partnership development, new products and projects and their introduction on the market using marketing strategies and tools has been launched in 2018 under Priority Axis 1, Operation C – SMEs in partnership with technology transfer infrastructures.

The **Operation’s goal** is to **create partnership agreements between SMEs and TTCs supporting technology transfer to be achieved through investment and commercialization.**

Actions supported under this Operation are:

- A. Investments in tangible assets;
- B. Investments in intangible assets, strictly necessary for the introduction of research results in the production process;
- C. Investments in developing online marketing tools of SME's own services/products;
- D. Experimental development investments;
- E. Investments in other innovation activities;
- F. Investments in product development activities (good or service) or process.

Key categories of eligible beneficiaries are the SMEs in partnership with technology transfer entities accredited in accordance with the national legislation in force.

## Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

**ACTION 1: Development of the new improved guidelines for the calls of proposals to be launched under 2014-2020 Regional Operational Program, Priority Axis 1 – “Promoting technological transfer”, Investment Priority 1.1 “Promoting investment in R&I, developing links and synergies between businesses, research and development centres and higher education, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation and public service applications, demand enhancing, networking and groups creation, and open innovation through specialisation as well as support for technological and applied research activities, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced production capacities and premium production, in particular in the field of generic technologies and dissemination of general-purpose technologies”, Operation C - “SME investment for implementation of a research – innovation result in partnership with a TTC” with the aim to better adapt expected results and financing requirements to market needs and stimulate companies to prepare and submit product and service innovation projects in partnership with technology transfer organisations.**

The proposed action aims to improve and simplify the procedure for potential beneficiaries to apply for FESI under ROP 2014-2020 Priority Axis 1, that will lead to an improved access to the innovation projects, targeting especially the smart specialization sectors of the SE Region where transport is the most important sector. The Action Plan measures are generally connected to the economic development in the South-East Region and in particular, to the transport sector, since the Beneficiaries of Priority Axis 1 are universities and research centers, TTOs and companies that can contribute to innovation in transport and connected sectors by implementing new or significantly improved goods or services/production with the aim of reducing the unit costs of production and distribution, improving quality.

Therefore, the proposed action will contribute to the achievement of INNOTRANS project objective namely to increase the regional transport innovation capacity by improving the policy instrument envisaged by each territory.

### III.1 The Background

*The lessons learnt from the project that constitute the basis for the development of the present Action Plan.*

Regions of Europe with solid entrepreneurial ecosystems continue to support development on the basis of European funding. A functional relationship between companies, the research environment, and the tertiary sector can generate concrete results in terms of increasing competitiveness by supporting the development of new innovative products and services.

The **good practices** that inspired the actions proposed in the Action Plan are:

- ✚ **Good Practice: “Successful spin-offs of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki” promoted by Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, project partner within INNOTRANS project**

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki has initiated the creation of two spin-off companies aiming to transfer the research and innovation know-how from the University to private market. University academics from the Thermodynamic Laboratory and a team of business professionals have launched a service offer by utilizing the laboratory infrastructure from University. The two companies offer is complementary, one offering emissions studies, tests and analysis while the other is offering software used by engineers to develop ultra-clean combustion engine and powertrain technologies. In 2018, the companies had a turnover of more than 10 mil euro. This is a positive example of successful technological transfer and linking academic sector response with the business sector requirements.

**✚ Good Practice: “Service of one stop shop aiming to play a catalytic role as a single contact point for innovation development and mediation between academia and businesses” promoted by Central Macedonia Region of Greece, stakeholder of INNOTRANS project.**

The second initiative that inspired the policy improvement is the “one stop shop” service offered by the One Stop Liaison Office of the Region of Central Macedonia/Greece aiming to play a catalytic role as a single contact point for innovation development and mediation between academia and businesses. The practice helps to create strong links between research and businesses by reducing the bureaucratic procedures. The One Stop Liaison Office is linking academia, research institutes, qualified personnel and innovation generators with the market (industry and businesses). It helps to improve the technology and innovation transfer, the competitiveness at regional level.

**Justifications for selecting the good practices are:**

- *Presentation of concrete technological transfer examples for product and service innovation* performed by SMEs in collaboration with research. The Thessaloniki project on creating innovative spin offs provides a development model for the South-East Region of Romania. The market approach of research institutions by establishing new firms or strengthening the collaboration with existing firms, is built on two key factors: the research expertise from Public or Private Research Organisations and SMEs market knowledge and ability to commercialize innovative products and services. The good practice of Aristotle University is an example of exploiting university infrastructures and providing expertise in relation with the needs of the business sector. The result of this cooperation can be considered a success, easily transferable case study in other countries where there is will, well-trained staff and research/facilities. It is the ideal way for research results to be connected with expectations of business environment and the results to have a marketing potential. The lessons learnt from the University project emphasize the important role of improved collaboration between research and technology transfer entities and the business environment by creating common business initiatives in which research expertise is integrated.

The similar funding measure previously launched within 2014-2020 ROP proved to have a limited success and looking at real cases of technological transfer, as Greek partners already implemented, the policy instrument can be improved.

- *Creation of an innovation ecosystem at regional level*, where companies build a real partnership with academia and public authorities. The one stop shop structure established by the Central Macedonia Region represents a communication link between universities and companies, facilitating the actual collaboration. Similarly, SE RDA offers helpdesk services for ROP implementation according to the one stop shop logic. The aim is that SE RDA acts more as an intermediary between actors in the Region, by consulting them in terms of needs, limitations, strengths and design Guidelines for call of proposals to overcome their difficulties and increase the access to EU funds.

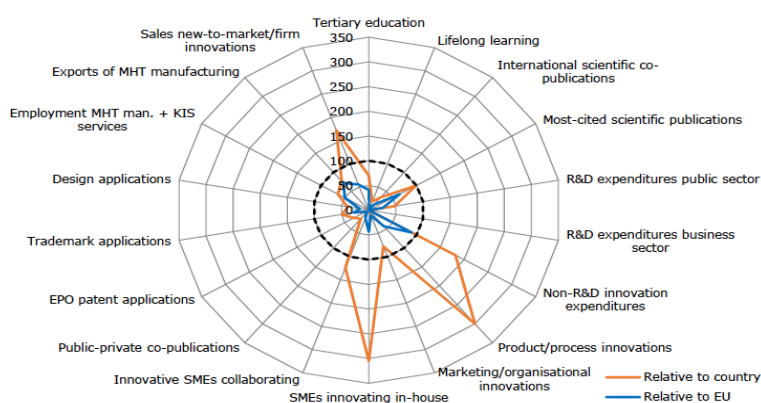
- *Simplification of the documents and procedures in order to stimulate companies to collaborate with the research sector (one stop shop initiative)*. To improve ROP spending and develop regional capacity to prepare and implement innovation related projects, ROP guidelines for technology transfer call of proposals should be correlated with companies and technology transfer needs. Therefore, the proposals for policy instrument improvement envisage to eliminate some of burdensome administrative requirements in the new call for projects.



The policy change in the policy instrument targeted by the Action Plan of the South-East Region is the Regional Operational Program, namely the operation financing companies which are taking innovation results from technological transfer entities and bring them to the market. Both practices from Central Macedonia are useful and complementary for the purpose of the action plan. One indicate concrete ways to market innovation through technology transfer, in this case by creating spin-off companies, while the other creates the conditions for initial collaboration between the research environment and the business environment through networking and partnership. The policy instrument needs to be improved to better integrate the two elements.

Beyond the reasons mentioned above, for pushing forward the smart growth objectives of the South-East Region of Romania, concrete examples of research-company collaboration are of major importance, especially due to the fact that the appetite of firms to innovate at the regional level is quite low while the commercialization of research results is not very positive. This is proven by the relatively low interest that firms in the Region have shown in collaborating with technology transfer centres to bring together innovation in the market, through innovative products and services.

South-East Region is a modest innovator. Radar graph shows below relative strengths of the Region compared to Romania and the EU, highlighting relative strengths (e.g. non R&D innovation expenditures) and weaknesses (e.g. Public-Sector R&D expenditures).



Innovation indicators show the need to stimulate firm innovation through public spending, Priority Axis 1 being the instrument for the Region to support this objective. A major element in this regard is to identify and target the interventions very good, allowing the private sector and technology transfer entities to apply for project opportunities.

### III.2 Detailed Description of the Action

#### III. 2.1 Needs addressed

**So far, 3 calls for proposals have been launched:**

Call P.I. Projects 1.1. A-Supporting innovation and technology transfer entities

Call P.I. Projects 1.1. B – Scientific and technological parks

Call P.I. Projects 1.1.C - SME investment for implementation of a research result of a TTC

The calls for projects were not very successful, results showing either the lack of interest of potential applicants in the region or insufficient knowledge on the preparation of the projects.

Calls	Description of results
1.1 A - Supporting innovation and technology transfer entities	There were 3 projects submitted covering up to 104% allocation of this operation; only one project passed the Administrative Conformity and Eligibility Compliance evaluation phase and entered in the Technical and Financial evaluation. If successful, its budget will cover around 55% of the allocation;
1.1 B - Scientific and technological parks	No projects have been submitted. The amount foreseen for this operation will be reallocated to 1.2 Operation aiming to finance proof of concept for companies.
1.1 C - SME investment for implementation of a research result of a TTC	3 projects were submitted, but all 3 projects were rejected in the Administrative Conformity and Eligibility Compliance evaluation phase.

**Key problems which led to such a limited success of the calls:**

- ✓ A lack of understanding from the Applicants of what *technology transfer* means;
- ✓ Difficulties met by the potential beneficiaries in identifying the partnership with an authorized ITT – which was a mandatory condition according to the guide of applicants;
- ✓ Small companies are not interested in innovation and do not allocated money in their budgets to invest in this area.

**Grounds for rejection during first 1.1.C call for projects:**

- Companies developed investment projects (acquisition of new technologies) while the call objective was to finance projects that implement a research result;
- Companies that applied were rejected in the administrative conformity and eligibility evaluation phase due to the fact that they didn't manage to comply with the administrative requirements of the Program and its management platform ("MySmis" platform).

The problems identified within Operation 1.1.C were concentrated on: administrative documents to be submitted by the Beneficiaries for the evaluation of proposals, eligibility of applicants, types of eligible activities based on a very rigid definition of the concept of technological transfer, roles of parties involved - obligation to work in partnership with a technology transfer centre, state aid/"de minimis" applicable for different type of Applicant.

### III. 2.2 Activities carried out for the policy change

The following activities have already been implemented for achieving the policy change:

- Analysis of the existent conditions to access funding within Priority Axis 1 - Operation C;
- Consultations with direct stakeholders at local/regional level and collection of relevant information to improve the policy instrument;
- Analysis of INNOTRANS good practices in the field of transport and innovation implemented in the partner regions and shared during the interregional cooperation events and study-visits;
- Continuous consultations between INNOTRANS project team and the representatives of ROP Intermediate Body for drafting the proposals in terms of new improved Guidelines for Applicants;
- Meeting organized on 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2019 with the Managing Authority for the discussion of the main changes proposed;
- Managing Authority has requested RDA to come up with a proposal for a more flexible definition of technology transfer;
- Final proposal drafted and submitted to the Managing Authority for new improved guidelines in the framework of the call of proposals to be launched (official notification sent to the Managing Authority on 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2019).

### III. 2.3 Concrete proposals for the policy change improvement

Based on findings, **the following proposals** were provided by SE RDA in the process of consultation launched by the MA of ROP.

#### ***General recommendations to the Guidelines for Applicants***

Similar to the first call, the call for project proposals to remain competitive.

#### ***Recommendations to simplify the evaluation process***

Since many projects failed to pass the administrative and eligibility criteria, the following proposals have been made:

##### ***a) Recommendations regarding the administrative criteria***

*Old version:*

Applicants must submit signed documents in order to prove their eligibility.

*New version:*

In the evaluation phase, the applicants must submit only Declaration of compliance and, in case the project is selected for financing, to provide administrative documents during contracting process.

*Old version:*

In case of clarifications during the administrative and eligibility phase, the mandatory documents for submitting the application form must not be issued after the end date of project submission.

*New version:*

In case of clarifications during the administrative and eligibility phase, the mandatory documents for submitting the application form can be issued after the end date of project submission, but the analysis of the eligibility criteria will refer to the date of submitting the application form and not to the date of checking the administrative and eligibility compliance.

*Old version:*

The declarations signing date is not more than 3 days before the project submission date.

*New version:*

No provisions regarding the declarations signing date.

#### **b) Recommendations regarding eligibility of the project, Applicant/Partner**

*Old version:*

The SMEs must be in partnership with an ITT.

*New version:*

The SMEs can prove the *collaboration with the ITT on a contractual basis*, which is basically a service provider. Thus, the SMEs would have 2 options: either conclude a partnership with an ITT, or sign a contract with an ITT. However, the European Commission has not agreed yet to remove the partnership and to preserve only the contractual relationship. Final decision still needs to be taken in order to eliminate the partnership.

If Applicant choice is to **form a partnership between SME and ITT**, the following aspects should be taken into account:

- Eligibility conditions will apply to both partners;
- The ITT becomes a beneficiary of “de minimis aid” for its activities. ITT entities should check if they also submitted the project on Priority Axis 1.1 A as well. This would affect the amount of “de minimis aid” requested for this call - within the ceiling of 200,000 euro. A maximum threshold of 50% of “de minimis aid” for the ITT was proposed. If the value will be higher, it will be considered ineligible expenses.
- Accreditation of the ITT will be requested in the pre-contracting phase. In the evaluation phase, only proof of submission of the dossier for obtaining provisional accreditation is required.
- There will be settled eligible activities for ITT and for SMEs as well.
- Staff costs and indirect expenses will be eligible for ITT partner. The acquisition of equipment will still not be eligible for ITT.

**If the Applicant choice is to conclude a contract between SME and ITT**, the ITT becomes a service provider and has no longer the duty to fulfil eligibility conditions of the applicant/partner. The SME will be the sole applicant.

No matter the Applicant choice is, the SME must demonstrate that *the services taken from ITT are necessary and sufficient to introduce the product on the market*.

#### **Recommendations to improve/change indicators**

*Old version:*

It is mandatory to maintain the indicator “number of employees”.

*New version:*

- It is no longer compulsory to keep the indicator “number of employees”;
- Mandatory indicator: “number of new or significantly improved product/service/process developed during the project implementation, but not as a result of the acquisition of cutting-edge technology”;
- Optional indicators: profitability and internationalisation.

***Recommendations to improve the definition of “technological transfer” included in the Guide of Applicants***

*Old version:*

The technological transfer represents any activity that results in launching new or significantly improved products on the market (goods and services), production or provision of services, new or significantly improved, all of them resulting from the implementation of the research results carried out in phase 1 of projects. Technological transfer for product and process can be accompanied by new methods and models (organization, marketing, marketing, etc.) or significantly improved methods and models.

The proposal below aims to simplify the definition and allow a better access to EU funding:

*New version:*

The technological transfer represents any activity resulting in launching new or significantly improved products on the market (goods and services), new or significantly improved production or service processes, resulted from taking over the ITT research results, according to the areas of smart specialisation found in annex 2a of the Guide of Applicants.

***Recommendations to improve the definition of “product innovation” included in the Guide of Applicants***

*Old version:*

Product innovation (good or service) is the introduction of a new or significantly improved good or service in terms of its characteristics or use (this may include significant improvements in the specifications, components and materials, built-in software, ease of use or other functional features).

*New version:*

Product innovation (good or service) is the introduction of a new or significantly improved good or service in terms of its characteristics or use (this may include significant improvements in technical specifications, components and materials, built-in software, ease of use, or other functional features). Innovative products may be new to the market or new only for the enterprise. Therefore, an enterprise may have product innovation even if the product is not new to the market, but it is new for the enterprise.

### **Recommendations to improve the definition of “process innovation” included in the Guide of Applicants**

#### *Old version:*

Process innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved production or delivery method (these may include significant changes in techniques, equipment and/or software), with the aim of reducing unit costs of production and distribution, improving quality, producing or distributing new or significantly improved products.

#### *New version:*

Process innovation is the implementation of a new or significantly improved production or delivery method (these may include significant changes in techniques, equipment and/or software), with the aim of reducing unit costs of production and distribution, improving quality, producing or distributing new or significantly improved products. Also, an enterprise can have process innovation, even if it process is not new for the market, but it is new for the enterprise.

### **III.2.4 Preliminary results of the recommendations to change/amend the Guidelines for Applicants**

A consultation process was carried out between the Managing Authority of ROP and SE RDA, as Intermediate Body in terms of improved guidelines for a new call of proposals.

A joint working group between RDAs and Managing Authority was organised on 18<sup>th</sup> of October 2019 for discussing the main proposals.

Follow-up consultations have been held by e-mail until 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2019.

Managing Authority has taken over the proposals and prepares a new version of the Guidelines for Applicants as concern Priority 1.1. Operation C. A new improved guidelines is expected to be launched for public consultation by the beginning of 2020.

The estimated allocated budget for the South-East Region of Romania in terms of the new improved call in the framework of Priority 1.1. Operation C is 4.997.715 EUR from EU funds.

### **III 3. Activities and timing**

<b>Activities to be implemented including the timeframe</b>		
<b>Activity no</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Timing (month/year or specific date where possible)</b>
1.	Organisation of public consultation for the discussion of the new guidelines for applicants in the framework of Investment Priority Axis 1.1 – Operation C	February – March 2020

	<p>The MA is responsible to initiate the public consultation in terms of new content of the applicant guidelines.</p> <p>The IB will support the campaign by publishing the draft version of the guidelines on its website.</p> <p>The INNOTRANS project team will maintain the contact with the IB to find out the preliminary results.</p>	
2.	Launching call for proposals with improved Guidelines in the framework of Investment Priority Axis 1.1 – Operation C	March – April 2020
3.	Projects developed in line with the new guidelines, and submitted for evaluation	April-September 2020
4.	Projects evaluation (administrative compliance & eligibility; technical and financial evaluation)	September – October 2020
5.	Contracting phase of the approved projects	November – December 2020
6	Implementation of the innovation projects	January 2021 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023

### III.4 Players involved

This section refers to the organisations from the South-East Region of Romania who are involved in the development and implementation of the action and their role.

Player	Roles
SE RDA – Intermediate Body (IB) for ROP 2014-2020	<p>Supports the development as well as implementation and monitoring of the Action Plan.</p> <p>IB had a major role in defining the policy improvement by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- relevant information as concern the progress of Priority Axis 1 implementation with focus on Operation C;</li> <li>- weaknesses of the previous Guidelines launched for Priority Axis 1 - Operation C ;</li> </ul> <p>Acts as an intermediary between Applicants and the Managing Authority – MA</p> <p>Monitors the implementation of the Action Plan and acts as a responsible party</p>

	<p>between Applicants and the MA and SE RDA project team by providing new relevant information in terms of the progress of the new call launched for the potential applicants.</p>
SE RDA – Projects Implementation Department	<p>Coordinates the process for the policy improvement;</p> <p>Key responsible to monitor the implementation of actions proposed and acts as a link with the IB ROP Department within SE RDA;</p> <p>Promotes the Action Plan at regional level using different channels.</p>
Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration (former Ministry of Public Works, Development and Public Administration - Managing Authority) - MA for 2014-2020 ROP	<p>Integrates the proposals for the policy change within a new improved guidelines for applicants;</p> <p>Launches in public consultation the new improved call;</p> <p>Coordinates the process of projects implementation within the new call for proposals.</p>
Private sector	<p>Chambers of Commerce and the Europe Enterprise Network offices in the Region, Business Schools and associations of SMEs at the local level are key actors in terms of promotion/dissemination of information regarding the new improved call for proposals among the potential beneficiaries.</p>
Technology Transfer Centers	<p>Two technological centers have been established at regional level: Technological Transfer Center within “Lower Danube” University of Galati County; Technological Information Centre (CIT Danube Delta).</p> <p>They are key actors in terms of success implementation of the new call for proposal under Priority Axis 1 - Operation C since collaboration between TTC and SMEs is mandatory for the projects implementation (partnerships or contracts).</p>



### III.5. Risks

Risk	Level of probability (High, Medium, Low)	Description of Contingency Plan
Limited influence to influence changes proposed by the SE RDA for improving call for projects Guideline	Medium	Engaging Managing Authority and highlight benefits of the policy instrument
Timeframe for the launch of new call for projects – 1.1.C – is delayed due to late publication	Medium	Keep contact with the Managing Authority and update the work plan accordingly
Reduced interest of potential applicants for submitting project proposals within the new call	High	Organising dissemination activities for informing the potential applicants on the Guidelines changes and the estimated impact on the projects implementation and results.
Not reaching the project indicator “Number of enterprises cooperating with research institutions: 11 enterprises”	High	<p>Large dissemination campaign organised by ROP IB targeting increased interest of potential applicants;</p> <p>Mobilizing internal and external experts to ensure a timely evaluation and contracting of projects submitted;</p> <p>However, since the projects implementation phase ends on 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2023 while INNOTRANS project ends on 31.12.2021, the indicator will reflect the status of the projects under implementation within the improved call.</p>

### III.6 Costs

Costs for the implementation of the Action Plan will be covered from Technical Assistance for Priority Axis 1: “Promoting Technological Transfer” within ROP 2014 – 2020 (ERDF and National Budget).

Types of costs covered by the Technical Assistance:

- external expertise costs for: organization of the public consultation; projects evaluation costs (technical and financial evaluation);
- staff costs for: administrative compliance and eligibility of the projects submitted under the new call of proposals; analysis of complaints after checking the administrative compliance and eligibility of the projects submitted under the new call of proposals; contracting costs of the approved projects; implementation costs of the projects (monitoring, financial checking, procurement etc).

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### PART IV – Official Signature(s)

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