



**The Parliament of Romania
Senate**

Bucharest, 18th December 2017

Courtesy translation

OPINION of the ROMANIAN SENATE

on the COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - Strengthening innovation capacities in Europe's regions: strategies for a stable, sustainable and inclusive growth COM (2017) 376 final.

The Romanian Senate, pursuant to art. 67, art. 148 (2) and (3) of the Romanian Constitution and the Protocol no.2 annexed to the Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, signed in Lisbon in 13rd December 2007, has examined **the COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - Strengthening innovation capacities in Europe's regions: strategies for a stable, sustainable and inclusive growth COM (2017) 376 final.**

Having in view the report of the Committee for European Affairs from 7th December 2017, **the Romanian Senate**, issued on 18th December 2017 an OPINION, as follows:

(1) **considers** that this Communication is a programmatic document that its implementation by all the stakeholders involved, at all levels of governance, can provide a stable, sustainable and inclusive growth at the levels of territories.

(2) **establishes** that the experience gained to date with the current programs related to the cohesion policy, together with the pilot actions and projects outlined in this Communication, will represent useful contributions to the preparation of the next Multiannual Financial Framework.

(3) **highlights the fact that**, in Romania, cluster policy has long been a concern for the Ministry of Economy - Directorate for Industrial Policies, Competitiveness and Energy Transport and was initiated by the Ministry in 2008 through InovCluster study "Development of the concept of technological pole at local level and of the clusters from regional networks, support for the increase of the competitiveness of the economic operators in the manufacturing industry -

Romanian Cluster Mapping”, financed by the Sectoral Plan from the sector of Research and Development from Industry.

In addition, it has been completed the implementation of several projects from which the assessment process (through benchmarking) of the clusters in Romania has started: SEENECO-CIP (training specialists for the benchmarking interview, training of trainers for cluster managers); Cluster PoliSEE (Elaboration of Intelligent Specialization Strategies for cluster development); CLUSTERIX-INTERREG IV C; Adriatic Danubian Clustering; DanuBioValNet (Cluster Partnership for stimulating eco-innovation through the development of a common, organic, value added network for the Danube Region, the Danube Transnational Program - INTERREG, Priority Axis 1, Specific Objective 1.1).

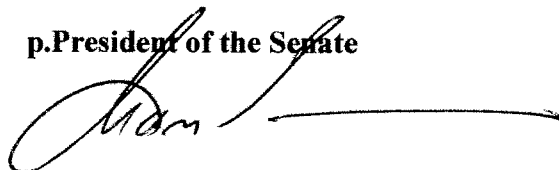
As a result of the constant policy of promoting and supporting cluster formation, at the moment, 70 clusters and competitiveness poles are registered in the Ministry of Economy’s database, of which 23 have been awarded the bronze label and 10 have been awarded the silver label after benchmarking studies carried out by ESCA experts.

At national level, the Intelligent Specialization Strategy was assimilated to the National Strategy for Research and Development 2014-2020 (SNCDI2020), the implementation of this strategy depending on the funding through Competitiveness Operational Program.

Also, the process of elaboration of the National Intelligent Specialization Program, provided by the Governance Program of the Government of Romania, was started, which aims to establish the synergies between the intelligent specialization strategies at national and regional level, ensuring the correlation with the RIS3 platform and identifies the strategic directions to increase business competitiveness by stimulating intelligent specialization processes. This process aims an unified approach of strategic directions for increasing competitiveness through regional analysis of the areas of economic development, together with the analysis of the infrastructure of innovation, technological transfer and human resources.

(4) **draws attention to the fact that** in Romania, six of the eight Development Regions have already developed their RIS3 strategies but, because Regional Intelligence Specialization Strategies do not have a budget, it is hard to believe that stakeholders will be willing to act in accordance with their action plan.

p.President of the Senate



Iulian-Claudiu MANDA