

presence of TEN-T road network and TEN-T railway network and the airport Suceava.

Among weaknesses, we identified: demographic decline, demographic ageing, which is accompanied by the elderly population feminization phenomenon. The number of educational units in the investigated rural area decreased; also the teaching staff. In agriculture are still present the (semi-) subsistence household farms, the productivity is low and the livestock sector experienced decline. The traditional wood utilization was abandoned and the mechanization is weak. There are many opportunities in the region and we would like to highlight the next: the European structural funds dedicated to regional development and Crossborder cooperation. The tourism, as one of the main economic activities, has huge potential, but also the agriculture and forestry.

The main threats identified for the region are the following: the continuation of the natality decrease and the migration phenomenon, slow improvements in educational and healthcare system, non-putting into value of the experience in livestock farming and the superior valorification of the wood, non-putting into value of the natural and anthropic resources or non-utilisation of the European funds for TEN-T road and railway networks.

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### **THE PERCULIARITIES OF ROMANIA – UKRAINE – MOLDOVA GROWTH TRIANGLE (RUM GT)**

In light of the current difficult situation in the country it is clear that Ukraine needs numerous reforms in almost all areas to ensure socio-economic development and its integration into the global community as equal partner. It has been long recognized that there is a very hard situation in border regions (the most of them are rural territories) and European integration should be viewed primarily as a catalyst in solving key problems hampering fundamental reforms in country. In order to ensure the competitiveness of border regions, it is necessary to develop new forms of regional interaction and economic integration, different types of international economic activities, the institutional infrastructure, to resolve the problems of employment, environment, security,

etc. Unfortunately, the Ukrainian management in the sphere of the regional development is facing a rather large gap between theory and reality and the country currently lacks new approaches and mechanisms for improving the efficiency of regional interaction between border areas of neighbouring countries in the framework of the neighbourhood policy at all levels taking into account the existing experience and current trends, systemic problems and contradictions.

Regional cooperation and economic integration are considered as a means of enhancing economic development and providing national security within the countries. The functioning of growth triangles in the different regions of the world demonstrates benefits, problems and prospects of regional cooperation and economic integration through this form of interaction (Kivikari, 2001; Nor-Afidah Abd Rahman, 2005; Majid, 2010; Bunnell et al, 2012; Balkar, 2015). It's hard to deny the fact that a growth triangle reflects a kind of philosophy of cooperation and mutual understanding between the partner countries in the context of building a new geopolitical space, based on the interest in socio-economic development and stability of the partner countries.

Despite the recognition of the need to develop different forms of regional cooperation and economic integration, many aspects because of its complexity and contradiction are not investigated. Because Ukraine lags behind European countries considerably in economic development, creation of the growth triangles has enormous potential. As Kivikari (2001) notices: "a growth triangle provides a solution to the strategic and administrative problems of regional cooperation between countries differing in their stages of social and economical development and other features. Areas close to each other but different in their production fundamentals can, as parts of a growth triangle, utilize their comparative advantages by means of strategic alliances and other forms of cooperation. The geographical proximity of the partners is an essential prerequisite for the achievement of savings by trade and industry in their expenses arising from transport, time and information costs. A growth triangle aims at attracting investment and promoting sales in outside markets". As a consequence, it is a very important to understand the real conflicts, constraints and the choices required of investors, taxation authorities, and target enterprises in economic growth zones (Easson, 2004).

Hence, we can state that Ukraine doesn't actively cooperate with Romania and Moldova. However, faced with a deep economic recession and a severe crisis due to the armed conflict in the East of the country, Ukraine will require the accumulation of a wide array of domestic and international resources from different sources and develop new forms of regional cooperation and economic integration with the purpose of catalysing inclusive growth. Successful regional cooperation increases economic performance and generates economic growth.

Finally, Ukraine has to enrich the modern system of regional development with new organizational structures and management technologies, which will be

an actual significant step in the development of regions. In order to achieve the integration of Ukrainian regions into world economic space and increasing competitiveness, Ukraine has to use new forms of regional cooperation and economic integration. Thus, as mentioned above, a growth triangle can be an effective instrument for achieving local socio-economic innovation growth. However, as Majid Rahimah (2010) noticed “successful economic cooperation and integration in this growth area requires collaborative efforts and close cooperation among the participating countries — the government as well as the private sector. The extent of mutual benefits also depends upon the degree of exploitation of economic complementarities, geographical proximity, and infrastructure development in those countries”. Thus, it has to be born in mind that in context of the changing world environment, challenges and contradictions include a growing role of cross-border cooperation for development of the regions and undoubtedly it’s very important to elaborate new forms of interaction as a tool for implementing sustainable development strategy in Ukraine through the improving the use of existing geo-political, geo-economic and scientific potentials in conditions of global challenges.

Thus, we can conclude that a RUM-GT is an important instrument of regional development policy for support measures to use specific features intensification and deepening socio-economic cooperation and resolve existing problems in border regions of Romania, Ukraine and Moldova. The proximity of the EU has prompted the need to accelerate the growth of lagging areas within Ukraine so that they can take advantage of the opportunities from further regional cooperation and economic integration.

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