UDC 339.923:061.1:(498)

Voicilas D.-M., PhD, Associate Professor,
Institute of Agricultural Economics,
Romanian Academy, Romania

SWOT ANALYSIS OF UPPER PRUT EURO-REGION:
FOCUS ON ROMANIAN SIDE

The cross-border cooperation between Romania and Ukraine has a long tradition. Under the present form, it was launched in 1997, when were created two euroregions: "Upper Prut" and "Lower Danube". The paper is focus on "Upper Prut" Euro-region. The Romanian part of the "Upper Prut" Euro-region consists of two counties, namely Suceava and Botosani. The county Suceava lies in the north-eastern part of Romania, borders with Ukraine in the north and neighbours upon the county Botosani in the east. It is the second largest county in Romania. The county Botosani is located at the north-eastern extremity of Romania (it is the northernmost county of Romania), borders on Ukraine in the north and the Republic of Moldova in the east. Together, both counties represent 5.7% of Romania's territory (TEMPO online database). From the administrative standpoint, both counties (NUT 3) belongs to the development region North-East (NUTS 2). According to the methodology used at EU level, the two counties are considered predominantly rural areas (it classifies the territorial units NUTS 3 into three groups: predominantly urban regions, intermediary and predominantly rural regions). In Romanian legislation, the rural area is considered the space into the administration of communes (NUT 5), while the urban area is under the administration of towns (NUT 4). Thus, the "Upper Prut" Euro-region has 169 communes, which in their turn consist of 712 villages.

The SWOT analysis of the "Upper Prut" Euro-region, Romanian side, highlights the strengths and opportunities of the rural area in the region and identifies the past and present weaknesses and the main threats for the future.

The main strengths of the region are: high population density, population relatively stable, a positive balance of migration flows to rural area. The region has preponderantly rural population, a significant share of employed rural population and a balanced age structure of rural active population. The educational system, healthcare system, together with the health insurance system is in a positive evolution. At the same time, the region analysed has a significant cultural-historical and ethnographic heritage. The region has significant land resources, with favourable land, pastures, hayfields and forests. Cereals represent the main crop, which adds to the high value-added crops like potatoes and vegetables (also oil crops and green fodders), plus the livestock sector, which is specialized in bovines and sheep. The tourism is well represented and has huge capacity of development. Also, we include the

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 stuff. 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.

References
1. Database of the Romanian National Institute of Statistics (TEMPO on-line)

UDC 339.923(043.2)

Babinska O. V., PhD, Associate Professor,
Chernivtsi Trade and Economics Institute of University of Kyiv National Trade and Economics University, Chernivtsi, Ukraine

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,