



EUROPEAN CLUSTER
COLLABORATION PLATFORM

Country factsheet

Romania

An initiative of the European Union





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Introduction



This document presents an overview of the cluster policy in Romania. Given the importance to contextualise the cluster policies (and related) analysed in the factsheets, a comprehensive outlook of the country in socioeconomic terms can be consulted in the [European Semester Country Report for Romania](#).

The European Semester was an instrument introduced to coordinate the EU Member States economic policies and address the economic challenges faced by the EU. Its goals are “to ensure sound public finances, to prevent excessive macroeconomic imbalances in the EU, to support structural reforms to create more jobs and growth, and to boost investment”. Thus, it focuses on the following areas: business environment; financial and fiscal stability; green economy; public administration; labour market and skills; and, social protection and cohesion.

The European Green Deal and one of its core elements, the European Industrial Strategy, combined with the emerging concepts of experimental governance, mission-oriented innovation policies, responsible research and innovation (RRI) in a post-COVID-19 European Union will impact policymaking in many ways that are difficult to foresee. However, one thing is certain, regional policymakers will continue to experiment with designing and implementing policy solutions to respond to their unique regional policy challenges.

The European Commission updated its industrial strategy in May 2021 to ensure that industrial ambition takes account of the new circumstances following the COVID-19 crisis while ensuring European industry can lead the way in transitioning to a green, digital and resilient economy. In addition, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, policymakers at EU and national level have acted decisively and at short notice to make available very significant financial resources, notably through the Recovery and Resilience Facility, to tackle the threat of a prolonged downturn. [National recovery and resilience plans](#) have been drafted in each Member State to ensure a recovery that addresses the challenges identified in the European Semester. The measures of Romanian's Recovery and Resilience Plan are built on six pillars: green transition; digital transformation; smart, sustainable and inclusive growth; social and territorial cohesion; health, and economic, social and institutional resilience; policies for the next generation. In addition to pandemics, the ongoing war in Ukraine has also taken its toll on EU companies and industrial ecosystems, highlighting the significance of policy efforts in supporting SMEs and clusters.

The new National Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2021-2027 of Romania is currently in progress under the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalisation coordination. Also, Romania has updated and/or elaborated the eight Regional Smart Specialisation Strategies as part of the regional policy.

In the following, a succinct overview of the cluster policy in Romania will be provided. The structure - of this factsheet generally encompasses:

- 1) an overview of the industrial ecosystems and cluster landscape in Romania,
- 2) an overview of the broad policies which support the development of clusters and an insight into a regional policy example,
- 3) an assessment of the state of play of the national cluster policy.

01

Industrial ecosystems and cluster landscape



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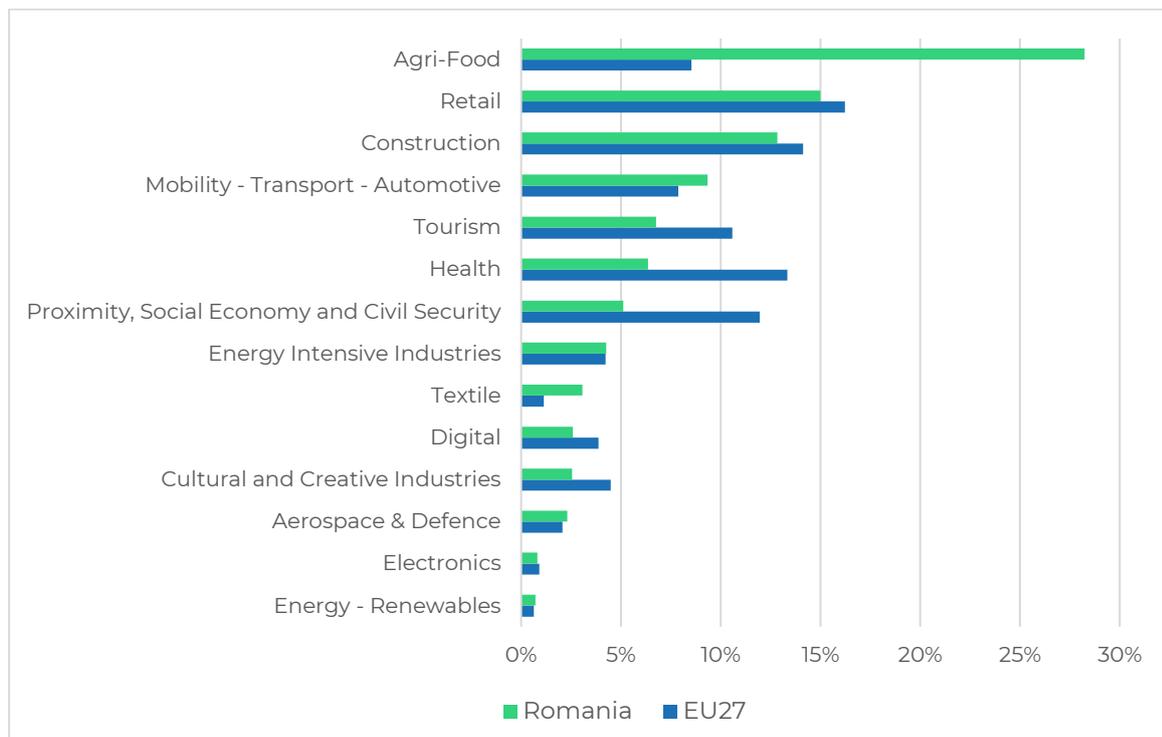
1. Industrial ecosystems and cluster landscape

Employment in the 14 ecosystems in the country

As part of its Industrial Strategy (March 2020), the European Commission has selected 14 industrial ecosystems that are particularly relevant in Europe and encompass all players operating in a value chain.¹ The classification of the 14 industrial ecosystems have been calculated by aggregating NACE 2 -digit activities, following the methodology established in the European Commission.²

In Figure 1, the employment share of the region and the EU27 on average in each industrial ecosystem is shown relative to the number of employed persons in the 14 industrial ecosystems. The ecosystems are ordered, from top to bottom, according to the amount of employment in the country. When the bar for the country is higher than that of the EU27, it indicates that the country is more specialised in that ecosystem.

Figure 1: Employment in the ecosystems



Source: ECCP (2022), own elaboration based on data from Eurostat.

According to Figure 1, the most significant ecosystem in Romania is the "Agri-Food" sector, which accounts for 28% of employment across all ecosystems. This is followed by "Retail" at 15% and "Construction" at 13%. Romania's strength in the "Agri-Food" sector is also evident when compared to the EU27 average of only 9%. "Mobility - Transport - Automotive" is the fourth-largest ecosystem, with a share of 9% of employment across all ecosystems, while "Textile" accounts for 3%. These two industrial ecosystems in Romania have a higher share of employment than the EU27 level,

¹ see here for more information <https://clustercollaboration.eu/in-focus/industrial-ecosystems> (last access 09.01.2023).

² see European Commission (2021): Annual Single Market Report, SWD(2021)351.



indicating their comparative strength. The strength of ecosystems “Agri-Food”, “Mobility - Transport – Automotive” and “Textile” is also shown in the sectoral and ecosystem nodes that are regionally relevant across the majority of the eight Romanian NUTS 2 regions, as detailed in the section below.

Regionally relevant nodes (agglomerations)

Economic activity, and therefore employment, is not equally distributed in all regions. Specialisation can be measured through Location Quotients (LQ) that reflect the relative specialisation of an activity in a region compared to the EU average. If the LQ for a given activity-region combination is above 1.5, it is considered a specialisation node and if the activity accounts for at least 1 % of total employment in the region, it is considered regionally relevant.³ The following tables shows the total number of regionally relevant specialisation nodes (agglomerations) in each region in the country and identifies the top five most specialised of these nodes. The first table focuses on the 88 NACE 2-digit activities or sectors, totalling 77 in the country, while the second table is based on the 14 ecosystems, which total 24 in the country.

Table 1: Number of regionally relevant sectoral nodes and Top 5 nodes by region (NACE)

Region	# of nodes	Node 1	Node 2	Node 3	Node 4	Node 5
RO11: North-West (Romania)	11	C15 - Manuf. of leather products	C31 - Manuf. of furniture	A01 - Crop & animal production	C14 - Manuf. of wearing apparel	F41 - Construction of buildings
RO12: Centre (Romania)	15	C15 - Manuf. of leather products	C29 - Manuf. of motor vehicles & trailers	C14 - Manuf. of wearing apparel	C16 - Manuf. of wood products	C13 - Manuf. of textiles
RO21: North-East (Romania)	5	A01 - Crop & animal production	A02 - Forestry & logging	C14 - Manuf. of wearing apparel	F41 - Construction of buildings	F42 - Civil engineering
RO22: South-East (Romania)	8	C30 - Manuf. of other transport equipment	C14 - Manuf. of wearing apparel	A01 - Crop & animal production	C24 - Manuf. of basic metals	F42 - Civil engineering
RO31: South-Muntenia	7	A01 - Crop & animal production	C14 - Manuf. of wearing apparel	C29 - Manuf. of motor vehicles & trailers	F41 - Construction of buildings	H49 - Land transport & transport via pipelines
RO32: Bucharest-Ilfov	9	N80 - Security, investigation activities	J61 - Telecommunications	F41 - Construction of buildings	J62 - Computer programming, consultancy & related activities	E38 - Waste activities
RO41: South-West Oltenia	8	B05 - Mining of coal & lignite	A01 - Crop & animal production	D35 - Electricity, gas & steam	C14 - Manuf. of wearing apparel	C29 - Manuf. of motor vehicles & trailers
RO42: West (Romania)	14	C29 - Manuf. of motor vehicles & trailers	C15 - Manuf. of leather products	C26 - Manuf. of electronic & optical products	C13 - Manuf. of textiles	C14 - Manuf. of wearing apparel

Source: ECCP (2022), own elaboration based on data from Eurostat.

Overall, there are fewer ecosystem nodes than the regionally relevant sectoral nodes by NACE sectors. This more concentrated agglomeration can at least partially be linked to the methodology of measurement of the 14 industrial ecosystems. Overall, the employment strength of Romania in the ecosystems “Agri-Food”, “Mobility-Transport-Automotive”, and “Textile” compared to the EU27 average is also reflected in the regionally relevant sectoral nodes (NACE) and the regionally relevant ecosystem nodes of the different regions. For instance, a number of regions (e.g., RO11: North-West and RO21: Centre) display regionally relevant nodes in the ecosystems “Textile” and “Agri-Food”. These regions also have regionally relevant sectoral nodes such as manufacturing of leather products (C15) and wearing apparel (C14) as well as crop and animal production (A01). Moreover, a number of regions

³ for more information on the methodology please see the methodology note: <https://clustercollaboration.eu/in-focus/policy-acceleration/country-factsheets-on-cluster-policies-and-programmes> (last access 09.01.2023).



has regionally relevant nodes in the ecosystem “Mobility-Transport-Automotive” (e.g., RO12: Centre and RO42: West). These regions and many others have related regionally relevant sectoral nodes such as manufacturing of motor vehicles and trailers (C29) or manufacturing of other transport equipment (C30).

Table 2: Regionally relevant ecosystem nodes

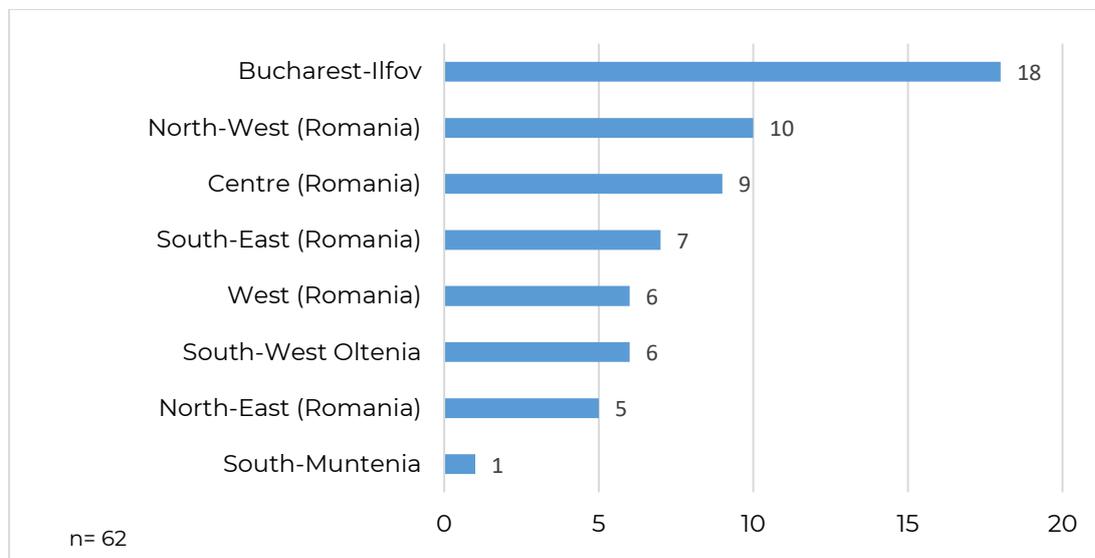
Region	# of ecosystem nodes	Node 1	Node 2	Node 3	Node 4	Node 5
RO11: North-West (Romania)	3	Textile	Agri-Food	Energy-renewables	-	-
RO12: Centre (Romania)	4	Textile	Agri-Food	Mobility-Transport-Automotive	Energy-renewables	-
RO21: North-East (Romania)	2	Agri-Food	Textile	-	-	-
RO22: South-East (Romania)	3	Agri-Food	Textile	Aerospace & Defense	-	-
RO31: South-Muntenia	2	Agri-Food	Textile	-	-	-
RO32: Bucharest-Ilfov	2	Digital	Aerospace & Defense	-	-	-
RO41: South-West Oltenia	2	Agri-Food	Textile	-	-	-
RO42: West (Romania)	6	Textile	Electronics	Mobility-Transport-Automotive	Energy-renewables	Aerospace & Defense

Source: ECCP (2022), own elaboration based on data from Eurostat.

Cluster organisations in the regions

There are 62 cluster organisations registered on the ECCP in the country. The majority of these cluster organisations are located in the capital region Bucharest-Ilfov (18 cluster organisations) followed by North-West (10 cluster organisations) and Centre with 9 cluster organisations. The following figure shows the presence of cluster organisations in the different regions.

Figure 2: Cluster organisations profiled on the ECCP



Source: ECCP (2022). Note: the data for the analysis was extracted on 14/10/2022.



The majority of member organizations of Romanian cluster organizations with profiles on the ECCP are composed of SMEs (78%, EU: 84%), followed by research organizations (14%, EU: 7%) and large enterprises (8%, EU: 9%). From a thematic perspective, these Romanian cluster organisations are operating in the following industrial ecosystems. Since not all cluster organisations on the ECCP provided this information, the number of cluster organisations with an allocated industrial ecosystem is lower than the overall number of cluster organisations in the country.

- Digital (8 cluster organisations)
- Renewable Energy (3 cluster organisations)
- Health (3 cluster organisations)
- Creative & Cultural Industries (2 cluster organisations)
- Construction (2 cluster organisations)
- Energy Intensive Industries (2 cluster organisations)
- Electronics (2 cluster organisations)
- Agri-food (1 cluster organisation)
- Textile (1 cluster organisation)
- Proximity & Social Economy (1 cluster organisation)
- Tourism (1 cluster organisation)

02

National cluster policy, programmes and initiatives



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2. National cluster policy, programmes and initiatives

In this section we provide an overview of the existing Romanian policies on national level as well as example of the regional level policy.

The breakdown is presented in the form of a table, with the first column showcasing information on the aspects which constitute the policy (beginning with 'Policy Objectives', following with 'Policy Focus', etc.). The second and third columns represent the case of Romanian broad policies supporting cluster development.

Within the table the text presented in bold (black) depicts standardised categories across country factsheets (56 in total for 2022), which are applied for comparative purposes. This is followed by a complementary descriptive text to provide more insights about the cluster policy in Romania.

Policy type:	Broad policy	Sectoral policy
Policy name:	Strategia Nationala de Specializare Inteligenta (National Strategy for Smart Specialization)	Document de politică industrială a României (Romania's industrial policy)
POLICY OBJECTIVES	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening cooperation between companies or industry and RTDI actors Increasing competitiveness and boosting scale up of SMEs Supporting internationalisation activities Fostering R&D activities, technology development and implementation Fostering innovation and strengthening innovation ecosystems Supporting cluster excellence and professionalisation of cluster management Supporting the consolidation of existing cluster organisations Supporting the creation of new cluster organisations Promoting entrepreneurship, start-ups and spin-offs Promoting resilience and sustainable economy and other solidarity-based initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening cooperation between companies or industry and RTDI actors Increasing competitiveness and boosting scale up of SMEs Supporting internationalisation activities Enhancing the visibility of clusters Fostering innovation and strengthening innovation ecosystems Supporting cluster excellence and professionalisation of cluster management Supporting the consolidation of existing cluster organisations Supporting the creation of new cluster organisations Promoting entrepreneurship, start-ups and spin-offs Promoting resilience and sustainable economy and other solidarity-based initiatives



Policy type:	Broad policy	Sectoral policy
Policy name:	Strategia Nationala de Specializare Inteligenta (National Strategy for Smart Specialization)	Document de politică industrială a României (Romania's industrial policy)
	<p>Promoting employment and upgrading skills and competences</p> <p>Enhancing territorial cohesion (through RIS3)</p> <p>Strengthening the network of cluster organisations/cross-clustering</p> <p>Cluster analysis and support for policymaking</p> <p>Increase supply chain resilience</p>	<p>Promoting employment and upgrading skills and competences</p> <p>Strengthening the network of cluster organisations/cross-clustering</p>
	<p>The new National Strategy for Smart Specialisation 2022-2027 is currently in progress under Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalisation coordination. The strategy will identify new S3 priorities and will define new mechanisms for S3 governance through clusters at national and regional level in the following period. In April 2022, the proposal regarding the National Strategy for Research, Innovation and Intelligent Specialization 2022-2027 was published.</p>	<p>Cluster policy in Romania has been, since 2009, an integral part of the overall national industrial policy. The policy was initiated by the Ministry of Economy and does not include non-industrial clusters. The main role of this policy is to disseminate the 'cluster' concept at national and regional level, to develop new and existing clusters, to help clusters get involved in European projects as well as having them involved in drafting smart specialisation strategies and exchange best practices with other relevant actors within the European network.</p>
POLICY FOCUS	Cross-sectoral	Sectoral
	<p>In addition to update the RIS3 and to respond to the 'seven enabling conditions' for the next programming period of EU Cohesion Policy 2021-27, the new Romanian strategies will have to experiment with new policy approaches to respond to the unique policy challenges resulting from COVID-19 and its consequences.</p>	<p>Romania's industrial policy document presents the current situation of the Romanian industry and underlines the main directions of action for an industry of the future.</p>
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES	Drafting as well as Implementation	Drafting as well as Implementation
	The provision of funding	The provision of funding
	The Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalisation	The Ministry of Economy, Industrial Policy Directorate



Policy type:	Broad policy	Sectoral policy
Policy name:	Strategia Nationala de Specializare Inteligenta (National Strategy for Smart Specialization)	Document de politică industrială a României (Romania's industrial policy)
BENEFICIARIES 	<p>SMEs</p> <p>Cluster organisations</p> <p>Research organisations</p> <p>Academic institutions</p> <p>Start-ups</p> <p>Business associations</p> <p>Large firms</p> <p>Technology centres</p> <p>General population</p>	<p>SMEs</p> <p>Cluster organisations</p> <p>Research organisations</p> <p>Academic institutions</p> <p>Start-ups</p> <p>Business associations</p> <p>Large firms</p> <p>Technology centres</p>
	<p>The new policy does not mention specifically which are the actors that will benefit from it. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalisation deploys the policy in collaboration with several organisations representing different value chain actors: The Romanian Cluster Organisation (ClusteRo), Regional Development Agencies, The Romanian Academy, The National Institute of Research – Development for Machines and Installations Designed to Agriculture and Food Industry.</p>	<p>The policy does not mention specifically which are the actors that will benefit from the policy. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Economy, through its Industrial Policy Directorate, deploys this policy in collaboration with several organisations representing different value chain actors: The Romanian Cluster Organisation (ClusteRo), Regional Development Agencies, The Romanian Academy, The National Institute of Research – Development for Machines and Installations Designed to Agriculture and Food Industry.</p>
INSTRUMENTS 	<p>Support to R&D projects, SMEs becoming cluster members, etc.</p> <p>Subsidies for cluster infrastructure (e.g. offices, equipment)</p> <p>Financing start-ups</p>	<p>Support to R&D projects, SMEs becoming cluster members, etc.</p> <p>Subsidies for cluster infrastructure (e.g. offices, equipment)</p> <p>Innovation: voucher, support to hire PhDs, cooperation with R&I actors</p>
	Financial	



Policy type:	Broad policy	Sectoral policy
Policy name:	Strategia Nationala de Specializare Inteligenta (National Strategy for Smart Specialization)	Document de politică industrială a României (Romania's industrial policy)
	<p>Innovation: voucher, support to hire PhDs, cooperation with R&I actors</p>	
	<p>Infrastructure: coworking spaces, offices, incubation and accelerator spaces, research centres, technology parks etc.</p> <p>Support for hard skill development: knowledge transfer, intellectual property , entrepreneurship, export advice, market intelligence</p> <p>Support for soft skills development: coaching, management training, upskilling/reskilling</p> <p>Support for networking and partnership building (at national and/or international level)</p> <p>Marketing activities: advertising, communication, events, fairs, and so on</p>	<p>Infrastructure: coworking spaces, offices, incubation and accelerator spaces, research centres, technology parks etc.</p> <p>Support for hard skill development: knowledge transfer, intellectual property , entrepreneurship, export advice, market intelligence</p> <p>Support for soft skills development: coaching, management training, upskilling/reskilling</p> <p>Support for networking and partnership building (at national and/or international level)</p> <p>Marketing activities: advertising, communication, events, fairs, and so on</p>
	<p>A 2020 report from ClusterRo highlights the status-quo of the cluster organisations in Romania as well as the type support provide to cluster organisations since 2012. Most of the financial support provided to cluster organisations consisted of EU funds which were channeled through different national programmes. According to the report, the most efficient scheme was the Sectoral Operational Programme "Competitiveness" (POS CCE 1.3.3) which combined minimis aid schemes with R&D&I projects. Another source of financing was through the Competitiveness Operational Programme (POC). In terms of technical assistance, the Romanian government facilitates cluster development by giving access to industrial and technological parks or business incubators.</p>	<p>A 2020 report from ClusterRo highlights the status-quo of the cluster organisations in Romania as well as the type support provide to cluster organisations since 2012. Most of the financial support provided to cluster organisations consisted of EU funds which were channeled through different national programmes. According to the report, the most efficient scheme was the Sectoral Operational Programme "Competitiveness" (POS CCE 1.3.3) which combined minimis aid schemes with R&D&I projects. Another source of financing was through the Competitiveness Operational Programme (POC). In terms of technical assistance, the Romanian government facilitates cluster development by giving access to industrial and technological parks or business incubators.</p>



Policy type:	Broad policy	Sectoral policy	
Policy name:	Strategia Nationala de Specializare Inteligenta (National Strategy for Smart Specialization)	Document de politică industrială a României (Romania's industrial policy)	
 HISTORY	Period	Limited	Unlimited
	Ending year (for policies with limited period)	2027	
	Starting year	2022	2009
	Explanation	The Romanian cluster policy has been an integral part of the national industrial policy since 2009. Although the policy per se has never been interrupted on paper, evidence seems to suggest that the support provided has not been consistent over the years which is highlighted also as one of the main weaknesses of the Romanian cluster landscape. Furthermore, a suitable funding framework is needed in order to ensure functioning of cluster organisations.	The Romanian cluster policy has been an integral part of the national industrial policy since 2009. Although the policy per se has never been interrupted on paper, evidence seems to suggest that the support provided has not been consistent over the years which is highlighted also as one of the main weaknesses of the Romanian cluster landscape. Furthermore, a suitable funding framework is needed in order to ensure functioning of cluster organisations.
BUDGET 	Overall	N/A	N/A
	Annual	N/A	N/A
	Source of funding	Funds came mainly from EU funds which were channeled through different national programmes, for the programming period 2021-2027: The Operational Program Smart Growth,	Funds came mainly from EU funds which were channeled through different national programmes (e.g. Sectoral Operational



Policy type:		Broad policy	Sectoral policy
Policy name:		Strategia Nationala de Specializare Inteligenta (National Strategy for Smart Specialization)	Document de politică industrială a României (Romania's industrial policy)
		Digitalisation and Financial Instruments 2021-2027 (POCIDIF) and the National Recovery and Resilience Plan.	Programme "Strengthening the competitiveness of the economy" (POS CCE 1.3.3), Competitiveness Operational Programme - POC).
POLICY EVALUATION 	Availability	In-itinere	Ex-post
	Results	The assessment of progress in national smart specialization priorities will be carried out in 2025 and 2027.	The Romanian Cluster Association (ClusteRo) published a report on the situation of Romanian clusters (2020).
POLICY ALIGNMENT WITH THE EU PRIORITIES 		Resilience	Resilience

03

State of play of cluster policy



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3. State of play of cluster policy

This section presents an overview on the state of play of Romanian cluster policy in the form of a quantitative and qualitative assessment. The data below illustrates how the country ranks in terms of **maturity of cluster policy at the national level**. The maturity assessment is based on a combination of factors presented in Chapter 2, which receive a score based on the existence or absence of a given element in the cluster policy.

Note: the maturity assessment does not reflect the performance of a country, but only the degree of development of their national cluster policy at the moment of data collection (Q3 2022). The assessment illustrates how the country scores for each of the four criteria (policy scope, continuity of cluster policies, evidence of performance, cluster support instruments) compared to the maximum score that they can reach. Please refer to the **Annex** for the detailed overview of the categories and the scoring system.

The table below presents an overview of the **maturity assessment for Romania** for 2022. The total score of Romania is 2 point out of 8.

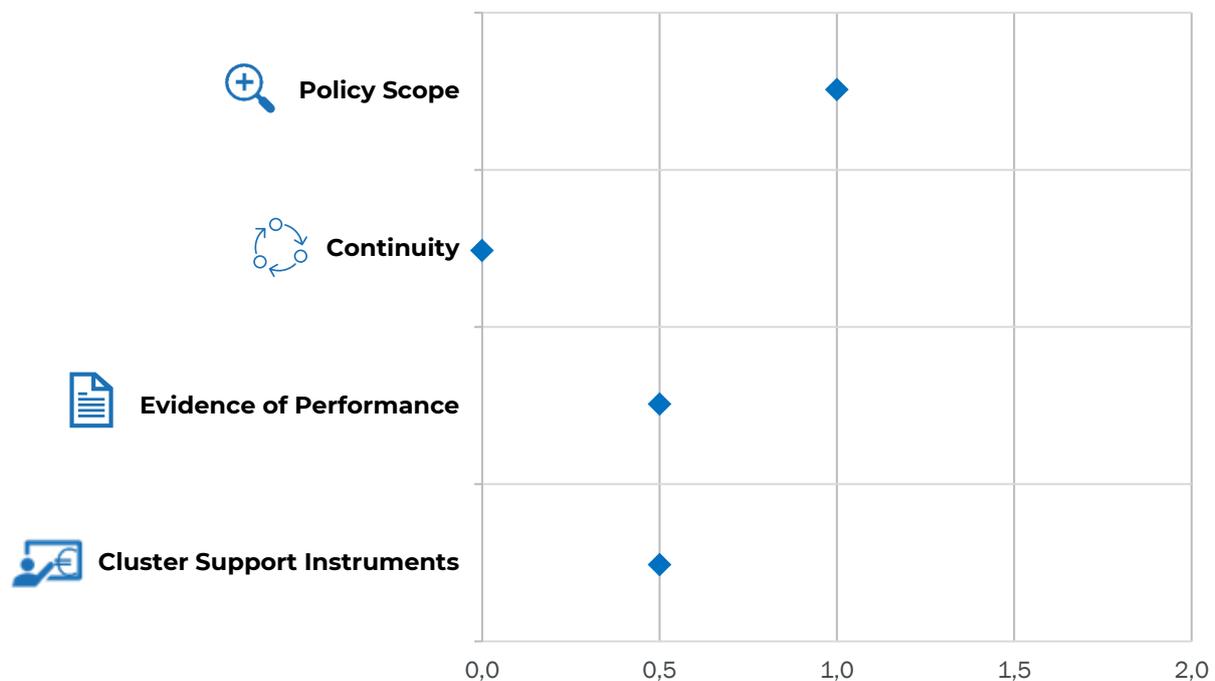
Romania	MATURITY ASSESSMENT	Max score	Actual score
POLICY SCOPE	Absence of cluster policy	0	
	Broad policy	0,5	
	Sectoral policy	1	1
	National and/or regional cluster policy	2	
CONTINUITY	No cluster-specific policy available	0	0
	Cluster policy established recently	0,5	
	Cluster policy established between over 2 and 10 years	1	
	Cluster policy established over 10 years ago	2	
EVIDENCE OF PERFORMANCE	No evaluation and / or monitoring available	0	
	Existence of evaluations of past policies	0,5	0,5
	Existence of monitoring or an ongoing / interim evaluation	1	
	Existence of monitoring and ex-ante or ongoing / interim evaluation	2	
CLUSTER SUPPORT INSTRUMENTS	No instruments for cluster development	0	
	Financial support for cluster development in the broader and / or sectoral policy	0,5	0,5
	Financial or technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy	1	
	Financial and technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy	2	
TOTAL (8)			2

Source: ECCP (2022).



Drawing from the table above that showcases the scored points in Romania's cluster policy, the Figure below portrays the **degree of maturity** across four categories related to the national level cluster policy.

Figure 3: Maturity of cluster policy - Romania



Source: ECCP (2022).

The text below provides a **qualitative description** of the state of play of the cluster policy in Romania, which is complementary to the maturity assessment presented above.

Policy scope

There is no self-standing cluster policy in Romania and the concept is only developed through the broader industrial policy, such as Document de politică industrială a României (Romania's industrial policy), Strategia Nationala de Specializare Inteligenta (National Strategy for Smart Specialization) or Regional Strategies for Smart Specialisation.

Continuity

The Romanian cluster policy was created in 2009 as part of the national industrial policy. Although the policy has never been formally interrupted or terminated, the actual support (either financial or through technical assistance) has been inconsistent over the years. Where financial support was provided, this was done through EU funds channelled through various national programmes and only in some years (2012, 2013, 2015, 2018 and 2020).

In Romania, there is no dedicated cluster policy. As mentioned previously, cluster as a concept is only an integral part of the wider national industrial policy. The current support targeted to cluster development under the industrial policy is rather unclear as it does not set any specific objectives or initiatives in this sense. Its main role is to disseminate the cluster concept at national and regional level and help clusters get involved in various European projects.



Evidence of performance

The Romanian Cluster Association (ClusteRo) published a report on the situation of Romanian clusters (2020). One of the main weaknesses of the cluster landscape and implicitly of the cluster policy has been the lack of coherent support. Even though the Ministry of Economy is the main actor responsible for cluster policy as an integral part of the industrial policy, structural funds have been made available only through ERDF interventions of the 'Operational Programme for Competitiveness 2014 - 2020'. The results of the report show overall sub-optimal support which can pose a risk to the cluster landscape in the medium and long term. Also, all the calls dedicated to clusters did not meet their actual needs. Despite the lack of support, cluster organisations have had very good results throughout the years (ClusteRo had in 2020, 47 organisations)

Cluster support instruments

In Romania's cluster support policies, there is a broad range of instruments for the creation and further development of clusters, e.g. support for cooperation and collaboration activities, support for R&D projects, development of innovations, etc.

Cross-regional / international cooperation

In the 2014-2020 funding period, the European Cluster Partnerships and the INNOSUP-1 initiative have been launched by the European Commission to encourage clusters from Europe to intensify collaboration across regions and sectors. Romanian cluster organizations have been involved in eighteen consortia of the European Strategic Cluster Partnerships out of which nine partnerships were focused on internationalisation (ESCP-4i), seven partnerships were on cluster management excellence (ESCP-4x) and two partnerships were focused on smart specialisation (ESCP-S3). Consortia partners came from 21 different states (PT, ES, AL, FR, RS, DE, PL, CZ, MK, IT, BG, DK, EL, BE, SE, HU, TR, LV, SI, AT, NL). Three Romanian cluster organizations participated in the INNOSUP-1 initiative with partner organizations coming from 14 countries (PL, ES, FR, DK, SE, DE, IT, IE, UK, BG, TR, FI, EL, GR).

In the 2021-2027 funding period, the Single Market Programme supports clusters as part of the Joint Clusters Initiatives (Euroclusters) for Europe's recovery. From Romania, seven cluster organisations are part of eight Euroclusters with partner from 12 countries (SK, AT, IT, ES, BG, FR, PL, BE, CZ, GR, DE, SE). These Euroclusters, namely AEC Eurocluster, DESIRE, DREAM, EU Rural Tourism, FRIEND CCI, RE-CENTRE, SILEO and SocialTech4EU, collectively cover seven industrial ecosystems. These ecosystems are "Construction" (AEC Eurocluster), "Cultural" (FRIEND CCI and RE-CENTRE), "Digital" (DREAM, RE-CENTRE), "Digital" (DREAM, RE-CENTRE), HEALTH (DESIRE), "Proximity" (Social Tech 4EU), "Tourism" (EU Rural Tourism) and "Retail" (SILEO).

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Annex

Criterion of maturity assessment	Description	Scoring (points between 0 and 2)
Policy scope	assessment whether the country has a dedicated cluster policy, or cluster creation and/or development is targeted through broader policies, e.g. foreign trade policies, labour and social policies or specific sectoral policies, e.g. industrial policy tourism policies, agriculture policies	absence of cluster policy = 0 existence of broader policies = 0,5 existence of specific sectoral policies = 1 existence of targeted cluster policies = 2
Continuity of cluster policies	assessment of the duration and experience of the country in carrying out cluster policies. This criterion assesses only existence of targeted cluster policies and not broader policies or sectoral policies	absence of policies supporting cluster development = 0 cluster policy established recently (within the last 2 years) = 0,5 cluster policy established between over 2 and 10 years = 1 cluster policy established over 10 years ago = 2
Evidence of performance	assessment whether there are evaluations of past and ongoing policies and a monitoring system in place. The existence of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms determines the degree of policy development in the country	no evaluation and / or monitoring available = 0 existence of evaluations of past policies, e.g. ex-ante = 0,5 existence of monitoring or an ongoing / interim evaluation =1 existence of monitoring and ex-ante or ongoing / interim evaluation =2
Cluster Support Instruments	assessment whether the policies provide any instruments to support the policy implementation, being these financial and/or technical support	no instruments for cluster development =0 financial support for cluster development in the broader and / or sectoral policy = 0,5 financial or technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy = 1 financial and technical support for cluster development in dedicated cluster policy = 2

Source: ECCP (2022).