

## **Improving Road Infrastructure with the Support of European Funds. EUSDR - A Strategic Tool Used to Fund Projects in Galati County**

**Manuela Panaitescu<sup>1</sup>**

**Abstract:** The study analyzes the strategy used in Galati County for the improvement of the road infrastructure with the support of European funds. The European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) can finance various areas - infrastructure development, human resource development, environmental protection, etc. The road infrastructure rehabilitation and modernization projects amount to over 300 km of the county road. There are works to consolidate the road, rehabilitate all bridges and footbridge, arrange pedestrian spaces, widen the road, where necessary, and, of course, asphalting.

**Keywords:** European strategy; Strategic Management; Danube Region

Over 300 kilometers of county roads are to be modernized in the following years in Galati county, most of the funds representing European funds. 13 is the number of projects that are currently being implemented, carried out by the Galați County Council for the road infrastructure of the Galati county. Nine of them, including the ring road of Galați, are funded from European funds, through the Regional Operational Program 2014-2020. The roads will not all be completed in 2020, because they are large investments, some will be completed during the year 2021.

The projects for the rehabilitation and modernization of the road infrastructure have provided for road consolidation, rehabilitation of all bridges and footbridges, arrangement of pedestrian spaces, widening of the road, where necessary and of course asphalting. The value of the investments in the road infrastructure is over 730 million lei, including the ring road, the restoration of roads affected by disasters or maintenance works.

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<sup>1</sup> Senior Lecturer, PhD, Danubius University of Galati, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Romania. Address: 3 Galati Blvd, Galati 800654, Romania. Tel.: +40372 361 102, fax: +40372 361 290, Corresponding author: manuelapanaitescu@univ-danubius.ro.

### **EUSDR - Strategic Managerial Tool**

Regional Operational Program 2014-2020, Priority Axis 6 - Improving the road infrastructure of regional importance, EUSDR is dedicated to supporting the objectives set out in Priority Area 1 - Interconnection of the Danube region of the European Union Strategy for the Danube region, the projects being located in the territory of the 12 counties in Romania riverside of the Danube (Caraș Severin, Mehedinți, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Călărași, Ialomița, Brăila, Galați, Tulcea, Constanța). We present in Table no. 1 projects won by the Galați County Council.

**Table 1. EUSDR - funded road infrastructure projects**

No	Project title	Benefit / Partner	The main activities	Budget (EURO)	Source of financing
1.	Rehabilitation and modernization of the regional transport infrastructure between Corod - Drăgușeni (DJ 251A)	UAT Galați County, UAT Corod and Commune UAT Drăgușeni Commune	- 16 km of county road rehabilitated and modernized (DJ 251A between km 16 + 000 - km 32 + 000); - 5 bus stations; - road protection (reconstruction of 2 new bridges and 2 new foot bridges); - 6 bridges rehabilitated and modernized.	8.409.141,19	FOR 2014-2020, Priority axis 6 - Improvement of road infrastructure of regional importance (EUSDR).
2.	Rehabilitation and modernization of the regional transport infrastructure on the Pechea - Măstăcani route - DN26 (DJ 255)	UAT Galați County, UAT Pechea, UAT Suhurlui, UAT Rediu, UAT Cuca, UAT Fărțănești and UAT Măstăcani	- 34.61 km of county road rehabilitated and modernized (DJ 255); - 8 modernized / reconstructed bridges; - 14 public transport	14.041.105,00	FOR 2014-2020, Priority axis 6 - Improvement of road infrastructure of regional importance (EUSDR).

			stations and alveoli built.		
3.	Extension and modernization of the bypass variant of Galati	UAT Galați County and UAT Galați Municipality	- 10,582 km of extended and modernized county road (DJ 251M - bypass variant of Galați municipality) and a hobanate type bridge.	28.445.648,90	FOR 2014-2020, Priority axis 6 - Improvement of road infrastructure of regional importance (EUSDR).
4.	Rehabilitation and modernization of the regional transport infrastructure on the Ivesti-Grivița route (DJ 254)	UAT Galați County, UAT Ivesti Commune, UAT Grivița and UAT Costache Negri Commune	- 15.4 km of modernized county road.	7.110.767,33	FOR 2014-2020, Priority axis 6 - Improvement of road infrastructure of regional importance (EUSDR).
5.	Rehabilitation and modernization of the regional transport infrastructure on the county road DJ 242A	UAT Galați County, UAT Rădești, UAT Berești City, UAT Berești - Meria and UAT Cavadinești	- 17.9 km of modernized county road.	8.844.414,41	FOR 2014-2020, Axis 6 - Improvement of road infrastructure of regional importance (EUSDR).

(Source – author's processing)

The projects financed by this financing line will also contribute to the implementation of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR). EUSDR is a community cooperation mechanism of 14 EU and non-EU states from the Danube basin, intended for the economic and social development of the Danube macro-region, launched in 2011.

From the perspective of EUSDR, the financed projects will follow actions relevant to road transport:

- Improving the cross-border regional / local infrastructure (from the Danube region) and access to rural areas;

- Development of node planning for multimodality.

The following relevant targets are considered:

- Facilitating the improvement of secondary and tertiary roads in the Danube Region;
- Supporting safe and sustainable transport and mobility in the Danube Region;
- Supporting the development of efficient multimodal terminals at sea, rivers and land in the Danube region and ensure connectivity and access to them by integrating all transport modes and efficient logistics services, by 2030.

The financial allocation for this financing line is 153,034,544.00 euros, of which 132,734,043.00 euros from the ERDF and 20,300,501.00 euros from the state budget. The maximum eligible value for a project is 30,000,000 Euros.

Out of the allocated funding, about half was won by the Galați County Council, as it results from Table no. 1 previously presented.

### **Case Study: Modernization of the Bypass Variant of Galați by SUERD**

The project with the highest amount allocated is the one of the ring road of Galați, the funding source is the Regional Operational Program 2014-2020, Priority Axis 6 - Improvement of the road infrastructure of regional importance (EUSDR). Project leader is UAT Galați County, and partner, UAT Municipiul Galați. The total value of the project is 135,196 million lei, of which UAT budget Galați County: 134,841 million lei, UAT budget Galați Municipality: 354,620 lei, CJ Galați contribution: 2,696 million lei, UAT Galati Municipal contribution: 7,092 lei.

The project involves widening to four lanes on certain road segments, modernizing approximately 11 km of road and constructing a gabled bridge. The hobanate bridge (Fig. 1) will be made for the deviation of the route from the habitable area and the shortening of the ring road by about 2 kilometers.

The main objective of the investment is to provide an extended and modernized road access route that connects the eastern point, the northern part and the western exit point of Galati as a ring road variant with county road status. The implementation of the project will ensure the flow of heavy and very heavy traffic that currently crosses the municipality of Galati, increasing traffic safety, shortening the transit time of the

area, offers multiple economic advantages through easy access to the industrial areas of the city located on the route of this public road, increasing the speed of traffic circulation, increasing load capacity, reducing noxiousness. The route proposed in the project will represent the only route to ring road the Galati municipality due to its geographical location being impossible to make an alternative route through the south of the city (south-east - Siret river, south - Danube river, east - Prut river). Thus, the heavy traffic of goods and passengers on the North - South and East - West transport axes of Galati municipality will ensure the connection between DN2B, DN26, DN22B, DJ251, DN22E.



**Figure 1. The hobanate bridge**

### **Conclusions**

The use of this strategic instrument to finance the road infrastructure projects will contribute to the economic and social development of Galați County, the non-reimbursable financial assistance is essential for the implementation of the project as it supports the local public authority to create a modern transport infrastructure and reduce the costs of transport and its maintenance.

## **Bibliography**

Applicant's Guide Specific conditions for accessing the funds within the call for projects no. FOR 2017/6/6.1/SUERD/1. Priority axis 6: Improving the road infrastructure of regional importance. Investment priority 6.1: Stimulating regional mobility by connecting secondary and tertiary nodes to the ten-t infrastructure, including multimodal nodes.

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