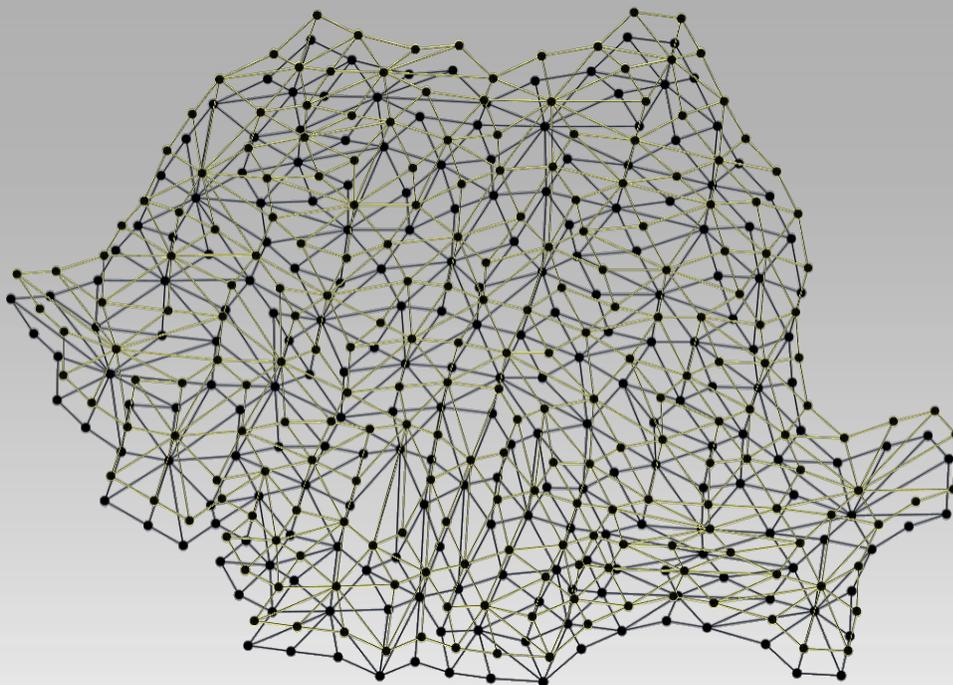


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Annual Progress Report on the Reimbursable Advisory Services Program in Romania

January 1 - December 31, 2019



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ANAP	National Public Procurement Agency
ARACIS	Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
CA	Contracting Authority
CoG	Centre of Government
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CPM	Chancellery of the Prime Minister
DGASPC	General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection
EC	European Commission
ESIF	European Structural Investment Funds
ESL	Early School Leaving
EU	European Union
FY	Fiscal Year
GDSMPP	General Directorate for Strategic Management and Public Policies
GIS	Geospatial Information System
GSG	General Secretariat of the Government
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HRM	Human Resources Management
IB	Intermediary Body
IFI	International Financial Institution
ISP	Institutional Strategic Plan
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MA	Managing Authority
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MNESR	Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoPF	Ministry of Public Finance
MLPDA	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration
MLSJ	Ministry of Labor and Social Justice
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSIIIEI	National Strategy for Infrastructure Investments in Education Institutions
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OP	Operational Programme
POCA	Operational Program for Administrative Capacity
POCU	Operational Programme for Human Capital
PP	Public Procurement
RAS	Reimbursable Advisory Services
RAQAHE	Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SCO	Simplified Cost Options
SIIEI	Strategy for Infrastructure Investments in Education Institutions
TE	Tertiary Education
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group

1. Introduction

1. Through Bank Reimbursable Advisory Services (RAS), the Government of Romania accesses international experience and global best practice in pursuit of strengthening Government capacity in policy and strategy formulation, analysis, diagnosis, sector and project/program planning, design, and implementation. By signing the MoU in January 2016, the Government of Romania acknowledged the value of the Bank's knowledge and advice in the effective implementation of its priorities, strategies, and projects financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) during the 2014-20 programming period, totaling €43 billion. Thus, the MoU facilitates access to a large pool of technical assistance funds - the European Fund for Regional Development, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, and for the first time, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

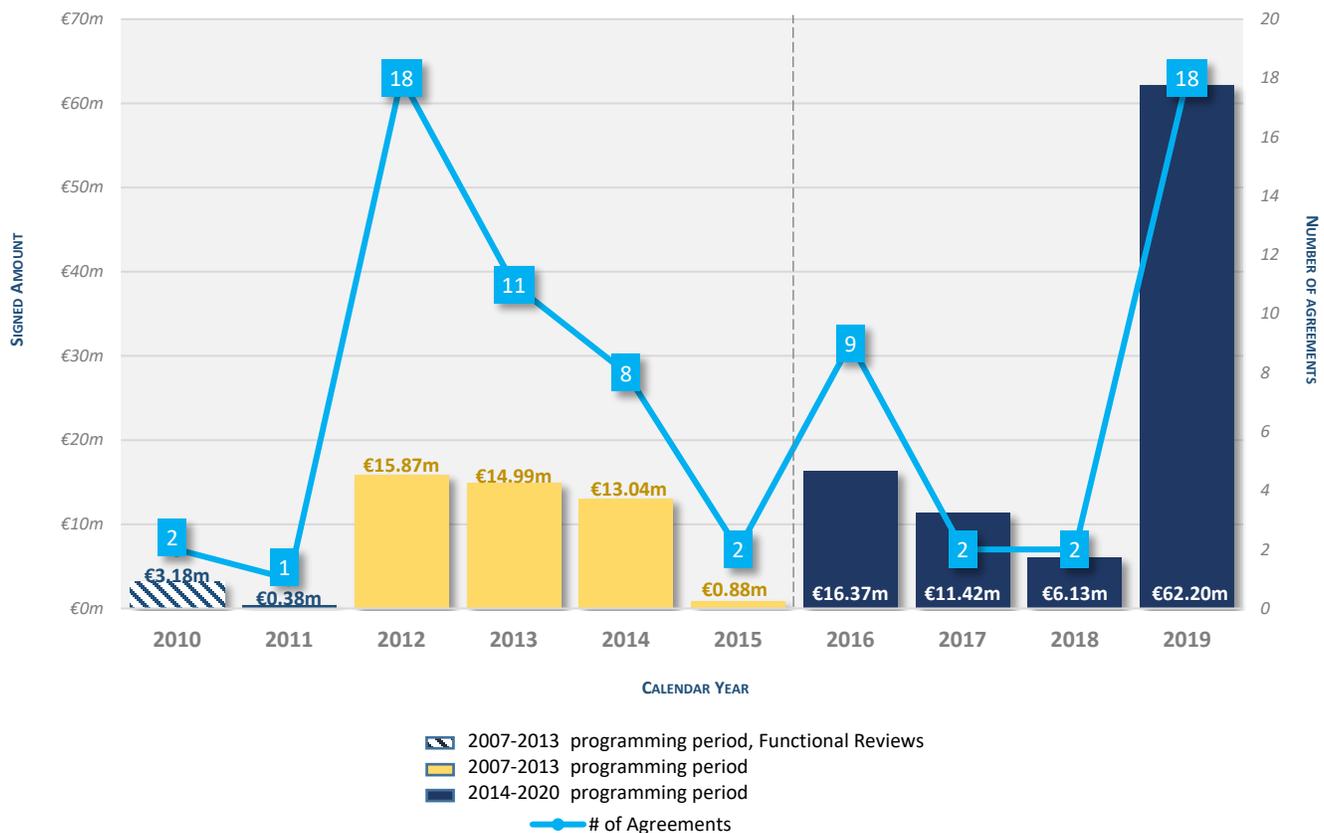
2. As part of the reporting activities agreed with the Government under the MoU, the Bank prepares an annual progress report on the RAS program. This is the fourth progress report on the RAS program paid for by the Government during the 2014-20 EU programming period. The report covers the period January 01, 2019 – December 31, 2019, and outlines and summarizes early results of the 2019 RAS program, also looking at the lessons learned and the way forward.

3. This progress report is intended mainly for RAS government beneficiaries and Managing Authorities. This includes the Ministry of European Funds as the coordinator of the Bank's RAS activities under its mandate to coordinate advisory services provided by all international financial institutions. The report will also be of interest to other ministries and government institutions, Managing Authorities and Intermediary Bodies. The European Commission is also considered an important audience for this report, as well as other stakeholders.

2. Overview of the World Bank RAS Program in 2019

4. Following the 2016 MoU signing, the RAS portfolio increased rapidly reaching a total of 27 agreements for EUR 85.28 million as of the end of 2019. By the end of 2019, 3 agreements ended and 18 new RAS agreements totaling EUR 62.20 million were signed, as shown in Figure 1. During 2019, the Bank has received 11 new requests for assistance. The number of newly signed projects per year is now comparable to the previous programming period, while the volume has seen significant increase mainly due to an increase in average RAS size. In 2019, the average size of a RAS agreement grew to EUR 3.10 mil from EUR 1.15 in the previous programming period (Figure 2), while the original average duration of RAS almost doubled from 15 months in the previous programming period to 30 months (Figure 2). This reflects the change in approach and shift to consolidated RAS engagements for longer term to allow for support to strengthen capacity. Under the actual programming period, the RAS Portfolio suffered 31 amendments, out of which 16 were approved in 2019: 8 of the amendments have introduced advance payments for the delivery of the first outputs, upon requests from the clients to facilitate the flow of funds, 6 of the amendments have extended the output delivery dates and consequently the expiration dates, while only 2 of the amendments have introduced new activities or changed the scope of a certain output.

Figure 1. Romania RAS signed using EU Funds / Programming Period Signing by CY 2010-2019 (EUR mil.)



Source: World Bank Romania Country Office, portfolio data (February 2020)

Figure 2. RAS Average amount CY 2010-2019

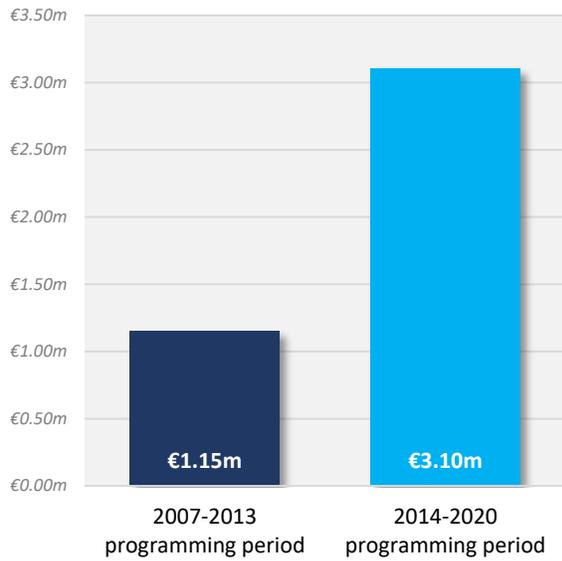
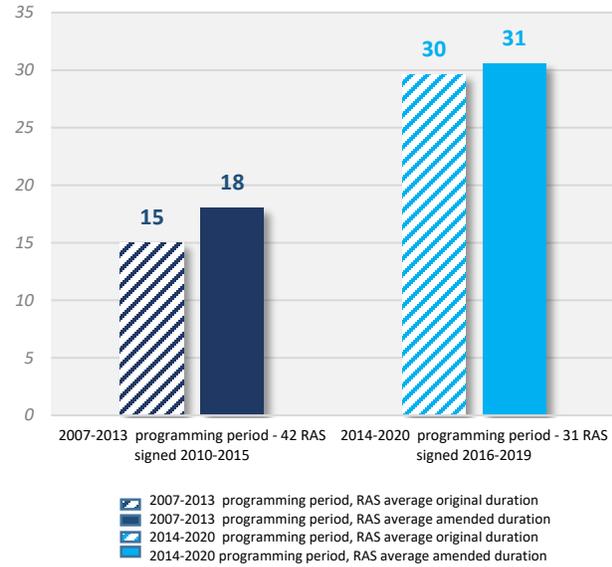


Figure 3. RAS Average duration (months) CY 2010-2019



Source: World Bank Romania Country Office, portfolio data (February 2020)

5. The ongoing portfolio of 27 RAS are paid for by the client institutions using EU funds through two Operational Programmes (OPs) under the 2014-20 programming period. 26 were signed by clients using EU funds through the Operational Program for Administrative Capacity 2014 – 2020 (POCA) for EUR 79.91 million and 1 was signed using EU funds through Operational Program for Human Capital 2014-2020 (POCU), for the amount of EUR 10 million. The main beneficiaries of the 18 new advisory services signed in 2019 include some of the experienced clients who benefited before from other Reimbursable Advisory Services in previous years, but also new beneficiary institutions from central government level (i.e. The Ministry of Waters and Forests; The Ministry of Internal Affairs, Romanian Court of Accounts), but also public agency level (i.e. The National Authority for the Rights of People with Disabilities, Children and Adoptions; National Office for Centralized Procurement) and national institutes (i.e. The National Institute for Statistics, The National Institute of Administration). These new activities focus on strengthening institutional capacity of beneficiary institutions through technical assistance engagements that all build towards the overarching goal set within the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) 2019-2023 of building institutions fit for a prosperous and inclusive Romania.

Table 1. World Bank – Romania ongoing Advisory Services Agreements, in 2019

	Agreement Title	Government Institution	Source of EU Funds	Signing year
ENDED IN 2019	1 Assistance on Informed Decision-Making on Investments in Infrastructure	National Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development		2016
	2 Assistance for Establishing a Strategy Unit	General Secretariat of the Government		2016
	3 Assistance to MNESR for Capacity Development for M&E the Implementation of Education Strategies	Ministry of Education and Research		2016
	4 Strengthening Planning and Budgeting Capacity and Supporting the Introduction of Performance Budgeting	General Secretariat of the Government		2016
	5 Support to the Implementation of the Public Procurement Strategy	National Agency for Public Procurement		2016
	6 Assistance to Enhance Quality Assurance in Higher Education System in Romania	Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education		2017
	7 Supporting the Implementation of Romania’s Human Development operational Programme (POCU) 2014-2020	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration		2017
	8 Developing a Unitary Human Resources Management System within the Public Administration	General Secretariat of the Government		2018
	9 Support in Implementing Activities A2, A3, A5, A6 and A7.2 of the project on “Increasing the efficiency of interventions within the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and its coordinated structures”	Ministry of Labor and Social Protection		2018
	10 Consolidation of the Strategic Planning Capacity of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration for Renovation of the National Building Stock for Energy Efficiency and Seismic Risk in Romania	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration		2019
	11 RAS on Technical Support to Romania in Analyzing and Addressing the Challenges in Meeting the UWWTD requirements	Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests		2019
	12 Consolidating the Coordination Mechanism to Implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	The National Authority for Persons with Disabilities, Children and Adoptions		2019

	Agreement Title	Government Institution	Source of EU Funds	Signing year
13	Assessment of the Public Procurement System and Further Support to the Implementation of the Public Procurement Strategy	National Agency for Public Procurement		2019
14	Capacity Building to Accelerate the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care for Children Deprived of Parental Care	The National Authority for Persons with Disabilities, Children and Adoptions		2019
15	Reimbursable Advisory Services on Romania Capacity Building for Statistics	National Institute of Statistics		2019
16	Support for Speeding up the Transition of People with Disabilities	The National Authority for Persons with Disabilities, Children and Adoptions		2019
17	Technical Support for the Preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans for Romania	Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests		2019
18	Strengthening INA's capacities to improve the Training Policy Framework in the Romanian Public Administration	National Institute of Administration		2019
19	Supporting the Improvement of the Training System in the GSG of Romania	General Secretariat of the Government		2019
20	Strengthening the Capacity of the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG) to Accelerate Public Investments in Romania	General Secretariat of the Government		2019
21	Regulatory Impact Assessment III	General Secretariat of the Government		2019
22	Support for Scaling-up Centralized Procurement in the Romanian Emergency Health Services	National Office for Centralized Procurement		2019
23	Romania Urban Policy RAS	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration		2019
24	Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of the Romanian Court of Accounts	Romanian Court of Accounts		2019
25	Consolidating the Strategic Management Function of GSG	General Secretariat of the Government		2019
26	Romania Territorial Impact Assessment RAS	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration		2019
27	Support for Scaling-up Centralized Procurement in the Romanian Emergency Health Services	Ministry of Internal Affairs		2019

6. During 2019, the RAS portfolio has included technical assistance engagements in 8 key development sectors. GOVERNANCE continued to be the lead sector in terms of number of

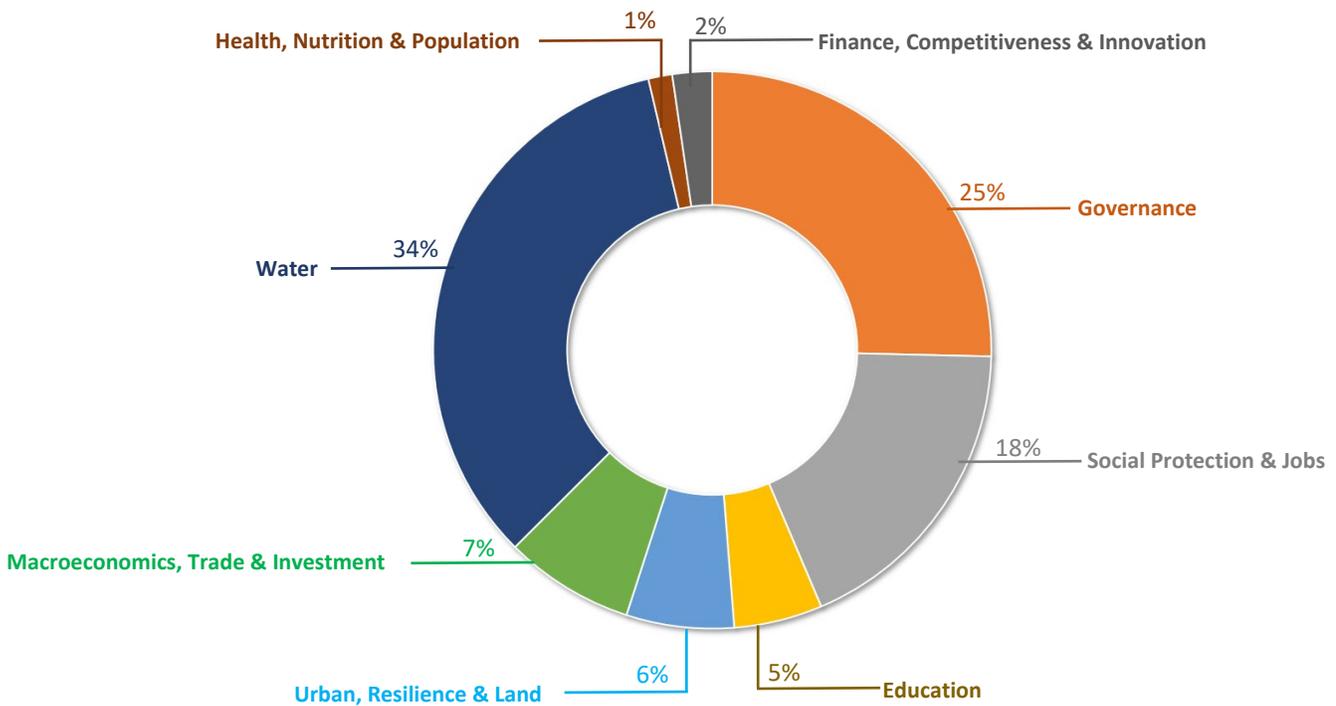
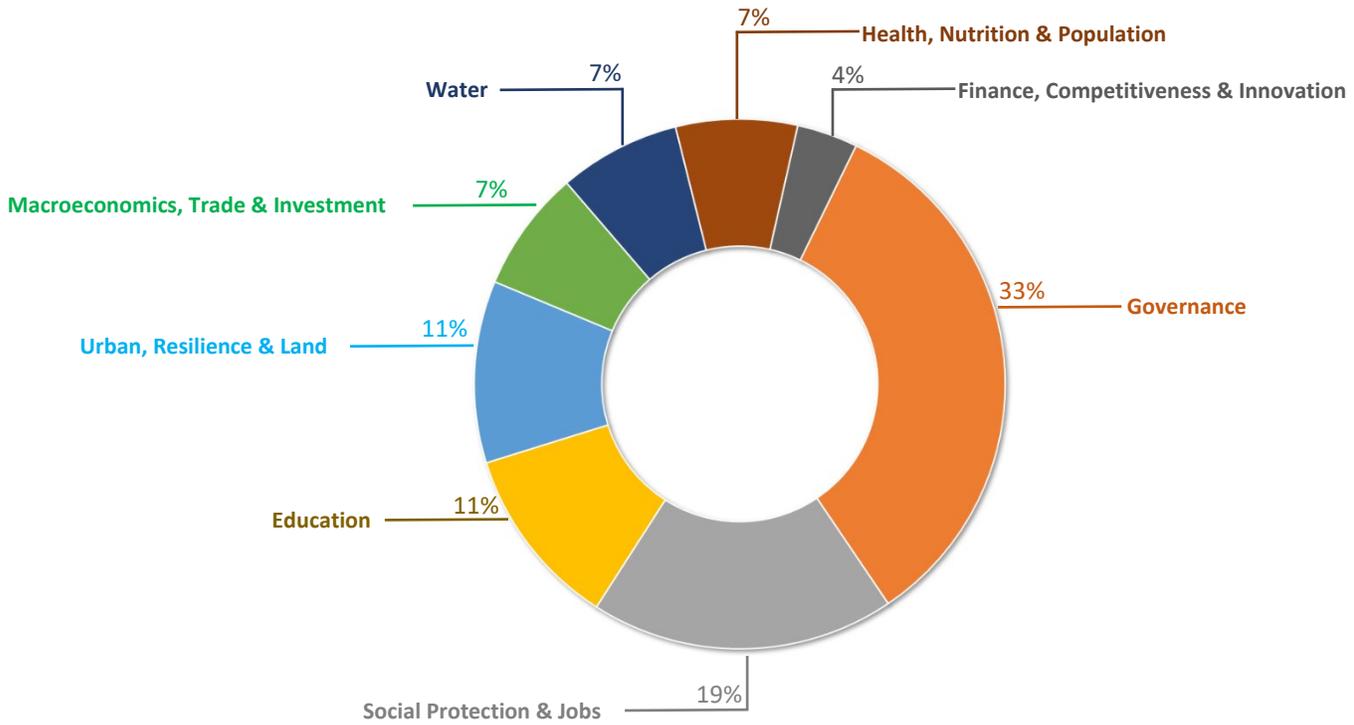
engagements (9), covering capacity building in the areas of governance strategy, public procurement, human resources management and public administration training frameworks. The **SOCIAL PROTECTION AND JOBS** sector came in second with 5 engagements, covering topics such as support to labor-market programs on trainings and skills for the public administration, as well as support for social assistance and safety nets targeting persons with disabilities and institutionalized children. Sharing the next spot with 3 engagements each are the **EDUCATION** sector (covering topics in the areas of education infrastructure, monitoring & evaluation of education strategies and quality assurance in higher education) and the **URBAN RESILIENCE AND LAND** sector (which covers diverse areas and topics such as seismic risk, energy efficiency, urban policy and territorial impact assessment). Furthermore, there have been 3 other sectors covered by 2 engagements each in Romania in 2019, as follows: the **MACROECONOMICS, TRADE AND INVESTMENT** sector (covering topics on performance budgeting and statistics); the **HEALTH, NUTRITION AND POPULATION** sector (covering the topic of centralized procurement) and the **WATER** sector (with engagements on waste water and flood risk management). Finally, the **FINANCE, COMPETITIVENESS & INNOVATION** sector has been covered through a newly signed engagement on the topic of regulatory impact assessment.

Figure 4. Lead sectors by number of RAS engagements in 2019



Source: World Bank Romania Country Office, portfolio data (February 2020)

Figure 5. Portfolio composition by sectors (by number above, and total engagement values below)

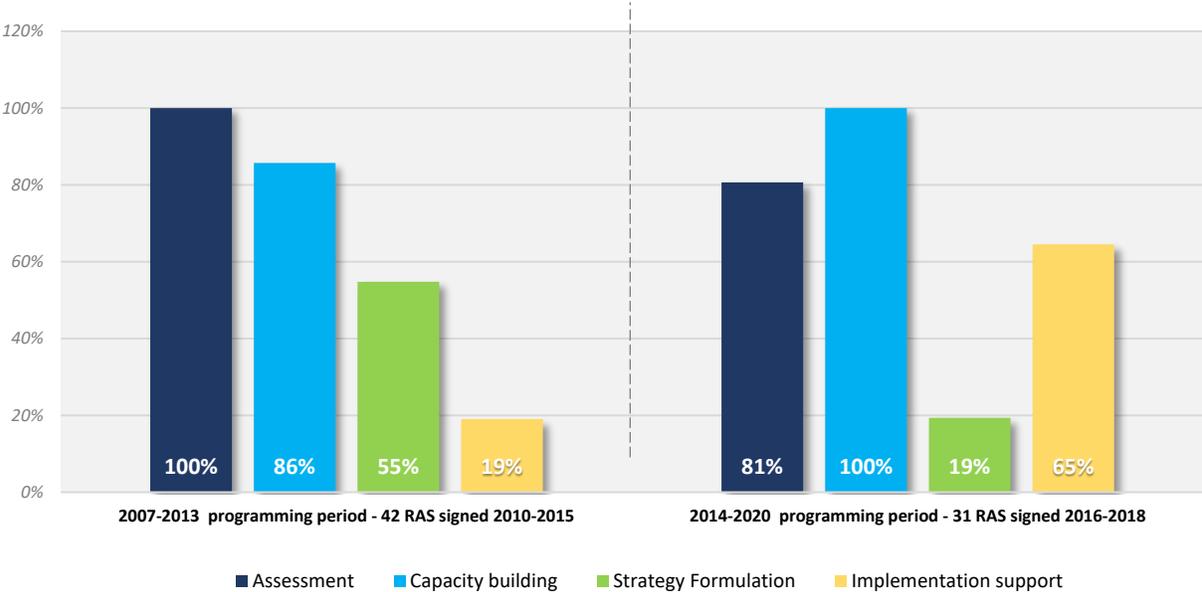


Source: World Bank Romania Country Office, portfolio data (February 2020)

7. During 2019 the Bank supported improved policy-making by developing the strategic management function or by consolidating the strategic planning capacity, strengthening the culture of evidence-based policy-making and moving towards medium-term, results-based budgeting, developing capacity for monitoring and evaluation, as well as supporting the smarter management and implementation of EU-funded programs. The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) RAS aims to increase the capacity of the Romanian administration to do impact assessments for evidence-based policy making. The RAS on Strengthening Planning and Budgeting Capacity aims to increase the capacity of the ministries participating in the project to develop Institutional Strategic Plans (ISPs) and to support the introduction of performance-based budgeting. The RAS on Capacity Development for M&E in the Education sector aims to increase the capacity of the Ministry of National Education to better monitor and perform evaluations on the implementation of education strategies. Furthermore, the POCU RAS addresses a subset of these issues in the short to medium term (with a priority focus on human development), while additional engagements such as the Human Resources Management RAS will, in the long run, help improve the capacity and performance of all civil service.

8. Further building on the previous Reimbursable Advisory Services program that focused on strategic prioritization and planning, the focus has now considerably shifted to implementation support and hands-on institutional capacity building, as well as assisting the Government in the implementation of priority programs, including those financed by EU funds. Therefore, the formulation of strategies has decreased from 55% to 19%, while capacity building elements remain at the core of the current RAS programs, as all RAS agreements under the 2014-20 programming period include and focus on such components (Figure 6).

Figure 6. RAS evolution of scope of work



Source: World Bank Romania Country Office, portfolio data (February 2020)

9. In 2019, more than 297 experts were mobilized by the Bank to carry out activities under the ongoing RAS program. The Bank has delivered about 20% of the total outputs envisaged under 27 agreements, with 27 contractual outputs and 21 progress reports submitted to the client institutions during the entire year. Some outputs continued to support the Government in meeting actions related to accessing EU funds under the 2014-20 programming period, although not constituting ex-ante conditionalities per se.

10. Forty-five invoices were issued and paid in 2019. The invoices are issued upon client approval of corresponding Outputs submitted by the Bank and in line with the timeline convened in the RAS agreement. Changes in the WB invoicing system due to impact the duration of issuing invoices have been announced in 2019 but are planned for implementation in 2020.

11. Three agreements were finalized in 2019. One of them, “*Support for the Establishment of a Strategy Unit*” for the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG) has led to a further request - namely to further consolidate the strategic management function of the GSG, building on the progress and the lessons learned during the implementation of the closed RAS. Two other engagements in education were finalized in 2019.

Table 2. World Bank - Romania Advisory Services Agreements closed in 2019

	Agreement Title	Government Institution	Source of EU Funds	Signing year
1	Support to the Establishment of a Strategy Unit	General Secretariat of the Government		2016
2	Informed Decision Making on Investments in Infrastructure	Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research		2016
3	Assistance to the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research for Capacity Development for M&E the Implementation of Education Strategies	Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research		2016

12. During 2019, 11 requests for technical assistance were received by the Bank covering a range of Government priorities (Table 3). Some of them are focused on Government’s need to meet the enabling conditions for EU funds under the 2021-27 programming period.

Table 3. World Bank - Romania Advisory Services for which public institutions requested assistance in 2019

	Agreement Title	Agreement Client/ Government Institution	Source of EU Funds (tbc)
1	Reimbursable Advisory Services on Romania Capacity Building for Statistics	National Institute of Statistics	
2	Technical Support for the Preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans for Romania	Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests	
3	Strengthening the Capacity of the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG) to Accelerate Public Investments in Romania	General Secretariat of the Government	
4	Support for Scaling-up Centralized Procurement in the Romanian Emergency Health Services - ONAC Component	National Office of Centralized Procurement (ONAC)	
5	Support for Scaling-up Centralized Procurement in the Romanian Emergency Health Services - MIA Component	Ministry of Internal Affairs	
6	Romania Urban Policy RAS	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration	
7	Romania Territorial Impact Assessment RAS	Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration	
8	Laser Valley – Land of Lights: Intelligent Territorial Development Capacity	General Secretariat of the Government	
9	Functional Review of the Romanian Judicial System and Development of the new post-2020 Strategy for the Development of the Judiciary and its corresponding Action Plan	Ministry of Justice	
10	Strengthening the Administrative Capacity of the National Archives in Romania	Ministry of Internal Affairs	
11	Support to the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and the National Authority for Persons with Disabilities in improving its capacity for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies	Ministry of Labor and Social Protection	

13. In 2019, the Bank has received additional requests from local authorities to provide capacity support. Two new RAS were signed with the Municipality of Bucharest and the Cluj County Council for: 1) a better use of local resources and a clear prioritization of local interventions; 2) bringing underused assets to productive use; 3) strengthening connections with and engagement of private sector actors. These requests funded through local budget are built on the previous World Bank work on Growth Poles, urban energy efficiency, or on urban competitiveness and are in line with the CPF objective of boosting subnational capacity to attract private investment. Other similar requests or interest in technical assistance came from the municipalities of Oradea, Sibiu, Alba-Iulia, Reșița and Cluj-Napoca.

Table 4. World Bank - Romania Advisory Services with local authorities in 2019

	Agreement Title	Government Institution	Signing year
ONGOING ACTIVITIES IN 2019			
1	Constanța Urban Development Program	Municipality of Constanța	2017
2	District 5 Urban Development Program	District 5 City Hall of the Municipality of Bucharest	2018
3	Brașov Urban Development Program	Municipality of Brașov	2018
4	Ilfov County Regional Development Programme	Ilfov County Council	2018
5	Bucharest Urban Development Program	Bucharest Municipality	2019
6	Cluj County Spatial Plan	Cluj County Council	2019
REQUEST RECEIVED IN 2019			
1	Oradea Urban Development Program	Municipality of Oradea	TBC
2	Sibiu Municipality Urban Development Program	Municipality of Sibiu	TBC
3	Alba Iulia Urban Development Program	Municipality of Alba Iulia	TBC
4	Reșița Urban Development Program	Municipality of Reșița	TBC
5	Cluj-Napoca Urban Development Program	Municipality of Cluj-Napoca	TBC

3. Coordination Arrangements

14. One Joint RAS Annual Review meeting took place in May 2019, together with the Ministry of European Funds, Ministry of Public Finance and client institutions who benefited from advisory services provided by the Bank. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss progress in implementation, challenges and next steps, as well as the results of the RAS program in Romania and lessons learned that can ensure a smooth and impactful implementation of each RAS in the future.

Figure 7. 2019 RAS Annual Review Meeting Agenda

AGENDA RAS Annual Review Meeting May 13, 2019	
12:00 – 12:30	Light lunch
12:30 – 12:45	Introductory Remarks by Ministry of European Funds, Ministry of Public Finance and World Bank
12:45 – 13:00	Informed Decision-Making on Investments in Infrastructure
13:00 – 13:15	Technical Assistance to Enhance Quality Assurance in Higher Education System in Romania
13:15 – 14:30	Assistance to MNESR for Capacity Development for M&E the Implementation of Education Strategies
14:30 – 14:45	Strengthening Planning and Budgeting Capacity and Supporting the Introduction of Performance Budgeting
14:45 – 15:00	Developing a Unitary Human Resources Management System within the Public Administration
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee Break
15:15 – 15:30	Support in Implementing Activities A2, A3, A5, A6 and A7.2 of the project on "Increasing the efficiency of interventions within the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and its coordinated structures"
15:30 – 15:45	Consolidating the Coordination Mechanism to Implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
15:45 – 16:00	Support to the Implementation of the Public Procurement Strategy
16:00 – 16:15	Technical Support to Romania in Analyzing and Addressing the Challenges in Meeting the UWWTD requirements
16:15- 16:30	Supporting the Implementation of Romania's Human Development Operational Programme (POCU) 2014-2020
16:30 – 16:45	Consolidation of the Strategic Planning Capacity of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration for Renovation of the National Building Stock for Energy Efficiency and Seismic Risk in Romania
16:45 – 17:00	Closing Remarks/Conclusions

Table 5. Joint RAS Review participating institutions

No	Institution
1	General Secretariat of the Government
2	Ministry of Public Finance
3	Ministry of European Funds
4	Ministry of Labor and Social Justice
5	Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration
6	Ministry of Waters and Forests
8	Ministry of National Education
9	Managing Authority for the Operational Programme Administrative Capacity (MA POCA)
10	Managing Authority for the Operational Programme Human Capital (MA POCU)
11	National Agency for Public Procurement
12	Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
13	National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development
14	National Administration for Waters
15	National Authority for People with Disabilities

4. Implementation Challenges and Other Issues

15. Frequent political and legislative changes continued to represent a challenge in 2019 to the RAS implementation. The political developments in 2019 were under the effect of two elections, the European Parliamentary elections in May and Presidential elections in November, which led to frequent motions and changes on the political scene. Furthermore, a no-confidence vote in October led to the fall of the government and a one-month gap until the appointment of the new cabinet in November.

16. Changes in government in November also led to changes in management and vision. As such, the previous cabinet of 27 ministers was changed to a new configuration of only 18 ministers, with a number of ministries and portfolios merged, as follows: (1) the Ministry of Transport was merged with the Ministry of Communications and Information Society to form the Ministry of Transport, Information and Communications; (2) the Ministry of Education was merged with the Ministry of Research and Innovation to form the Ministry of Education and Research; (3) the Ministry of Environment was merged with the Ministry of Waters and Forests to form the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests; (4) the Ministry of Economy was merged with the Ministry of Energy and with the Ministry for the Business Environment, Commerce and Entrepreneurship to form the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Business Environment.

17. Furthermore, there have been considerable managerial changes at the level of governmental agencies and institutes. One of the most important such changes with direct effects on RAS was the disbandment of the National Institute of Administration (INA) and the subsequent taking over of its functions by the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration. This change led to delays in starting the activities on two RAS agreements signed in 2019, namely “Strengthening INA’s capacities to improve the Training Policy Framework in the Romanian public administration” signed with INA on the 29th of October, and “Supporting the improvement of the training system in the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG) of Romania” signed with GSG on the same date. Both RAS agreements are currently in hiatus, awaiting further decisions on the government side. Another such change, though with a lesser impact on RAS has been the merger of the National Authority for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with the National Authority for the Protection of Child Rights and Adoptions, forming the new National Authority for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Children and Adoptions. For the three RAS signed in 2019 with both authorities (i.e. “Consolidating the Coordination Mechanism to Implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”, “Capacity Building to Accelerate the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care for Children Deprived of Parental Care” and “Support for Speeding up the Transition of People with Disabilities”) technical activity has started with no considerable delays expected.

5. Lessons Learned

18. High-level (political) and technical level commitment by the client is necessary but not sufficient. To overcome implementation challenges, frequent communication between the Bank and client team is needed. The best results are delivered where a true partnership is established, with Bank teams working closely with counterpart teams. This is different from a standard consultancy agreement to deliver an output and requires particular time commitments from counterpart staff, with regular feedback also needed from decision makers. Therefore, RAS engagements ideally need a locally based Task Team Leader or senior specialist available on the team to facilitate collaboration.

19. A blend of the best local expertise supplemented by World Bank global expertise yields the best results. Romania has many unique characteristics in its governance environment and the use of local experts helps to ensure that any diagnosis and analyses are appropriate for the current context. Supplementing and supporting local experts with seasoned Bank staff both (local and global) as well as with international experts is the most efficient approach to introduce international best practice examples.

20. The introduction of complex processes and reforms (e.g. performance-based budgeting) requires a long-term approach on capacity building and complementary measures. Building on the knowledge accumulated during the implementation of the RAS program, the participating institutions experience increased capacity, however, this by itself will not go far towards the establishment of coherent practices and culture. As such, for most interventions, there is a strong need for building the capacity to also upgrade key complementary activities. Oftentimes, these are difficult multi-annual reforms which require political leadership and ownership, as well as guidance and resources, but also continuity of policies over the course of years.

21. Institutional capacity remains one of the majors constrains to the successful implementation of the RAS program. In order to mitigate this, the Bank adapted its approach by shifting from short RAS engagements to programmatic and longer-term engagements with built-in components on capacity building. Availability of resources and maintaining and sharing further the knowledge acquired within the institution could contribute to ensuring the sustainability of efforts.

22. Requests for RAS support to meet the enabling conditions or other EU directives come often at the last moment. This puts pressure on the client institution and the Bank to rush the preparation and implementation period of the project affecting the quality of design and deliverable. Sometimes it may lead to several extensions and amendments to the activities.

23. For a successful design of the RAS, both client and WB requirements regarding entering into an agreement should be taken into consideration. As soon as the client institution decides that it needs the support of the World Bank, the Bank team should get involved in the preparation of the detailed activities together with the client. Bank Management endorsement on the concept is also needed before the client submits the financing application to the Managing Authority. This is the only way to ensure that the work requested is in line with the WB support as defined in the Legal Agreement, which will allow for a smooth implementation of the RAS.

6. RAS Results

24. A new Bank-led review of RAS results started in late 2019. The purpose of the evaluation is to inform the Performance and Learning Review (PLR), a midterm review of the Bank's Country Partnership Framework for Romania, by assessing progress toward building institutional capacity for the Romanian public administration. As of the date of this report, the RAS review team conducted preliminary analyses to refine the evaluation methodology, designed case studies, and started interviewing RAS project teams to collect data on the implementation, performance and results of each RAS within the scope of the evaluation.

25. The evaluation methodology is based on a refined version of the Institutional Change Assessment Method (ICAM), which was first applied for the evaluation of the World Bank's RAS Program in Romania for the period 2012-2015. The ICAM applies standard ratings to explore how RAS impacts and outcomes extend beyond the knowledge and skills gained at an individual or group level to strengthen institutional capacity.

26. The evaluation exercise is due to be finalized in 2020. The final evaluation report will be shared with the main governmental stakeholders involved in the RAS program (namely the Ministry of Public Finance and the Ministry of European Funds) and with the direct beneficiary institutions of the RAS program. Lessons and findings from the assessment will be used to help design future RAS engagements in the next programming period and to improve the Bank's collaboration and working arrangements with the Government.

27. RAS Results Stories. The rest of this chapter will provide a brief outline and description of the main activities performed under a selection of RAS engagements, and will provide a preliminary overview on results and impacts achieved through the specific interventions.



RESULTS STORIES

28. RAS on Support for the Establishment of a Strategy Unit (P154787)

The objective of this RAS was to strengthen Romania's central strategic planning function, through the establishment of a Strategy Unit and a design of strategic planning and monitoring processes and tools. Even though all of the RAS activities for achieving this objective were completed, strengthening Romania's central strategic planning function is a continuous process. While the Strategy Unit was established within the GSG, its operationalization was limited. For instance, no specialized staff have yet been hired to support the performance of the Strategy Unit. Still, Bank support to the core Center of Government functions in the GSG is greatly valued by the client who has requested follow-on activities. Together, the GSG and World Bank have achieved the following in support for the development objective:

- ✘ Designed a new model for cross-government strategic management;
- ✘ Created a note on the establishment and operationalization of the Government Strategy Unit with a supporting communications plan and operational manual;
- ✘ Took inventory of existing national strategic documents, mapping by sector and analyzing for gaps and overlaps;
- ✘ Designed a new methodology for developing strategic documents, created a supplemental user guide, and piloted the guide;
- ✘ Analyzed the existing framework for monitoring strategy implementation and evaluating impact, proposed recommendations for improvement, and drafted a monitoring and evaluation guide;
- ✘ Adapted the existing monitoring IT system to support the Strategy Unit.

KEY ACTIVITIES IN 2019

- *Methodology for developing strategic documents developed and delivered.*
- *Guide on monitoring the implementation of strategies and IT tool for Institutional Strategic Plans.*
- *National Strategy for Tourism elaborated.*

The outputs of this RAS indeed contribute to strengthening Romania's strategic management, but further efforts are necessary to maintain progress in this direction. Moving forward, Romania has the opportunity to build upon the tools and processes developed in this RAS to greater strengthen its strategic management function, not only at the central level but also in coordination with localities. The World Bank is collaborating on building a new engagement to continue strengthening the GSG's strategic management capacity.

29. RAS on Assistance to the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research for Informed Decision-Making on Investments in Infrastructure (P155507)



The main outcome of this RAS is the development of guiding principles and matrix of criteria and sub-criteria that served to the calls launched under the EU funded Regional Operational Program, as part of the SIIEI. As such, the RAS played a critical role in helping Romania to leverage EU funding for education infrastructure and meet ex-ante conditionalities. The criteria were used to evaluate the project proposals submitted under three specific calls launched in 2018, with a total value of EUR 222 million.

Another important outcome is related to the counterpart's capacity to make informed decisions on investments in education infrastructure. The capacity building process started at project launching and continued throughout the preparation process of the draft SIIEI. This process was accompanied by a continuous approach to knowledge sharing and transfer to the MNESR and TVET Center representatives. The capacity-building activities, training, workshops, focus groups strengthened the capacity of the MNESR and TVET Center to make informed decisions on investments in education infrastructure in the long-term. Likewise, the functional analysis of the VET sub-sector strengthened the analytical capacity of the TVET Center. The capacity development is not the primary goal of the RAS but is key in contributing to an identified capacity challenge, therefore unlikely to have sustainable outcomes without some form of follow-up support to the client. Some institutional capacity constraints may be overpassed with improved knowledge, skills, behaviors and/or relationships that are likely to translate to stronger institutional capacity over the long term even without continued World Bank support. This RAS engagement included components designed to build capacity for monitoring investment in education infrastructure. RAS activities and outputs provided guidance for setting up monitoring arrangements and included the development of a monitoring information system and training (GEIS tool and M&E indicator framework) on its use for 180 staff in the MNESR and CNDIPT. Both MNESR and CNDIPT stakeholders commented on the usefulness of the training for introducing "a monitoring culture" but emphasized the need for more preparation and support before the new monitoring arrangements and information systems could be implemented.

KEY ACTIVITIES IN 2019

- *Recommendations for developing the Strategy for Infrastructure Investments in Education Institutions delivered.*
- *Guidelines to monitor the action plan for Implementation of the Strategy for Infrastructure Investments in Education Institutions developed.*
- *Report on Building and Enhancing Capacity to Monitor the Action Plan for Implementation of the strategy for Infrastructure investments in Education Institutions delivered.*
- *Final Report on the Functional Analysis of the VET sub-sector delivered.*

Finally, some of the most important results the RAS contributed to are:

- ✘ Government deblocking of 222 million EURO of EU funds in 2018 for education infrastructure investments;
- ✘ increasing transparency of allocations, adequacy and efficiency of projects and funds allocation;
- ✘ supporting an evidence-based decision-making process.

30. RAS on Assistance to the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research for Capacity Development for M&E the Implementation of Education Strategies (P157670)

The main outcome of this RAS is that MNESR staff developed and internalized a new set of skills, processes, and practices for conducting effective monitoring & evaluation (M&E). This entailed a new and distinct type of Client engagement through the direct involvement of MNESR staff in developing and implementing the M&E framework and its associated



methodology and instruments, collecting, analyzing data and reporting to support evidence-based policy making. In this respect, the WB team provided the MNESR staff with training sessions, but also individualized and group mentoring/coaching during multiple technical meetings, workshops, and dissemination. As a result, the MNESR was in a position to produce two annual M&E reports on the implementation of education strategies in 2018 and 2019 based on the application of the methodologies and instruments developed under this RAS. The MNESR also shared these documents with relevant authorities at the European Commission and used them for reporting on progress in implementation of the education strategies, remaining challenges and further areas of support. Another important outcome of this “learning by doing” process is the awareness raised among MNESR staff and relevant stakeholders on the importance

KEY ACTIVITIES IN 2019

- *Training program delivered for 225 persons within the Ministry of National Education, subordinated structures and county inspectorates on the Education public policy cycle, structured around 4 modules:*
 - *Formulation;*
 - *Implementation;*
 - *Strategic Management;*
 - *Monitoring & Evaluation.*
- *60 hours of interviews and focus groups.*
- *Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) study delivered.*

and added value of utilizing evidence-based instruments for informed decisions in education. In this respect, the development of SABER studies on Teachers, EMIS, ECD, and WfD played a key role in identifying challenges and solutions for improving the respective policies. Finally, these documents also represent important resources for further dialogue under the Presidency Project “Educated Romania”, or for subsequent analytical work undertaken by the WB (e.g. Country Economic Memorandum/CEM 2.0), as well as the OECD (e.g. Policy Paper on ECD in Romania).

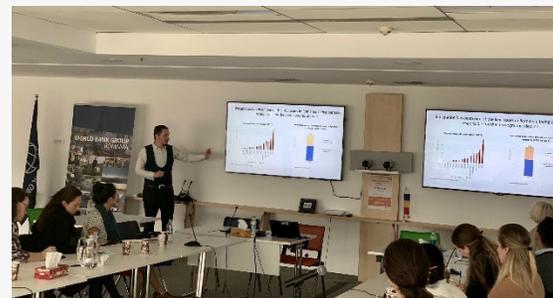
31. RAS on Assistance on Strengthening Planning and Budgeting Capacity and Supporting the Introduction of Performance Budgeting (P156889)



Work undertaken under this RAS was considered a key first step towards introducing elements of performance-based budgeting in the Romanian public sector, which has been an objective on the policy agenda of the Government. The scope of the technical assistance was anchored in the Strategy for the Consolidation of the Public Administration (SCPA) for the period 2014-2020.

The RAS was part of a package of technical assistance operations which support a broader set of complementary reforms promoted by the Government with the aim of enhancing the functioning of the public administration along the lines of the SCPA. The focus of the technical assistance was threefold: a) to strengthen the existing Institutional Strategic Plans (ISPs) development processes in the ministries participating in the project under the guidance of the GSG; b) to build capacity in the Government to monitor ISP updates and implementation with a common IT tool, developed with support from the Bank; and c) to develop a central dashboard in the GSG for reporting on the implementation of the high level ISP priorities of the selected ministries. The three immediate objectives of the RAS were largely achieved: the ministries participating in the RAS have essentially developed the capacity to prepare comprehensive ISPs following a common methodology; the IT application for monitoring the implementation of the policy agenda has been installed both at GSG and in the line ministries and is operational and accompanied by a user's manual; and the central dashboard has been finalized and can be used for reporting and analytics.

However, the ISPs have not yet become formally part of the budgeting process, which is not results-oriented. The governmental decision aiming to make the ISP preparation part of the budget formulation process was not passed by the time of this report. Thus, the preparation of the ISPs and the budgeting process largely remain parallel processes, which raises sustainability questions with respect to the long-term results of the project. This risk is partly mitigated by the fact that: a) a second RAS, currently in preparation, will extend the work done under the current project to the ministries which did not participate in the first phase; and b) the GSG, with support from the World Bank and MoPF, will continue to work towards making the ISPs part of the budget process and calendar through legislation.



- ✦ The main step forward in improving the quality of strategic planning is represented by the comprehensive ISPs that the 13 participating line ministries have prepared with the Bank's

assistance through this RAS and the monitoring IT tools developed in complementarity. This package represents a solid starting base for result orientation and performance budgeting; they include all the elements that one could look for

in such a document: a detailed presentation of the strategic objectives of the institution, proposals for budget programs that are aligned with higher level commitments and goals, performance indicators etc.

- ✘ The preparation of the ISPs has also contributed to significant capacity building in the participating ministries, particularly at the level of the Public Policy Units (PPUs). The technical staff in the ministries have become familiar not only with the methodologies for setting priorities and objectives, designing programs or allocating appropriate financial resources aligned with the medium-term budgetary framework but also with the monitoring of outputs, outcomes and unit costs, setting performance indicators and collecting systematically the necessary performance data.
- ✘ The ISPs are currently the only documents presenting a comprehensive and coherent picture of the situation and policy priorities of a sector, including all the proposed budget programs of a ministry, the associated financial resources and the expected results (outputs/outcomes) that are available for consultation by anyone interested. This has contributed to increasing the transparency of the Romanian public sector and constitutes the first step towards linking policy with the budget. At this stage, the ISP preparation is not yet part of budget formulation process. Nevertheless, more and more ministries use the ISP to inform and articulate their budget requests in discussions with MoPF.

KEY ACTIVITIES IN 2019

- *13 Institutional Strategic Plans revised and delivered for central government institutions for the period 2019-2022.*

32. RAS on Supporting the Implementation of Romania's Human Development Operational Programme (POCU) 2014-2020 (P162775)

In 2019 the WB team supported the Management Authority (MA) in responding to its institutional needs. As such, the WB team has carried out several institutional capacity building activities with the overarching aim of supporting a more efficient and effective implementation of the Operational Programme.



- ✘ **IMPROVING TECHNICAL AND MANAGEMENT CAPACITY IN THE POCU MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY AND INTERMEDIARY BODIES.** An extensive training needs assessment conducted within institutions involved in the implementation of the (EU-funded) Human Capital Operational Programme (POCU) and introduced in a RAS output (Mid-line Assessment Report, Output 13.1) has revealed several gaps in terms of competencies. These gaps could be observed and quantified at the level of both management and operational staff, with direct implications concerning the overall program cycle management i.e. reimbursement of expenses, public procurement, financial management, mitigation of irregularities, communication among various units, team motivation, delegation of tasks. Based on these findings, the World Bank team has designed an integrated training program for the management and staff of the Management Authority (MA) and Intermediary Bodies (IB), consisting of 2 major components: i) technical training sessions, focusing on streamlining monitoring activities through improved data collection, analysis and visualization; and ii) management training sessions on organizational communication, time management, team motivation and delegation of tasks. Since November 2019, 140 participants have benefited from 6 technical training sessions, whereas 40 executive staff have attended 4 management training sessions. Feedback from the MA and IBs highlight the following outcomes of the training program: (i) the operational personnel has significantly improved its technical skills in various key technical areas, such as project supervision or financial verification; (ii) management staff has been equipped with modern management and communication instruments (i.e. scheduling and activity planning tools, templates for the organization and delegation of tasks, guidelines for designing process maps). These changes are contributing to improved, more streamlined and efficient operations, thus enabling the more effective use of EU funds.
- ✘ **DELIVERING INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS FOR SUPPORTING POCU BENEFICIARIES IN CRITICAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT AREAS.** Outputs delivered under the RAS have identified the need for more coherent, organized and timely interactions between the beneficiaries of POCU, and the authorities. In line with feedback shared by the MA and the IBs during focus groups and interviews, such difficulties in interactions with POCU Beneficiaries affect the overall implementation of POCU as they directly contribute to an increased risk of errors and irregularities among POCU Beneficiaries. Key reasons

for the limited responsiveness of the MA and IBs included issues on both the functioning of the help-desk function of the MA, and the quality of support materials for sound project management. To address these challenges, the Bank team, in close partnership with the MA and the IBs, have provided assistance to beneficiaries through four inter-linked measures: i) 23 information sessions organized in all 8 development regions of Romania for approximately 700 POCU beneficiaries to help them avoid irregularities in the implementation of their projects; ii) The design and drafting of guiding materials and instruments (i.e. Beneficiary Manual, Indicators Guide, General Guidelines for POCU) for more effective project implementation; iii) hands-on assistance to Local Action Groups (beneficiaries of Priority Axis 5) on various project implementation challenges (e.g. improved procedures, dedicated tools for sound project management), and iv) instructional videos relating to financial management. Based on feedback received during various interactions with POCU Beneficiaries, they now have better access to informational resources required to implement their projects more effectively, to identify and mitigate possible risks of error/ irregularities in a timely manner, and to use hands-on analytical and information tools for documenting results and indicators.

KEY ACTIVITIES IN 2019

- 25+ targeted training sessions and workshops with Government participants from POCU MA and IBs.
- 2 bi-annual Progress Reports submitted.
- Collaborative drafting and submission of 6+ reports:
 - documenting technical inputs of WB team in the evaluation process;
 - Documenting technical inputs to the updates of the rollout plan;
 - documenting and assessing the training process;
 - documenting updates to the TA framework.

- × **ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND PROCESS IMPROVEMENT INTERVENTIONS IN THE POCU MA.** Several institutional assessment exercises at the MA level have signaled two important vulnerabilities. First, a low level of internal coherence could be observed at the level of POCU management. Data collected for the Mid-line Assessment Report (Output 13.1) from MA & IBs staff and POCU Beneficiaries indicated inconsistency in terms of solutions formulated by various IBs to similar cases or issues faced by Beneficiaries; furthermore, the same data indicated discrepancies between project verification aspects as practiced by the monitoring officers in the IBs, and those used by operational staff in the MA. Second, current management practices within the MA led to the over-allocation of tasks for certain staff leading to work overload. These vulnerabilities have further translated into inconsistent approaches to resolving program implementation issues, and a higher probability of error in project management and processing of financial and technical reports. In response to these, the Bank team has provided targeted support for enhancing internal coordination by tackling three inter-linked aspects: i) optimizing the procedure for the verification of the tasks delegated by the MA to the IBs, ii) participating in missions aimed at verification of delegated tasks at the level of the IBs and making hands-on recommendations for fostering collaboration between the MA and the IBs, and iii) carrying out an in-depth work-load analysis at the level of MA to enable management to perform adjustments in roles and responsibilities streamline internal processes, make better use of resources, and smoothen out internal communication. As a result, the MA and IBs have taken important steps towards building a unitary approach, which translates into more coherent measures for project supervision, increased responsiveness to requests made by various stakeholders, and fewer bottlenecks in terms of

contracting, verification of expenses, and processing reimbursement requests.

- ✘ **IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION AND SELECTION SYSTEM.** Past RAS activities and deliverables have identified challenges in project evaluation and selection functions of the MA and IBs. Problems included the limited internal capacity for project appraisal, high number of proposals rejected due to administrative and eligibility issues, delays in project selection and contracting, and significant numbers of appeals because of insufficient clarity and consistency in the evaluation process. These issues have in turn triggered significant delays in the contracting of POCU-funded projects, with direct impact upon the overall absorption rate and attainment of target indicators. To address these issues, the Bank team has provided the MA POCU with inputs to streamlined evaluation procedures, improved calls for proposals and associated evaluation manuals and grids, along with hands-on trainings and capacity building activities for evaluators. These instruments enable a higher quality of the overall project evaluation process. As a result, the MA and IBs are carrying out more efficient evaluation and selection processes, quantifiable in compressed evaluation times, lower rejection rate in the administrative stage, fewer appeals filed by applicants, higher degree of consistency among evaluators and their reports. This will translate into enhanced contracting, and accelerated POCU implementation.
- ✘ **IMPROVING THE UPTAKE OF PERFORMANCE DATA IN POCU MANAGEMENT.** Assessing the performance of POCU support in key social fields plays an important role in the overall management of the program, as well as in supporting the design of the next programming period. To this end, the Bank team has been supporting the POCU MA with drafting targeted assessments of calls for proposals in the employment, social inclusion, and education sectors through targeted analyses of a subset of POCU- interventions related to young people not in employment, education, or training (NEETs), entrepreneurship, health, social services, social economy. As a result, MA POCU is enabled to build a data-driven roadmap of POCU outcomes, and to use this evidence in order to document program implementation reports, as well as strategic negotiations with European Commission.
- ✘ **SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP INTERVENTIONS THROUGH BENEFICIARY ENGAGEMENT.** One of POCU priorities consists of supporting the development of entrepreneurship in Romania for employment and job creation. POCU has contributed to the establishment of approximately 700 start-ups and expects to finance a total of over 2,100 new businesses and to set-up over 1,700 social-economy entities through 2023. Beneficiaries of POCU-funded entrepreneurship interventions (i.e. Start-Up Plus, and Start-Up Diaspora) have indicated limited access to lessons learned on good practices, legal aspects of operations, HR management, as well as financial sustainability beyond POCU. To address these issues, the Bank team and the MA have jointly organized a conference titled “Start-Up Next” in December to connect POCU-financed entrepreneurs with key stakeholders (i.e. representatives of contracting authorities, “business angels”, etc.), and to showcase the results of these start-ups. By bringing together actors from various fields involved in entrepreneurship, this event has increased awareness on important development opportunities for POCU-supported start-ups. By attending the plenaries, the workshops, and the networking sessions, POCU-funded entrepreneurs have gained access to relevant knowledge, and business resources in a more targeted manner, in turn, increasing the viability of their POCU-funded start-ups.

33. RAS on Consolidation of the Strategic Planning Capacity of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration for Renovation of the National Building Stock for Energy Efficiency and Seismic Risk in Romania (P169420)

Progress on this RAS has been registered on two dimensions, namely the energy efficiency component and the seismic risk component. Some of the achieved results under this RAS are expressed below:

- ✘ **SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW NATIONAL LONG-TERM BUILDING RENOVATION STRATEGY.** In 2019, the World Bank supported the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration – MLPDA - (former Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration) in the preparation of the new National Long-Term Building Renovation Strategy which establishes the objectives and milestones for energy efficiency of buildings in Romania to 2050. This outcome was preceded by a Gaps Analysis of the Current National Long-term Building Renovation Strategy and Action Plan.
- ✘ **PREPARING AN ACTION PLAN FOR LEGISLATIVE, REGULATORY AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS TO ACCELERATE SEISMIC RISK REDUCTION.** The World Bank conducted a diagnostic of relevant legislation and regulations and past seismic risk reduction programs to gain a deeper understanding of the current strengths and weaknesses of past and ongoing investments on seismic resilience in Romania. Based on this study, an action plan was prepared to inform legislative, regulatory and institutional reforms to accelerate seismic risk reduction in Romania.
- ✘ **STRENGTHENING THE TECHNICAL CAPACITY OF THE MLPDA THROUGH PEER-TO-PEER KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES IN IRELAND AND ITALY.** The World Bank organized a study tour to Ireland in July 2019 that provided MLPDA with an understanding of how energy efficiency programs are organized, coordinated, financed and implemented at different administrative levels. A study tour in Italy was also organized by the World Bank in cooperation with the Italian Department of Civil Protection which fostered peer-to-peer knowledge exchange on the topic of seismic resilience and created new opportunities for mutual learning. It also facilitated the establishment of points of contact between MLPDA and Italian national institutions responsible for seismic risk management.
- ✘ **CONVENING PARTNERS AND BRINGING GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE TO ROMANIA ON THE TOPIC OF SEISMIC RESILIENCE.** A technical team from the MLPDA participated in Understanding Risk Europe organized by the World Bank and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery in partnership with the Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs through the Department for Emergency Situations. The conference took place in Bucharest from November 27-29, 2019 and focused on understanding climate and disaster risk to guide government investments and create more resilient societies. As part of this conference, the World Bank team organized a session on “Managing earthquake risk at national scale: from strategic planning to on-the-ground actions” that convened public officials, representatives from academia, civil society and the private sector from Romania, Italy, Portugal,



and New Zealand, to discuss how earthquake risk reduction actions are planned, and what are the main challenges and opportunities in translating national programs into on-the-ground action at scale.

- ✘ **SHARING VIEWS AND PROMOTING TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN DIFFERENT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL TECHNICAL SPECIALISTS.** Several working meetings took place in 2019 with the participation of the MLPDA, other line ministries, sub-national governments, civil society groups, representatives from the private sector and academia, to discuss relevant topics related to energy efficiency and seismic risk of existing buildings in Romania, place for the preparation and the finalization of both outputs. These meetings promoted an informed debate between different institutions in Romania on these topics and facilitated exchange of technical views between public officials and local and international specialists.



34. Assessment of the Public Procurement System and Further Support to the Implementation of the Public Procurement Strategy (P169141)

In 2019, the RAS team continued to provide support to the National Agency for Public Procurement in its efforts to reform the PP system in line with the PP Strategy by transforming the procurement policy and practice into a strategic management function with focus on value for money in the whole project cycle. 2019 marks the finalization of all activities of the RAS.



The Web-based Guide and 8 (eight) sets of standard tender documents finalized. The Guide is available at www.achizitiipublice.gov.ro and represents a primary source of guidance and in-depth practical information to the contracting authorities. The Guide includes guidance, models, instruments and tools to facilitate the procurement function and is complemented by several sets of standard tender documents, including contract conditions, for most frequent procurement i.e. intellectual services, execution of works, products, design services, maintenance services, repair works, cleaning services and air travel. More than 115,000 users, 25% returning visitors accessed the Guide during the period January 2017-September 2019. A video was developed to capture the main benefits and structure of the website.



10 workshops for main stakeholders organized at regional level (part of the workshops was delivered prior to 2019). The scope of the workshops was to disseminate the new operational approach promoted by the Web-based Guide to the representatives of the main institutions of the public procurement system, i.e. Court of Account,

Complaints Council, Appeal Courts or authorities in charge with management of EU funds (Management authorities, Audit Authority, Agencies for Regional Development). A total of about 170 participants attended the workshops at country level.

13 dissemination sessions for contracting authorities organized at regional level (part of the sessions was delivered prior to 2019). The scope of the sessions was to promote the tools and instruments of the Web-based Guide to the procurement professionals. Almost 1000 participants took part in the sessions and had the opportunity to have more in-depth view on the scope and contents of the Web-based Guide. Proposed indicators and related methodologies to support the Monitoring and Supervision functions developed. The tools were developed in relation to specific topics relevant for the public procurement system and mentioned by the PP Strategy i.e. corruption index, administrative burden and red flags. The provided tools were accompanied by workshops for the staff of the Monitoring and Supervision units, with participation from other departments as well.



35. RAS on Technical Support to Romania in Analyzing and Addressing the Challenges in Meeting the UWWTD requirements (P167925)

In 2019, the RAS supported the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests to analyze and address the challenges in meeting the Urban Waste-Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) requirements under the overarching environmental objective to improve the quality of water bodies under Water Framework Directive (WFD). The main activities conducted by the Bank team during 2019 are highlighted below:

- ✘ Carried out a stocktaking assessment of the current UWWTD implementation plan based on the available most up-to-date data, identifying bottlenecks and options to accelerate implementation in line with the UWWTD, institutional arrangements, incentives towards improved compliance efforts, and relevant lessons learned from other EU member states.
- ✘ Engaged in assessing options for optimization of compliance costs including the review and update of the methodology for defining agglomeration with more than 2,000 p.e.
- ✘ Organized and participated in meetings in 40 counties to present and discuss the new methodology and potential implications for the county.
- ✘ Provided an update of the list of agglomerations above 2,000 p.e. under the UWWTD, including details and maps, based on the revised methodology and available information, as well as the analytical field work conducted to validate the maps in boundary cases.
- ✘ A draft review of Individual Appropriate Systems (IAS) in Romania was prepared, including the preparation of an outline for the process of registration and inspection of existing IAS; and planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance, monitoring and control of new IASs, in order to facilitate adequate environmental protection, while optimizing compliance costs.
- ✘ The final list of agglomerations above 2,000 p.e. will be included in the updated UWWTD Implementation Plan (to be delivered in 2020), including the development of a draft Strategic Financing Plan for the remaining investments in the country to address the challenges of UWWTD requirements and existing funding gap, based on the available most up-to-date information and analytical work carried out by the Bank.
- ✘ An evaluation of the existing national UWWTD reporting systems under the MEWF and the National Administration Romanian Waters was conducted, with an outlook on their compatibility with the SIIF requirements. Based on this, in 2020 the Bank will develop a proposal to improve the process of data collection, processing and validation of information regarding UWWTD compliance reporting to the EC, including responsibilities and timeframe.

36. RAS on Developing a Unitary Human Resources Management System within the Public Administration (P165191)

The implementation of a robust human resources management system has been identified as a precondition to supporting Romania's public sector reform agenda; reforms depend fundamentally on the capacity of public employees to design and implement programs, projects, and public policies.

As such, the activities included under the HRM RAS are an important element to sustaining growth and sharing prosperity amongst Romanians. As part of this collaboration, the Bank has conducted analyses and elaborated diagnostics, offering Romanian authorities evidence-based insights on the core human resources management (HRM) challenges in the public administration.

HRM RAS key activities 2019

- 20+ targeted focus groups and workshops with 150+ Government participants from GSG & line ministries
- Monthly management meetings with the GSG, NACS, MOLSP teams
- Study visits to Ireland, United Kingdom, Lithuania, Netherlands
- Collaborative drafting of:
 - Baseline Diagnostic Report
 - HR Council Guidelines
 - Competency Framework
 - Methodology for Monitoring Public Sector Pay Policy

While this engagement is still ongoing, some key results are already worth noting, including:

- ✘ **BUILDING STRONG ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR INTERLOCUTORS.** The GOR merged three separate initiatives into the HRM RAS, making coordination and breaking siloes across partner institutions a top priority for the team. The Bank team conducted extended consultations to bring together our three different counterparts – the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG), Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MOLSP), and the National Agency of Civil Servants (NACS), into a single counterpart. This early investment in understanding needs and expectations and communicating to align incentives under the GSG's central role, as a center of government, has paid off. The RAS has progressed steadily towards delivering its development objective despite institutional changes and other unforeseen challenges; following common implementation protocols has shielded the RAS from gridlock and delays during periods of political instability and changes in government counterparts.
- ✘ **FOSTERING INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION.** The HRM RAS activities have increased awareness among HR professionals across the central public administration in Romania. Early in the RAS implementation, the Bank collaborated with the GSG to host a range of consultation workshops and focus groups on underlying HRM challenges, such as merit based-recruitment, staffing needs, competencies, and career management. During these technical discussions many of the HR professionals observed that they had never met with their peers at other ministries or institutions to discuss their critical concerns. They were also impressed to learn that many ministries face the similar challenges or, in some cases, have very different understandings of some fundamental HRM concepts. Providing this platform for communication and knowledge exchange and involving the counterparts helped build additional interest and ownership into the RAS, resulting in stronger participation in the dissemination events for the reports delivered in 2019. The HRM RAS partners have received subsequent requests from the participating institutions for additional information and targeted presentations at institutional-

level conferences and training events.

- ✘ **PROVIDING ANALYTICAL UNDERPINNINGS FOR REFORMS.** Although still under implementation, the RAS is starting to see results on the ground. One of the greatest risks in analytical and advisory engagements, such as the HRM RAS, is that the provided recommendations are not implemented. To mitigate this risk, the HRM RAS team placed significant emphasis on communications, change management, and engagement activities to ensure the policy recommendations from the RAS translated quickly into action. Notably, the Baseline Diagnostic of the legal and institutional framework for Human Resources Management in the Romanian public administration was formally approved by the National Committee for Coordinating the Implementation of the Strategy on Strengthening Public Administration (CNCISCAP), which is the core institution for HRM coordination for the Romanian public administration. Another success story is the Government's use of the guidelines for setting up a cross-government HR council to coordinate HRM coordination provided by the Bank as the foundation for a Government Decision establishing this council. Finally, the MOLSP has committed to employing the Bank's recommended Methodology for Monitoring Public Sector Pay Policy in 2020 and is using the methodology to prepare their annual reports on pay policy implementation.

37. Urban Redevelopment Sub-National RAS Program (NATIONAL FUNDS)

- ✘ **HELPING TO ATTRACT PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND CREATE JOBS.** The World Bank has worked with the City of Constanța to prepare a Competitive Profile, with a comprehensive overview of the key advantages Constanța offers to



potential investors, and with recommendations on the better management of existing assets in the city (e.g. large land plots suitable for development). Moreover, an Investments Attraction Unit was created, which pro-actively engages investors, organizes events for investors, or participates in such events (e.g. Expo Real). The mayor has stated publicly that a private investor has decided to invest 80 million Euro in Constanța based on the assessment done by the World Bank, and discussions were started pro-actively with a number of other potential investors. Recently, the administration managed to attract a massive investment of 200 mil. Euro for the development of an industrial and logistics platform on a 100 hectare site, next to the Constanța Port. Overall, the City Hall has received requests for building permits for private investments totaling more than 700 million Euro – currently the largest private investment portfolio in Romania, outside Bucharest.

- ✘ **HIGHER EU FUNDS ALLOCATIONS FOR URBAN AREAS.** The World Bank has worked with DG Regio, the Association of Municipalities, the Ministry of European Funds, and the Ministry of Regional Development, to prepare the Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) approach for the 2021-2027 Programming Period. The worked took a closer look at the budget executions of cities and came up with an estimate of capital investment budgets for each city in Romania. The proposed allocation for SUD is 5 billion Euro for 2021-2027, as compared to 1.3 billion for the 2014-2020 Programming Period. In addition, SUD 2021-2027 allows cities access to a wider set of interventions (i.e. more diversity), encourages inter-jurisdictional cooperation, and promotes a more decentralized approach (more attuned to the needs of each city).
- ✘ **COORDINATE METROPOLITAN SPATIAL PLANNING.** Most large cities in Romania have outdated spatial plans, which in recent years has led to unsustainable, piece-meal development patterns. Urban sprawl and un-coordinated developments come with huge costs for the environment, people, and the economy – from more pollution and more time spent in traffic, to a drop in the quality of life and attractiveness of the cities. The World Bank has worked with the City of Constanta and the City of Brasov to prepare comprehensive GIS databases for their metropolitan areas, and has provided assistance with Terms of Reference for the elaboration of metropolitan spatial plans. Both terms of reference have been tendered, and upon implementation, Constanta and Brasov will be among the few cities in Romania with comprehensive metropolitan spatial plans.
- ✘ **IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF CITIES.** According to a survey undertaken by the World Bank in 2017, better quality of life is the main impetus for Romanians to move to one of the cities in the country, instead of migrating abroad. The World Bank has, consequently, worked with the municipalities of Constanta, Brasov, and the District 5 of Bucharest, to prepare urban regeneration guides for: 1) apartment block neighborhoods; 2) historic districts; 3) areas of interest. In Constanta, the administration has already started an ambitious program focused on the rehabilitation of urban infrastructure in apartment block neighborhoods. The Municipality of

Brasov, together with the Romanian Architects' Order, has launched an international urban design competition for the rehabilitation of its historic center.

- ✘ **IMPROVING STRATEGIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION.** The World Bank is working with the City of Bucharest, Ilfov County Council, and the City of Cluj, to prepare medium-term development strategies, and to help with the implementation of existing investment programs – in the case of Bucharest, the Seismic Retrofit Program, interventions in the Old City Center, and the implementation of the Mobility Plan. For the City of Bucharest, this will be the first integrated urban development strategy in its history, with the administration having focused in the past 30 years only on ad-hoc capital investments and generally under-investing in much needed urban infrastructure. In the case of Ilfov County, the development strategy aims a symbiotic approach with the Bucharest development strategy, as Ilfov is the de facto larger metropolitan area of Bucharest.
- ✘ **IMPROVING SPATIAL PLANNING.** The World Bank is working with Cluj County, the county with the second-highest number of new developments in Romania (after Ilfov), and with a need for coordinated territorial interventions. The work with the Cluj County also focused on introducing novel and extended public engagement methods, to ensure that proposals in the spatial plan reflect the opinions and needs of a large spectrum of stakeholders.

7. Going Forward

38. Going forward, the RAS program will be directed towards the goal of strengthening institutions for achieving sustainable and inclusive growth, as framed in the new FY19-23 Country Partnership Framework (CPF) with Romania, approved in 2018. The new CPF is more selective and focused than the previous one and it covers five years to align the WBG engagement to the Romanian EU funds that can be used until 2023. In addition to the filter of building institutional capacity the RAS program will be filtered, to the extent appropriate, to: (i) developing innovative solutions that benefit the most poor and vulnerable, including Roma; (ii) maximizing finance for development, including catalyzing private sector investment or leveraging additional resources (e.g., better absorption of EU funds); and/or (iii) contributing to regional and global public goods.

39. Given the exceptional circumstances related to the spread of COVID-19 and the on-going crisis, the engagement of the World Bank in Romania and the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the pace of the RAS agreements in implementation is currently assessed in close collaboration with all counterparts. Considerable risks on the implementation of the RAS portfolio are mainly stemmed by restrictions on mobility and field work, and on carrying out face-to-face discussions, interviews, workshops as well as large-scale conferences and events. The World Bank is committed to finding the best possible solutions in ensuring the effective implementation of all RAS agreements and is maintaining close communication with governmental counterparts and stakeholders in assessing risks and responding to emerging needs.

40. The focus for new RAS requests in 2020 should be strongly focused on helping the Government meet the enabling conditions before January 1, 2021. Enabling conditions for the next programming period have replaced the ex-ante conditionalities from the 2014-2020 period. The enabling conditions will be monitored and applied throughout the period and Romania will not be able to declare expenditure related to specific objectives until the enabling conditions are fulfilled.

41. The RAS approach should continue to focus on longer engagements to allow for capacity building and knowledge transfer. In 2019, the duration of the legal agreements was extended with an average of 7 months (with the largest being a 12-month extension) through 6 amendments, which shows that more time is needed to successfully implement activities that are focused on capacity building. Dissemination of activities has also shown results in terms of knowledge transfer and the RAS agreements should allow for sufficient time for dissemination of results towards the end of the project.

42. The RAS engagement at the subnational level continues to evolve. Based on the successful engagement with local administrations and delivery of high-quality activities, the requests for assistance from municipalities are growing in number. Moreover, as part of the survey conducted under the Urban Policy RAS, almost all local administrations answered positively on working with the World Bank in the future. In face of this growing demand, the World Bank is looking to prioritize engagements based on specific criteria, focusing on engagements that are likely to have a bigger impact and engagements where the Bank can bring the largest added-value, as well as being more granular and focusing on solutions to specific

technical issues (e.g. solid waste management, urban regeneration of specific neighborhoods, local resilience, financial management etc.) adjusted as per the needs of municipalities. Furthermore, given the growing focus at both global and EU-level on climate change and environment sustainability, going forward the RAS engagements at subnational level are expected to have an increasing focus on this agenda.

Annex 1. Summary Description of Each Ongoing RAS in 2019 Using European Funds

ROMANIA: PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STRATEGY UNIT	
SIGNED: February 25, 2016 DURATION: 36 months VALUE: RON 6.43 million (EUR1.44 million)	KEY PARTNERS: General Secretariat of the Government
<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To strengthen Romania's central strategic planning function. The RAS will help the Prime Minister's office achieve this objective through the establishment of a Strategy Unit and a design of strategic planning and monitoring processes and tools.</p> <p>The project has four main components: (i) design of the National Strategy Management Framework and Procedures; (ii) support for the establishment of the Strategy Unit; (iii) methodology and procedures for preparing strategic documents; and (iv) monitoring and evaluation.</p>	

ROMANIA: ASSISTANCE TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FOR INFORMED DECISION-MAKING ON INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE	
SIGNED: March 30, 2016 DURATION: 39 months VALUE: RON 7.8 million (EUR 1.75 million)	KEY PARTNERS: National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development
<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To strengthen the strategic and monitoring capacity of the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research of Romania to make informed decisions on investments in education infrastructure. Specifically, this RAS will (i) support the preparation of a draft Strategy for Infrastructure Investments in Education Institutions, and (ii) build and enhance capacity within the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research for the preparation and monitoring of the National Strategy for Infrastructure Investments in Education Institutions.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education and Scientific Research will prepare the National Strategy for Infrastructure Investments in Education Institutions (NSIIEI) based on the draft Strategy for Infrastructure Investments in Education Institutions (SIIEI) to be developed under this RAS. The NSIIEI will be fundamental to inform decisions on investments in infrastructure, and to increase the absorption of European Union Structural and Investment Funds for the 2014-2020 programming period.</p>	

ROMANIA: ASSISTANCE TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR M&E IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION STRATEGIES	
SIGNED: June 29, 2016 DURATION: 36 months VALUE: RON 6.46 million (EUR1.43 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of National Education
<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To build the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research to (i) monitor and evaluate the implementation of strategies for reducing early school leaving, and improving tertiary education, life-long learning and vocational education and training, and (ii) apply an evidence-based tool--the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) --to key policy areas with the purpose of fostering a structured policy dialogue with decision makers and stakeholders. The MESR will undertake a M&E process of the implementation of four complex education strategies - three of them (ESL, TE, and LLL) developed with Bank assistance under previous RASs and formally approved by the Government in June/July 2015, and one (VET) prepared by the MESR separately and currently processed for final approval. While all these strategies represent</p>	

ex-ante conditionalities for Romania's access to European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), resources for their implementation will also incur national budgets as well as other sources of funds. The M&E is expected to be a process of monitoring, learning and adjusting, as necessary, while leading to the achievement of the objectives of the strategies and EU2020 targets. At the same time, the MESR will seek to evaluate and improve key policies against evidence based global standards. This RAS will assist the MESR in the above-mentioned process through capacity building activities. The capacity building process is expected to foster a broader policy dialogue with decision makers and stakeholders on how to strengthen the effectiveness of the education system.

ROMANIA: ASSISTANCE ON STRENGTHENING PLANNING AND BUDGETING CAPACITY AND SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF PERFORMANCE BUDGETING

SIGNED: June 8, 2016 DURATION: 35 months VALUE: RON 14.2 million (EUR 3.15 million)	KEY PARTNERS: General Secretariat of the Government
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To strengthen the strategic and monitoring processes in the Center of Government (CoG), Ministry of Public Finance (MoPF) and line ministries with the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of public spending. Specifically, the assistance will focus on a) further strengthening the existing Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) development processes of the MoPF and line ministries under the guidance of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister (CPM); b) monitoring ISP updates and implementation with a common IT tool, developed with support from the Bank; and c) developing a central dashboard in the CPM for high level ISP priorities of the selected ministries.	

ROMANIA: SUPPORT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

SIGNED: September 1, 2016 DURATION: 35 months VALUE: EUR 2.38 million	KEY PARTNERS: National Agency for Public Procurement
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support the Romanian Ministry of Public Finance and its subordinated National Public Procurement Agency to reform the public procurement system in line with the PP strategy by transforming the procurement policy and practice into a strategic management function with focus on value for money and integrity in the whole project cycle.	

ROMANIA: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ENHANCE QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ROMANIA

SIGNED: July 24, 2017 DURATION: 37 months VALUE: RON 6.48 million (EUR 1.42 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To improve the capacity of the Ministry of National Education and the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education to govern the quality assurance system of higher education with the purpose of supporting increased attainment to and quality and efficiency of Romania's higher education system. This Advisory Services is designed to support the improvement of the administrative capacity of the MESR and the RAQAHE by developing procedures for the organization of its internal and external activities, by training its own staff, and also by developing and implementing consultation mechanisms to ensure that all stakeholders are participating in the decision-making process and continuing to develop efficient, citizen-oriented public policies.	

ROMANIA: SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ROMANIA'S HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME (POCU) 2014-2020

SIGNED: October 12, 2017 DURATION: 38 months VALUE: EUR 10 million	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To enable the Government of Romania to make more effective and efficient use of resources from the Human Development Operational Programme (POCU). This will be achieved by supporting (i) streamlining the implementation process of POCU within the managing authority and intermediary bodies, (ii) improvement of the design of POCU calls and (iii) improvements in the appraisal and evaluation of calls through clarifying roles and responsibilities and introducing adequate controls and accountability mechanisms.	

ROMANIA: DEVELOPING A UNITARY HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WITHIN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

SIGNED: January 31, 2018 DURATION: 23 months VALUE: RON 27.24 million (EUR 5.85 million)	KEY PARTNERS: General Secretariat of the Government
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support the implementation of the national Strategy to Strengthen the Public Administration. The RAS will assist the client achieve this objective by promoting informed public debate on HRM reform, updating the legal and regulatory basis for HRM, consolidating current HRM practices, and clarifying the main roles and responsibilities associated with each category of public employees. The RAS will create conditions for improved HRM in particular by: 1) Facilitating a high-level dialogue on the importance of improved HRM, including a process of public consultation; 2) Developing a public policy proposal based on analysis of the existing legislative and institutional framework that drives HRM; 3) Developing new support instruments, procedures, systems and methodological guidelines for new HRM processes; 4) Elaborating and revising the provisions for HRM, including quality assurance, pay-scales, competency frameworks; and 5) Supporting capacity building and study tours to relevant EU countries.	

ROMANIA: SUPPORT TO IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES A2, A3, A5, A6 AND A7.2 OF THE PROJECT ON "INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF INTERVENTIONS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ITS COORDINATED STRUCTURES"

SIGNED: September 18, 2018 DURATION: 21 months VALUE: RON 1.31 million (EUR 0.28 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of Labor and Social Justice
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To provide support to the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice to develop an M&E System for monitoring the National Strategy for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction and the performance of the main programs under its responsibility. The activity will contribute to Ministry of Labor efforts in the M&E area through (i) developing the M&E System for the National Strategy for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction, (ii) developing a system of social inclusion indicators regarding the programs implemented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Justice and ensuring they are integrated in the M&E system; (iii) assessing regulations affecting the M&E system, the way it is implemented and make proposal to improve them; (iv) training to the ministerial technical team and policymakers on monitoring & evaluation, data analysis and reporting; and (v) supporting the MLSJ in the implementation of the M&E systems.	

ROMANIA: CONSOLIDATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING CAPACITY OF MDRAP FOR RENOVATION OF THE NATIONAL BUILDING STOCK FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SEISMIC RISK (P169420)	
SIGNED: January 8, 2019 DURATION: 24 months VALUE: RON 6.56 million (USD 1.63 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support the consolidation of the strategic planning capacity of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration to renovate the national stock of buildings for the purposes of energy efficiency and preparedness to seismic risks.	

ROMANIA RAS – TA TO SUPPORT ROMANIA IN ANALYZING AND ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES IN MEETING THE UWWTD REQUIREMENTS (P167925)	
SIGNED: January 28, 2019 DURATION: 22 months VALUE: RON 14.48 million (USD 3.7 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of Waters and Forestry
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support Romania in analyzing and addressing the challenges it has faced in meeting the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD) requirements. The higher-level, medium-term objective of the Bank re-engagement in the sector is to: encourage the Government of Romania to go beyond UWWTD compliance and consider the challenges of limited financial and technical capacity at local level, major inclusion gap for the poor, rural population and Roma population, and other measures necessary to achieve water security and sustainability of infrastructure and services as well as sustainable WSS sector in Romania.	

ROMANIA: CONSOLIDATING THE COORDINATION MECHANISM TO IMPLEMENT THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTIONS ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (P168612)	
SIGNED: March 21, 2019 DURATION: 29 months VALUE: RON 8.5 million (USD 2.11 million)	KEY PARTNERS: National Authority for People with Disabilities
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support the National Authority for Persons with Disabilities (ANPD) to make operational the coordination mechanism for the implementation and monitoring of the UN Convention to promote, protect and ensure all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons with disabilities.	

ROMANIA: ASSESSMENT OF THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT SYSTEM AND FURTHER SUPPORT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT STRATEGY (P169141)	
SIGNED: May 24, 2019 DURATION: 36 months VALUE: EUR 6.81 million (USD 7.89 million)	KEY PARTNERS: National Agency for Public Procurement
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To assist Romanian authorities in strengthening institutional capacity and implementing reform activities in the area of Public Procurement. The RAS will help strengthen the public procurement system by improving institutional performance and capacity at national (Public Procurement Agency ANAP) and subnational (contracting authorities) level. In addition, it will contribute to the development of a career path in public procurement and to meeting the enabling conditions for public procurement for the next EU financing period 2021-2027.	

ROMANIA: CAPACITY BUILDING TO ACCELERATE THE TRANSITION FROM INSTITUTIONAL TO COMMUNITY-BASED CARE FOR CHILDREN DEPRIVED OF PARENTAL CARE RAS (P168507)

SIGNED: August 26, 2019	KEY PARTNERS: National Authority for Protection of Child Rights and Adoption
DURATION: 30 months	
VALUE: RON 7.1 million (USD 1.68 million)	
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: (i) To support the development of evidence-based policies in the field of child protection; and, (ii) to develop the capacity of the local public administration to prevent the separation of children from their families, to increase the spread and quality of child-related services they provide.	

ROMANIA: RO ENHANCING EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY-MAKING BY STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO PRODUCE AND USE RELIABLE STATISTICS (P167217)

SIGNED: September 17, 2019	KEY PARTNERS: National Institute for Statistics (NIS)
DURATION: 35 months	
VALUE: RON 17.1 million (USD 4.05 million)	
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To: (i) support the NIS and the participating agencies of the NSS to prepare the 2020 General Agricultural Census; (ii) support the NIS and the participating agencies of the NSS to prepare the 2021 Population and Housing Census; and (iii) support the NIS to strengthen its institutional capacity, including in terms of human resources, to produce quality official statistics. In this context, the RAS will help to improve the processes, methods, tools, and capacity of the NIS, GSG and other NSS stakeholders in Romania to enable them to produce and disseminate relevant, timely, reliable, and open statistical data, that are in line with the European standards, classifications, and methodology for evidence based policy making, and to increase the overall capacity of the Government to make use of reliable data in order to substantiate public policies.	

ROMANIA: Support for Speeding up the Transition of People with Disabilities (P168518)

SIGNED: October 4, 2019	KEY PARTNERS: The National Authority for Persons with Disabilities
DURATION: 32 months	
VALUE: RON 13.5 million (USD 3.1 million)	
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To provide support to and improve the capacity of the National Authority for People with Disabilities to accelerate the process of deinstitutionalization of adults with disabilities to move from residential institutions to community-based services. The proposed Advisory Services task will support the process of deinstitutionalization of adults with disabilities in Romania through the following activities: (i) prepare a comprehensive diagnosis of the residential centers for persons with disabilities to prioritize their restructuring, identify beneficiaries' needs and the services that would respond to them, and assess barriers preventing adults with disabilities having an independent living or accessing community-based services; (ii) draw up a comprehensive methodology for preparing the plans for restructuring the residential centers for persons with disabilities; (iii) monitor the implementation of the restructuring plans at county level, and the strategies for developing social services prepared by the County Directorates for Social Assistance and Child Protection; and (iv) understand the difficulties in the use of instruments already legislated and to recommend ways of improving them as required.	

ROMANIA: Technical Support for the Preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans for Romania (P170989)	
SIGNED: October 16, 2019	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of Waters and Forests
DURATION: 38 months	
VALUE: RON 130.2 million (USD 30.4 million)	
<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support the Government of Romania to strengthen its capacity in developing the Flood Hazard and Flood Risk Maps, as well as the Flood Risk Management Plans to ensure a water secure future for the people, economy and environment of Romania and aligned with EU water legislation requirements. Methodologies, Flood Hazard and Flood Risk Maps and 12 draft Flood Risk Management Plans must be prepared (one for each of the country's eleven River Basins Administrations, plus one for the Danube River) to cover the period 2022-2027. World Bank' support for the preparation of the draft FRMPs aims at: (i) improving the methodological framework; (ii) developing the new FHM taking into consideration the climate change impact, sources, mechanisms and characteristics of floods, and the FRM based on monetary evaluation of impact; (iii) developing comprehensive draft FRMPs which consider major aspects of flood risk management, focusing on prevention, protection and preparedness and actively engaging the stakeholders in the process; (iv) proposing programs of specific measures or combination of measures, as part of the FRMPs, to address the identified risks in a context of climate change inducing an increase in the frequency of extreme events; (v) building institutional and technical capacities for the next cycles of the Floods Directive. The plans essentially result in a Program of Measures (structural and non-structural) that are then expected to be implemented during the plans' validity period. Among others, the plans will significantly influence the country's investment programs in flood control structures for the next EU programming period and will define the country's ability to ensure a water secure development path for its people, its economy and its environment.</p>	

ROMANIA: SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN IMPROVED TRAINING SYSTEM IN THE ROMANIAN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION – INA RAS (P169456)	
SIGNED: October 29, 2019	KEY PARTNERS: General Secretariat of the Government
DURATION: 20 months	
VALUE: RON 2.26 million (USD 0.54 million)	
<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To strengthen INA's capacity to develop evidence-based training policy for the Romanian public administration. The RAS will assist the client in identifying training needs of the Romanian public administration, providing evidence-based policy recommendations to improve training policy and support new training programs (mentoring).</p>	

ROMANIA: SUPPORTING GSG IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE TRAINING SYSTEM IN ROMANIA (P170498)	
SIGNED: October 29, 2019	KEY PARTNERS: General Secretariat of the Government
DURATION: 21 months	
VALUE: RON 1.51 million (USD 0.35 million)	
<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support the Government of Romania to develop an evidence-based training policy framework for the Romanian public administration. The RAS will assist the client in identifying training needs of the Romanian public administration, providing evidence-based policy recommendations to improve training policy and support new training programs.</p>	

ROMANIA: STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE GOVERNMENT (GSG) TO ACCELERATE PUBLIC INVESTMENTS IN ROMANIA (P171255)	
SIGNED: November 11, 2019 DURATION: 32 months VALUE: RON 8.50 million (USD 1.99 million)	KEY PARTNERS: General Secretariat of the Government
<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To strengthen the role of GSG to align the public investment policy framework with key policy priorities, establish coordination mechanisms, and enhance institutional capabilities towards the improvement of public investment management, particularly in relation to the utilization of EU funding. The selection of the GSG as the main counterpart has a dual objective: it aims at strengthening the policy coordination framework and it supports the transition to more evidence-based policies. The RAS activities will be built around two pillars: (1) reducing administrative barriers and improving government-wide coordination mechanisms. This encompasses using the GSG's center of government convening power to improve interinstitutional coordination and streamline policies and processes across government; (2) encouraging the production of data to inform investment strategies and decision-making. The GSG is especially mandated to strengthen the alignment of national priorities to investment priorities. Likewise, through its coordination role, it is adequately placed to serve as a platform to generate data that would allow the government to better assess its investment needs, plan, and prioritize.</p> <p>The development objective of the project is to improve the effectiveness of public investment by: i) strengthening GSG capacity; and, ii) streamlining processes related to the utilization of EU Funds.</p>	

ROMANIA: REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT III (P167906)	
SIGNED: November 11, 2019 DURATION: 30 months VALUE: RON 9.82 million (USD 2.3 million)	KEY PARTNERS: General Secretariat of the Government
<p>PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To strengthen the RIA quality control and coordination mechanism as well as the capacity of the Romanian administration for evidence-based policy making. In order to achieve this objective, the project will work on the institutionalization of the RIA quality control oversight mechanism and continue to support capacity building through the development of impact assessment studies in selected institutions. The project aims to strengthen the capacity of the public administration for evidence-based policy making through the following activities: The first component of the project will focus on strengthening the quality control mechanism for RIA by preparing a Comparative analysis of institutional arrangements for RIA institutional setup of quality control mechanism. The analysis will present good international practice, identify feasible options and recommendations for a possible RIA quality control setup in Romania and propose operational procedures for RIA quality control and coordination. This will then be disseminated and presented to the decision makers and RIA community of practice. The second component will focus on capacity building for RIA. This will include a set of general RIA training sessions as well as more targeted training on RIA quantification tools and emerging topics in policy making (e.g. using behavioral insights in policy making, using artificial intelligence, regulating disruptive technology). The third component will aim at developing selected Regulatory Impact Assessments in priority areas. Three in-depth RIA studies will be developed on priority regulations relevant for the government legislative agenda. In addition, on-the job training will be provided in developing 6 substantiation notes by applying RIA principles. In these on-the job RIA's the new approach will be to work on developing a simplified RIA model that will serve to demonstrate that the RIA process can bring significant impact and improve the quality of policy</p>	

decisions even if not accompanied by complex cost benefit analysis. The fourth and final component will focus on strengthening the RIA community of practice. To further reinforce this community, the project will support the organization of 3 annual RIA conferences and two State of RIA Annual Reports. The project will facilitate the on-line interaction of the Community and help develop networks with universities and think tanks. The project will also develop branding and outreach strategy for the community of practice, including brochures and promotional material.

ROMANIA: SUPPORT FOR SCALING-UP CENTRALIZED PROCUREMENT IN THE ROMANIAN EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES (P172066)	
SIGNED: November 25, 2019 DURATION: 21 months VALUE: RON 3.07 million (USD 0.72 million)	KEY PARTNERS: National Office for Centralized Procurement (ONAC)
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To contribute to strengthen the Government of Romania's capacities to conduct centralized procurement in the health sector. In order to achieve this objective, the RAS will include an analysis of the regulatory framework and establishment of institutional arrangements for centralized public procurement of medical products, a review of existing regulations on public procurement of medical products in Romania, of regulations on centralized procurement in Romania and of European Union (EU) regulations related to the procurement of medical products, case studies on centralized procurement of medical products and a study visit in a European country for procurement staff for exchanging knowledge and expertise.	

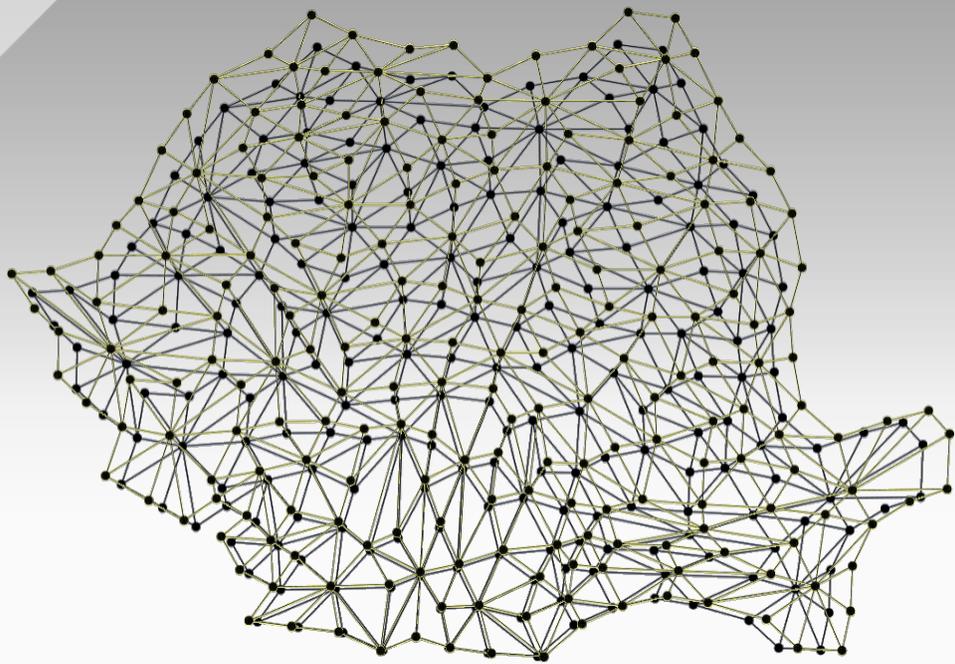
ROMANIA: URBAN POLICY RAS (P171176)	
SIGNED: November 29, 2019 DURATION: 25 months VALUE: RON 18.58 million (USD 4.85 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To: (i) put in place a clear urban policy, in line with the next EU financing period and (ii) create a platform of dialogue on urban development issues for relevant stakeholders.	

STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF THE ROMANIAN COURT OF ACCOUNTS (P171014)	
SIGNED: December 3, 2019 DURATION: 34 months VALUE: RON 9.4 million (USD 2.17 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Romanian Court of Accounts
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support the Romanian Court of Accounts to strengthen its institutional and technical capacity to deliver high quality audit services. In the longer term, higher quality audit services are expected to contribute to improving citizens perceptions of the RCoA and public service delivery.	

ROMANIA: TERRITORIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT RAS (P172820)	
SIGNED: December 9, 2019 DURATION: 25 months VALUE: RON 1.54 million (USD 0.36 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To provide support to the Ministry of Public Works, Development and Administration in developing an evidence-based decision-making tool for assessing potential territorial impact of public policies and investment programs.	

ROMANIA: CONSOLIDATING THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FUNCTION OF GSG (P170487)	
SIGNED: December 9, 2019 DURATION: 32 months VALUE: RON 8.5 million (USD 1.99 million)	KEY PARTNERS: General Secretariat of the Government
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To strengthen the capacity of the Romanian GSG to consolidate its strategic management functions and support capacity building of line ministries in elaborating national strategies and policies	

ROMANIA: SUPPORT FOR SCALING-UP CENTRALIZED PROCUREMENT IN THE ROMANIAN EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES - MIA COMPONENT (P172075)	
SIGNED: December 17, 2019 DURATION: 27 months VALUE: RON 2.87 million (USD 0.67 million)	KEY PARTNERS: Ministry of Internal Affairs
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To contribute to strengthening the Government of Romania's capacities to conduct centralized procurement in the health sector.	



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