



GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC FINANCE
OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
2007 – 2013

Annual Implementation Report
2008



Instrumente Structurale
2007 - 2013

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List of Abbreviations

AA – Audit Authority

ACD - Administrative Capacity Development

ACIS - Authority for the Coordination of the Structural Instruments

CPA - Certifying and Paying Authority

CCTA – Coordination Committee of Technical Assistance

DCI – Framework Document for Implementation

DSC - Directorate for System Coordination

DTA - Directorate for Technical Assistance

EC - European Commission

ECU - Evaluation Central Unit

ERDF - European Regional Development Fund

GD – Government Decision

GEO – Government Emergency Ordinance

IT&C - Information Technology & Communications

MA – Managing Authority

MC – Monitoring Committee

NARMPP - National Authority for Regulating and Monitoring Public Procurement

NCC – National Coordination Committee

NSRF - National Strategic Reference Framework

MPF – Ministry of Public Finance

NRF – National Reform Plan

NGO- Non-Governmental Organization

OP – Operational Programme

OPTA - Operational Programme Technical Assistance

ROP - Regional Operational Programme

SCF – Structural and Cohesion Funds

SI – Structural Instruments

SMIS–NSRF - Single Management Information System for Structural Instruments

SOP - Sectoral Operational Programme

TA – Technical Assistance

TAWG - Technical Assistance Working Group

UCVPP - Unit for Coordination and Verification of Public Procurement

WG – Working Group

1- Identification

OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME	Objective concerned: Convergence
	Eligible area concerned: ROMANIA
	Programming period: 2007-2013
	Programme number (CCI No): 2007RO161PO005
	Programme title: Operational Programme Technical Assistance
ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT	Reporting year: 2008
	Date of approval of the annual report by the Monitoring Committee: 3 June 2009

2- Overview of the implementation of the Operational Programme

2.1. Achievements and analysis of the progress

For the Operational Programme Technical Assistance (OPTA), 2008 was the year of *completing the preparation of the management and control system*, as confirmed by the favourable opinion of the European Commission issued on *10 September 2008*.

The implementation of the *OPTA* was launched on *22 February 2008*. As OPTA is a programme with *continuous submission of applications*, starting with that date, eligible beneficiaries could submit applications continuously, corresponding to the needs identified; the proposed activities must be coherent with OPTA objectives and comply with both national and Community policies.

During 2008, 5 applications submitted to MA were approved to be financed under OPTA, as follows:

- support to the functioning of the Authority for Coordination of Structural Instruments (ACIS) and Managing Authority (MA) for OPTA;
- support to the functioning of Certifying and Paying Authority (CPA);
- training for Single Management Information System (SMIS-NSRF) users;
- procurement of equipments for SMIS-NSRF functioning within MA for Operational Programme (OP) Administrative Capacity Development (ACD);
- communication activities regarding the Structural Instruments (SI) within the Communication Plan financed under OPTA, organizing conferences, publishing and elaborating informative and promotional materials, developing and maintaining web pages www.fonduri-ue.ro, www.poaat.ro;

In 2008, the MA signed a financial decision for the project „Support for functioning of the ACIS and the OPTA MA”, and received the first payment claim and the progress report for January-December 2008 within this project, where the following results were achieved:

- 1 National Coordination Committee for Structural Instruments (NCC) organized;
- Conference for OPTA launching, organized;
- 6 reunions organized (OPTA MC, Working Groups, Coordination Committee of Technical Assistance, reunions for SI coordination);
- Personalized materials for the OPTA MC and the annual reunion for Operational Programmes elaborated;
- Participation of ACIS staff at events and reunions for managing the SI ensured;

Also, expenditure was made for the staff participation at the seminars, developing and maintaining the web page www.fonduri-ue.ro. This expenditure will be enclosed in the payment claim which will be submitted to the OPTA MA in 2009.

OPTA coordination with the Technical Assistance (TA) Priority Axes was made through the Coordination Committee of Technical Assistance (CCTA) which was founded on the base of the Working Group (WG) for TA. The Committee meets quarterly (in 2008 met twice) in order to find out possible overlapping between projects financed from technical assistance and it represents also a discussion forum regarding problems encountered in implementation and solutions that can be solved under TA financing..

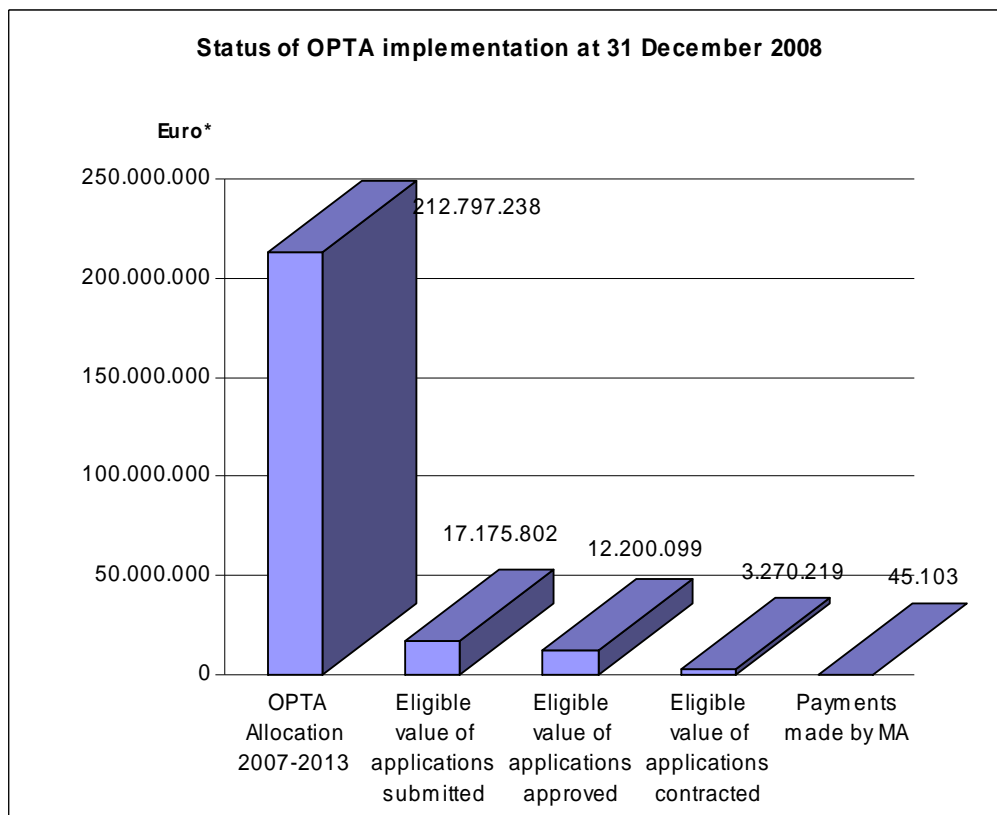
2.1.1. Information on the physical progress of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance

According to the document approved by EC Decision No. 3431 of 10 July 2007, the OPTA indicators are defined by Priority Axis. They are presented in Chapter 3 „Implementation by priority”.

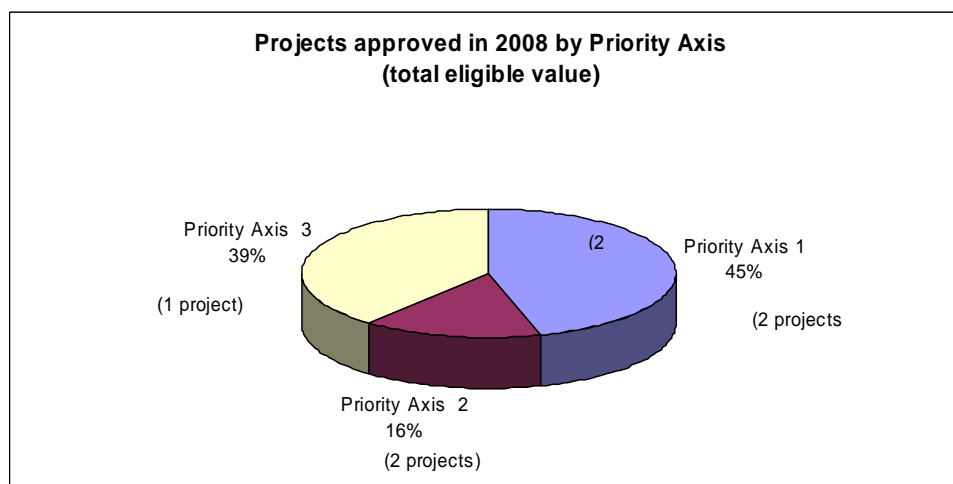
The progress made in 2008 in implementing OPTA is briefly presented below:

- Between March and December 2008, OPTA MA received 9 applications for financing (66,449,743 lei, equivalent to 17,175,802 Euro*), out of which 4 applications were rejected and 5 applications passed the evaluation process, with a total eligible value of 47,199,743 lei (12,200,099 Euro*), accounting for 27.6% of the funds allocated for 2007 and 2008 under OPTA. For the 5 approved projects, only one financing decision was signed in 2008, for 12,651,825 lei (3,270,219 Euro*).
- In November 2008, the first payment claim was received under OPTA, for the project „Support for the functioning of the ACIS, including the OPTA MA”; the amount declared by the beneficiary was **218,121 lei** (56,380 Euro*), of which **174,497 lei (45,104 Euro*)** from **ERDF**. After performing the checking, OPTA MA approved entirely the payment claim and reimbursed the requested amount on 12.12.2008.
- In December 2008, the first statement of eligible expenditures was forwarded to the Certifying and Paying Authority (CPA) for the project „Support for the functioning of the ACIS, including the OPTA MA”, for which OPTA MA requested the reimbursement of the amount paid at the level of the MA representing 80% of eligible expenditures authorised.
- Also in December 2008, based on this first statement of expenditures, CPA certified towards the EC the amount of 184,427.97 lei (47,670.59 Euro, at the exchange rate of

3.8688 lei/Euro) from the total of 218,121 lei authorised by the MA and requested 80% of it, namely 38,136.47 Euro.



*Conversion to EUR at the inforeuro rate of December 2008 (1 Euro = 3.8688 lei)



As both the submission of applications under OPTA and the initiation of public procurement procedures by beneficiaries, for the contracts related to projects, hardly started in the second half of the year, the results registered in 2008 are limited. In most cases, the reason for delays was the fact that the main OPTA beneficiaries, namely the Structures in charge with the coordination and management of SI (ACIS, AA, CPA, Managing Authorities) focused rather on the completion of

procedures and preparation of management and control systems. Lessons learned by the MA in implementing OPTA, as well as the measures taken to overcome the problems encountered, are presented under heading 2.1.6.

2.1.2. Financial information

Financing Plan of the OPTA, for the whole programming period, as it was approved by EC Decision no. 3431 of 10 July 2007:

- EUR -

Year	Structural Funding (ERDF)
2007	16,979,328
2008	18,401,347
2009	20,977,535
2010	24,775,573
2011	27,568,456
2012	30,463,144
2013	31,072,407
Grand Total 2007-2013	170,237,790

Priority Axes by source of funding (EUR)

	Expenditure paid out by the beneficiaries included in payment claims sent to the managing authority * EUR	Corresponding public contribution * EUR	Private expenditure EUR	Expenditure paid by the body responsible for making payments to the beneficiaries* EUR	Total payments received from the Commission EUR
Priority Axis 1 Support to the implementation of Structural Instruments and coordination of programmes ERDF	56,380	56,380	0	45,104	0
Of which ESF type expenditure	---	---	---	---	---
Priority Axis 2 Further development and support for the functioning of the Single Management Information System ERDF	0	0	0	0	0
Of which ESF type expenditure	---	---	---	---	---
Priority Axis 3 Dissemination of information and promotion of Structural Instruments ERDF	0	0	0	0	0
Of which ESF type expenditure	---	---	---	---	---
Grand Total	56,380	56,380	0	45,104	0
Total in transitional regions in the grand total	---	---	---	---	---
Total in non-transitional regions in the grand total	56,380	56,380	0	45,104	0
ESF type expenditure in the grand total where the Operational Programme is co-financed by the ERDF	---	---	---	---	---

*Conversion to EUR at the Inforeuro rate of December 2008 (1 Euro = 3.8688 lei).

Advance payments received from the EC for OPTA were as follows:

Advance payments (Euro)	Date
3,404,755.8	27/07/2007
5,107,133.7	29/02/2008

Annex 1 shows a report on financial indicators, as generated by SMIS-NSRF. In 2009, with support from the project „Developing and ensuring the proper functioning of SMIS-NSRF”, financed under OPTA, the SMIS-NSRF generated reports are to be improved, based on the needs identified by the Managing Authorities, following their ranking by the SMIS Unit of ACIS, depending on the urgency in addressing them.

2.1.3. Information about the breakdown of the use of Funds

Commission reference No: CCI2007RO161PO005

Name of the programme: **Operational Programme Technical Assistance**

Date of the latest Commission decision for the Operational Programme concerned: 10/07/2007

The table below shows the distribution of the ERDF contribution within the projects contracted for funding under OPTA until 31 December 2008, by the five dimensions:

Code Dimension 1 Priority theme	Code Dimension 2 Form of finance	Code Dimension 3 Territory	Code Dimension 4 Economic activity	Code Dimension 5 Location	Amount EUR*
85 (Preparation, implementation, monitoring and inspection)	01	00	00	RO	2,616,176
86 (Evaluation and studies; information and communication)	01	00	00	RO	0
Total					2,616,176

*Conversion to EUR at the inforeuro rate of December 2008 (1 Euro = 3.8688 lei).

2.1.4. Assistance by target groups

OPTA target groups in horizontal training projects for SI management are defined as follows:

Target group	Output indicator	Baseline	Baseline year	Achievements 2007-2008	Targets for 2015
OPTA					
Beneficiaries	Participant training days – beneficiaries	0	2006	0	42,000
Staff of managing structures	Participant training days – management structures	0	2006	0	68,000

No horizontal training project was initiated under OPTA in 2008 because the 2006 National Phare Programme included a training project aimed at covering the horizontal training needs of the managing and control structures, as well as of the SI potential beneficiaries. As the Contracting Authority cancelled the public procurement procedure for the above-mentioned Phare project in December 2008, a horizontal training project entitled „Continuous training in managing SI in Romania”, including training for the managing and control structures, was submitted and

approved for financing under OPTA in February 2009. Another project focusing on potential beneficiaries is under preparation and will be forwarded to the Managing Authority in the third quarter of 2009.

At the same time, the project “Developing an efficient and professional community of SMIS-NSRF users” aimed at training the SI managing structures in operating SMIS-NSRF was approved for financing under OPTA in September 2008. The public procurement contract related to this project was signed, and its implementation began in April 2009.

As the implementation of these projects advances and payment claims are received, data on monitoring and evaluation indicators related to the two target groups will be available and therefore reported.

2.1.5. Assistance repaid or re-used

Not applicable for 2008.

2.1.6. Qualitative analysis

The main progresses registered in 2008 were the completion of preparations for the management and control system and the inception of OPTA implementation process.

Following the preparatory activities for OPTA implementation, the results registered in 2008 are:

- The MA became fully functional, with 25 positions filled, out of 26 (21 execution jobs, 3 heads of office and director).
- The Procedures Manual was prepared and approved by the head of OPTA MA on 18 February 2008. Five amendments to this manual were approved during the year, in order to implement the recommendations of the Audit Authority (AA) and to simplify the OPTA implementation process.
- Applicant’s Guide was prepared and approved by the head of OPTA MA on 18 February 2008. It was amended three times in 2008 and published on the SI website in Romania (www.fonduri-ue.ro) and on www.poaat.ro.
- OPTA launching conference took place on 22 February 2008 and included the introduction of Applicant’s Guide to the representatives of all OPTA potential beneficiaries.
- The function of committing, liquidating (approval as eligible expenditure) and payment ordering from the funds allocated for OPTA was delegated to the head of OPTA MA, by order of the Minister of Public Finance (MPF) No. 699 of 11 March 2008.
- Addendum No. 1 to the Agreement between OPTA MA and the CPA was signed on 20 June 2008.
- MPF Order No. 2116/2007 approving the categories of expenses eligible under OPTA was amended in order to provide clarifications and additional directions for certain categories of expenses, by MPF Order No. 3700/17.12.2008.
- OPTA official website www.poaat.ro, where potential beneficiaries as well as the general public can find relevant information on OPTA programming, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and coordination, was launched on 3 December 2008.
- OPTA MA staff was trained on various subjects: best practice in implementing the structural instruments (1 person), financial management (11 persons), management and monitoring (14 persons), public procurement (11 persons), overview of SI (2 persons),

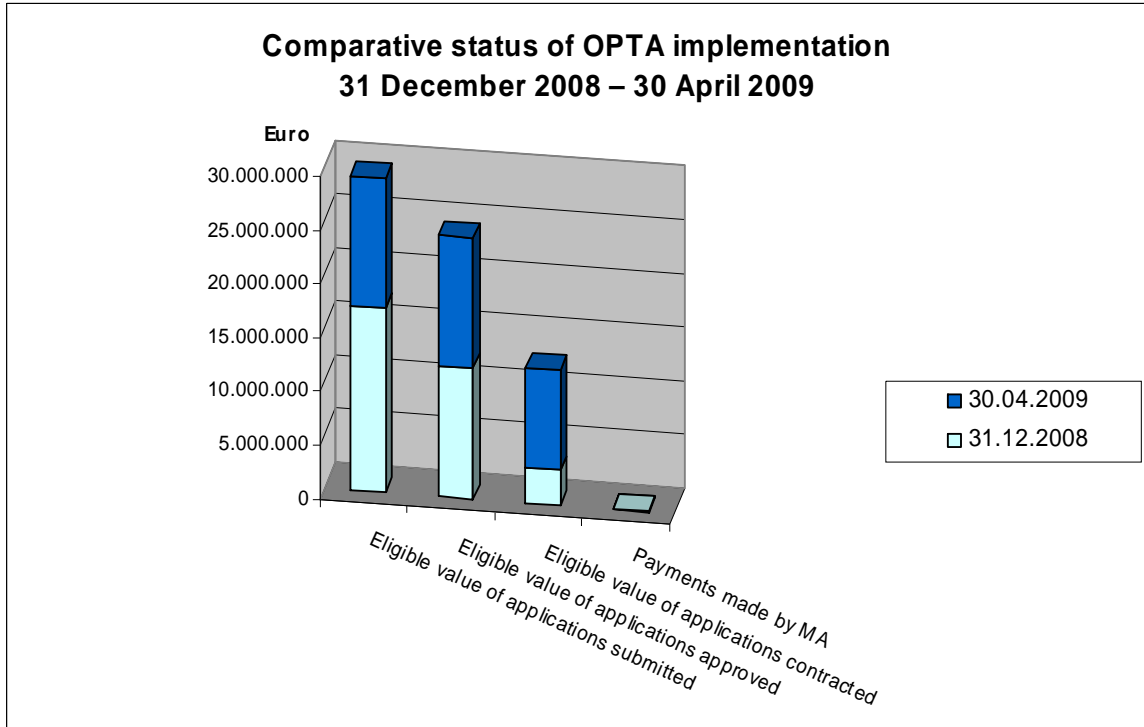
reporting of irregularities (2 persons), using the CONTAB application (2 persons), SMIS-NSRF (6 persons), training of trainers (2).

- OPTA MA organised 3 training sessions for OPTA beneficiaries, regarding the preparation of applications and the eligibility of expenditures.
- Two meetings of the OPTA MC took place (15-16 May and 30-31 October 2008).
- CCTA was established in accordance with the provisions of Art. 5.1 “Management” of OPTA, in order to coordinate the implementation of the TA and ensure its coherence and comprehensiveness within the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF). The Committee meets quarterly, with the first two meetings held on 11 July and 10 October 2008 respectively.

Regarding the actual implementation of OPTA, although the results are not substantial for 2008, prerequisites for a proper implementation starting with 2009 were created by:

- setting-up and operation of the management and control system;
- preparation - together with OPTA potential beneficiaries of 2008-2009 Workplan for OPTA implementation;
- reception, approval and inception of the first projects, which enabled running of procedures and identification of needs for improvement;
- enhancement of beneficiaries’ experience in public procurement, taking into account that most of the departments dealing with procurement in the SI managing structures (OPTA beneficiaries) are recently established;
- improvement of public procurement legislation in order to increase flexibility.

Stages in implementing OPTA at 31 December 2008 and 30 April 2009, respectively, are comparatively presented below, in order to support the statements above.



Lessons learned from the first experiences of implementing OPTA in 2008 could be summarised below:

Lessons learned	Measures taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication and support for beneficiaries should be a priority and take place continuously; • a small number of beneficiaries is not always an advantage; • the projects of MPF beneficiaries need more details regarding the implementation system; • coordination and experience shared with other managing authorities speeds up solution finding; • budget annuality and restrictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OPTA MA organises regular meetings with beneficiaries and initiated a forum on www.pogat.ro in order to have a continuous dialogue with the beneficiaries interested in accessing OPTA; ▪ potential applicants' group extended to include also other interested parties (eg. support in coordinating the Growth Pole Strategy has become accessible by the Regional Development Agencies), and collection of ideas through the form posted on the website; ▪ initiation agreements with CPA, Directorate for System Coordination (DSC) and Evaluation Central Unit (ECU) of ACIS (the main beneficiaries of OPTA); ▪ CCTA established, and communication and consultation intensified with the Managing Authorities through meetings and information sharing; ▪ a more rigorous planning of activities;

<p>imposed by the public finance law lead to delays in implementation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • necessity to train and inform all persons involved in the contract approval process; • certain categories of expenditure related to the Technical Assistance are not defined in legislation; • difficulties in approving the MPF Annual Public Procurement Plan results in late launches of acquisitions; • preparation and approval of the Terms of Reference is a long term process, the same for evaluation of offers. • limited capacity of the main beneficiaries to prepare and manage projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ regular meetings held with relevant directorates of MPF (e.g. General Legal Division, Central Unit for Harmonization of Financial Management and Control Systems); ▪ regulation on this type of expenses initiated by ACIS/MPF; ▪ specific annex created for the MFP Annual Public Procurement Plan for projects financed under the Technical Assistance heading; ▪ documents standardised as much as possible and simplified requirements, facilities introduced by the new legal provisions put into practice. ▪ provision of expertise in project preparation and management to the main beneficiary has been included within the contract "Support for the functioning of the ACIS, including the OPTA MA" which started implementation in 2009.
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Coherence with Community policies: partnership, equal opportunities, sustainable development

The partnership principle, initiated in the OPTA programming stage, continued to be taken into consideration: OPTA MC was established and regular meetings are held, bringing together institutions involved in the management of SI and representatives of socio-economic partners, NGOs and associations of local public authorities. Particularly in order to strengthen the partnership principle, following the recommendation of the Economic and Social Committee, the MC meeting of 15-16 May 2008 approved the inclusion of one representative of the Romanian Alliance of Employers Confederations and of one representative of the National Statistics Institute.

OPTA MA promotes and applies the *principle of gender equality*, in accordance with Law No. 202/2002 and with the Community provisions on gender equal opportunities. In this respect, OPTA MA:

- encouraged the participation of women in making decisions, by requesting the appointment of women in the structure of OPTA MC as much as possible (60% women, 40 % men);
- included a representative of the National Agency for Gender Equal Opportunities in the structure of OPTA MC;
- included a specific request in the standard form of the application for financing, asking the beneficiaries to describe the coherence and compliance of their application with the Community policies. Furthermore, the payment claim forwarded by the beneficiary must

be accompanied by a technical progress report including references to the compliance with the principle of gender equal opportunities;

- every project involving employment of contractual staff within MA shall be implemented by observing the gender equal opportunities principles;
- under the financing contracts/decisions, the beneficiaries/contractors must observe the legal provisions on gender equal opportunities principles and non-discrimination of ethnical minorities, thus ensuring equal employment chances.

Regarding the *sustainable development*, the projects funded under OPTA comply with the EU sustainable development policy. Given the specific nature of OPTA, activities carried out by projects are expected to have a neutral impact on this horizontal issue. Whenever applicable, the beneficiary and MA monitor the positive impact of the project in terms of sustainable development (in accordance with the provisions of the financing contract/decision).

Lisbon Strategy

On 28 January 2009, the EC adopted the proposal of updating the Integrated Guidelines necessary for implementing the *Lisbon Strategy* at national and Community level. The document includes the Evaluation of Lisbon Strategy implementation in EU Member States and in the Euro Zone, as well as specific Country recommendations.

In Romania, the Lisbon Strategy implementing tool is the National Reform Programme (NPR). The NPR comprises general objectives and specific objectives, measures and actions, as well as financial resources for the latter.

The Member States report yearly on NPR implementation. Romania, as a Member State of the EU, has sent two such reports to the EC until present, on 18 October 2007 and 23 October 2008 respectively.

EC recommendations for Romania, issued on *28 January 2009*, remained approximately the same since 2007. They are aimed at speeding up the implementation of structural reforms set forth in the Lisbon Strategy, in order to ensure economic competitiveness based on high productivity, innovation and know-how. In EC's opinion, these reforms are a priority also in the current economic and social context, marked by the *world economic financial crisis*, given especially Romania's limited progress registered in 2008 in implementing NPR.

The NPR converges with the sectoral development strategies promoted through the 2007-2013 National Development Plan, 2007-2013 NSRF and 2007-2013 National Rural Development Plan. Financially, 56% of the amounts received by Romania from the Community budget through the Cohesion Policy are linked to the priorities of Lisbon Strategy.

At the same time, based on the categories listed in Annex IV of the Council Regulation No 1083/2006, OPTA expenditures do not directly count for achieving the Lisbon goals. Nevertheless, as it is specified in NSRF, increasing the capacity of public and central authorities in relation to the management and control of the SI is a top priority for Romania, that needs to be addressed in the present programming period and which will unquestionably have a positive impact on the creation of jobs and fostering of economic growth, contributing thus to the objectives of the Lisbon Agenda.

Therefore, the Romanian authorities have complemented the list of categories of Annex IV with the expenditure related to the strengthening of administrative capacity and consider that OPTA contributes 100% to the achievement of Lisbon objectives since it is designed to ensure the efficient implementation of the SI.

The progresses registered in 2008, namely the completion of preparations for the management and control system, the inception of actual implementation of OPTA and the enhanced experience of beneficiaries in accessing and using TA create the prerequisites for a significant contribution of OPTA, starting with 2009, by strengthening the SI management systems, and therefore to the Lisbon Strategy.

Conclusions

Strengthening and completing the management and control system for OPTA, inception of the actual implementation of the programme, gaining first experiences within both OPTA MA and structures of potential beneficiaries, as well as the fact that the current Government's priorities include the absorption of European funds available to Romania, create the prerequisites for substantial advancements starting with 2009.

2.2. Information about compliance with Community Law

State Aid – not applicable

Environmental protection – not applicable

Public procurement:

Public procurement in every contract financed from OPTA and from the corresponding national contribution is conducted in compliance with EU legislation, and with the primary and secondary national legislation implementing the EU provisions on public procurement.

In 2008, the national legislation on public procurement was improved in order to avoid delays in contracting or implementing projects, by enactment of:

- Government Emergency Ordinance (GEO) no. 143/2008 amending GEO No. 34/2006 on awarding public procurement contracts, public works concession contracts and services concession contracts
- Government Decision (GD) no. 198/2008 amending and completing the Norms for applying the provisions on awarding public procurement contracts by electronic means from GEO no. 34/2006 on awarding public procurement contracts, public works concession contracts and services concession contracts, approved by GD no. 1.660/2006;
- NARMPP Order no. 113/2008 approving the Regulation on supervising the manner of awarding public procurement contracts, public works concession contracts and services concession contracts.

2.3. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

During 2008, the OPTA MA faced various problems as it was the first year of actual implementation, but there were no significant problems that would affect the strategy of the OPTA.

The measures described under the chapter 2.1 enables the MA to start recuperating the delays in 2009 and ensure the OPTA efficient implementation within the remaining period 2009-2015.

2.4. Changes in the context of the Operational Programme implementation

In the context of global economic crisis that affected Romania since the last quarter of 2008, the Romanian Government took several measures to reduce budgetary expenses, which could affect OPTA beneficiaries, mainly public institutions. However, the 2009 State Budget Law includes a special budget heading for projects funded from grants, where priority is ensured for the projects financed by the EU.

2.5. Substantial modification pursuant to Article 57 of Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006

Not applicable

2.6. Complementarity with other instruments

2.6.1. Complementarity in using TA between OPTA and TA Priority Axes of the other Operational Programmes

In addition to the OPTA, which provides support for the management of SI at national level, the other Operational Programmes include Technical Assistance as well. However, unlike OPTA, the TA Priority Axes are meant to provide the Managing Authorities and the Intermediary Bodies with the necessary means to ensure proper implementation of the Programmes. Therefore, the TA Priority Axes are aimed mainly at catering for the specific needs of each Programme, and they are limited to the institutional framework of the Programme implementation.

Given the multi-sectoral nature of OPTA, which requires continuous efforts of coordination in order to avoid overlapping with the TA Priority Axes, an OPTA Coordination Committee was established, according to Art. 5.1 "Management" of OPTA. CC's goal is to coordinate TA implementation and to ensure its consistency and completeness within the NSRF. The Committee meets quarterly, with the first two Coordination Committee meetings taking place in 2008 (on 11 July and 10 October 2008)

OPTA Coordination Committee is established under the chairmanship of OPTA MA and joins coordinators of TA Priority Axes from all Operational Programmes (director/head of office), of ACIS directorates, while representatives of AA, CPA and EC participate as observers. Given the aim of CC, OPTA MC approved on 31 October 2008 the change of the name "OPTA CC" into the Coordination Committee of Technical Assistance (CCTA).

At the same time, given the complexity of horizontal issues that have arisen in relation to SI management, Working Groups (WG) consisting of representatives of all Managing Authorities and ACIS have been established and meet periodically:

- WG for coordination of training in SI
- WG for coordination of communication
- WG for evaluation
- WG for monitoring
- WG for SMIS-NSRF
- WG for Cost-Benefit Analysis.

For a proper communication and a coherent approach of the interventions to be financed under OPTA or TA Priority Axes of the other Operational Programmes, representatives from all Working Groups attend each meeting of CCTA. They inform CCTA on the results of the Working Groups and present problems identified, which can be solved by using TA.

After each CCTA meeting, a summary of decisions is prepared and forwarded to the CCTA members and to the heads of Managing Authorities. It includes decisions and structures involved in solving the problems identified. Implementation of the CCTA decisions is monitored in subsequent meetings.

The main decisions adopted in 2008 by CCTA were following:

- Approval of the Organisation and Functioning Regulations for CCTA;
- Agreement upon an efficient cooperation method between OPTA and the other Operational Programmes in performing CCTA tasks;
- Agreement of principle upon a first draft of GD on “financial-accounting regulations and norms for the specific expenses incurred by the authorities and public institutions from the central public administration as beneficiaries of projects funded from SI”, which will be submitted by ACIS to the relevant departments of MPF for provision of opinions;
- Agreement on preparing a common document for all OPs to include the categories of TA expenses, with details of all types of expenses included in each category;
- Agreement on preparing a single form for the payment claims.

2.6.2. Coordination of Structural Instruments

During the year 2008, the ACIS has made the following progress in the coordination of SI:

- Following a comprehensive consultation process with all the structures involved GD no.457 on the institutional framework for coordination and management of SI was approved in April 2008, published in May 2008. This legislation establishes the mechanism for inter-institutional coordination of funds at political, operational and technical level and also determines the distribution of tasks between the different structures of the management system in Romania, starting from the obligations laid down in Community regulations.
- The coordination mechanism at the operational and technical levels has been ensured (the Management Committee for the SI Coordination and the Technical Working Groups have been organized).
- The process of drafting secondary legislation on the eligibility of expenditures incurred in the operations financed by Operational Programmes has continued, being approved 15 joint orders of expenditures.
- The protocols of cooperation in public procurement field were drafted and signed under the coordination of ACIS.
- The compliance assessment process took place for the Operational Programmes within the Convergence Objective, being transmitted to the EC the AA reports for all 7 Programmes. In September 2008 the audit report for the OPTA was approved and based on the mission conducted in December 2008, the EC approved in January 2009, the audit reports for Sectoral Operation Programmes (SOP) Environment and SOP Competitiveness, stating the compliance of their management and control systems. A key element to achieve this accreditation was that the Community auditors concluded that the SMIS-NSRF system is functional and operational.
- The economic and technical documentation for investment projects was simplified, under the coordination of ACIS, through the development of GD no. 28/2008 on the content of

the framework documentation for technical economic investment and the structure and methodology for developing the estimated cost for the investment objectives and works interventions.

- The GD no. 998/2008 for the designation of growth poles and the poles of urban development in which the priority investment programs and national funding are conducted, was developed, designating 7 growth poles (one for each Region of Development) and 13 poles of urban development. The GD no.998/2008 had 2 subsequent amendments in 2008 (GD no. 1149/2008 and GD no. 1513/2008). It was also established by GD no. 1513/2008 that each growth pole has to designate a pole coordinator, which will help coordinate the preparation and implementation of the integrated development plans and the projects included in the plan. The activities of the pole coordinators will be supervised by the ACIS and the ROP MA.
- A correlation was made with the priorities and actions related to Operational Programmes falling under the European Territorial Cooperation Objective, the National Rural Development Programme and Fisheries Operational Program through the following actions:
 - ensure participation of the institutions responsible for managing them in the CNC meetings, the Management Committee for Coordination of Structural Instruments or some of the thematic Working Groups organized in the context of the coordination mechanism established by GD 457/2008;
 - bilateral consultations on various issues of implementation (informatics system, eligible expenditures, etc.).

2.7. Monitoring arrangements

2.7.1. Monitoring

OPTA monitoring is conducted by the MA based on data provided by the SMIS-NSRF.

SMIS-NSRF information is updated as progresses take place in the Programme implementation (receipt of applications for financing, evaluation of applications by administrative, eligibility and technical-financial criteria, project contracting, reception of payment claims and technical progress reports, payments to beneficiaries and transmission of statements of expenditure to CPA).

Operating the SMIS-NSRF

Year 2008 was particularly important in operating the SMIS-NSRF, which provides information on the SI under the Convergence

SMIS-NSRF is a central information system developed by the MPF, through the ACIS, in cooperation with the users, aimed at collecting information on implementation, necessary for financial management, monitoring, verifications, audit and evaluation of the Convergence Programmes, in accordance with Art. 60 (c) of Council Regulation no.1083/2006.

In 2008, the core components related to the functioning of the system were completed. Thus, in January 2008, members of the SMIS-NSRF Working Group, comprising representatives of all users, conducted and completed the testing of system functionalities and of generated reports, based on procedures and test cases developed for each module, function and sub-function of SMIS-NSRF.

Procedures for managing access rights to the system were developed and, based on the working procedures of the users, all SMIS-NSRF profiles were defined, representing the matrix of

permissions for a user by all functions and sub-functions of the system, in accordance with the user's tasks in each institution. Besides specific permissions for input/data validation, each profile contains the reading permission for all modules, functions and sub-functions of the system.

In 2008, over 850 system access accounts were configured for persons appointed from all institutions in charge with the management of SI. These accounts allow the data input / validation for all SMIS–NSRF modules, depending on the tasks of the structures where users belong and in accordance with the user's job description.

Based on the results of PHARE RO 2004/016-772.04.03.01.02.01 contract, at the beginning of 2008, ACIS made available to all users Procedures Manuals for each module of the system, explaining in detail each step necessary in using the system. The Managing Authorities correlated the manuals with their internal procedures.

Envisaging an optimal functioning of the system, in 2008 ACIS made available an efficient support tool to the SMIS-NSRF users, namely a SMIS NSRF help-desk.

In 2008, the SMIS-NSRF application was installed on ACIS equipment, and a workload test was successfully conducted, with no significant load generated on equipment. At the same time, the SMIS-NSRF communication network was configured at the level of institutions using the system.

In order to ensure the uniformity of information within the system, the basic data - such as programming years, authorities, indicators, categories of eligible expenditures, etc., which is subsequently uploaded and used in all the other modules, functions and sub-functions – is introduced into a specific module, "Parameters", at ACIS level. In 2008, a complex process for defining this information was carried out, and the catalogues of parameters were completed and introduced in the system. They are updated and completed continuously, as the needs of users require it.

The production base was continuously updated during the year with information regarding all Operational Programmes. Programming data from programming documents (NSRF, Operational Programmes, Framework Documents of Implementation), as well as the first data related to applications for funding, were introduced too.

At the end of 2008, SMIS-NSRF was tested by the AA, as part of the process of checking the compliance of management and control systems with the Community Regulations. The AA's opinion was positive.

Like any IT system, the optimal functioning and operation of SMIS-NSRF requires permanent training of users, corrective and updating maintenance, as well as continuous development, consisting in development of new functionalities and reports. In this regard, public procurement procedures were launched in 2008 for two contracts, namely "Developing an effective and professional community of SMIS-NSRF users" and "Developing and ensuring the proper functioning of SMIS-NSRF".

Use of SMIS–NSRF by OPTA MA

Regarding the use of SMIS–NSRF by OPTA MA, the following stages were covered in 2008:

- By February 2008, MA entered all data related to the module "Programming", from OPTA and the Framework Document of Implementation;
- Upon OPTA MA's request, 16 SMIS–NSRF access accounts were activated. These accounts allow the introduction / validation of data for all modules of SMIS–NSRF in accordance with the user's job description.

- Starting with 2008, the module "Project Management" is being used, by entering data related to the applications for financing received under OPTA; at the same time, information on evaluation and approval or rejection of applications was completed, too.
- In December 2008, the first payment claim under OPTA was introduced in SMIS–NSRF, as well as:
 - information on public procurement contracts concluded by the project beneficiary, as indicated in the technical progress report attached to the payment claim, was introduced at the level of module "Project Management / Project registration form";
 - information on expenditure incurred by the beneficiary was introduced at the level of module "Monitoring / Subprojects monitoring form";
 - at the level of module "Funds Flow level / Allocation Decision Management" information on payments from CPA to MA and from MA to Beneficiaries was entered.
- In December 2008, following the first statement of expenditure submitted by OPTA MA to CPA, data related to this statement was generated by SMIS–NSRF through the module "Funds Flow / MA Statement of expenditures"
- In terms of monitoring, SMIS–NSRF was used for monitoring activities at programme level, namely the module "Monitoring / Operational Programme" (the financial data provided by SMIS–NSRF at the level of Operational Programme and Priority Axis is presented under heading 3 "Implementation by priorities").

As regards the payment claim received under OPTA, MA followed the procedure and verified on the spot the data indicated in the application, then drew up the field visit report. On-the-spot checks enable MA to verify the delivery of products and/or services in accordance with the contract/financing decision, the correctness of payment claim and the compliance with Community and national law, to make sure that the public procurement process was conducted in accordance with the national regulations in force, that projects do exist physically, to collect more data compared to the payment claim, to check progress against targets and also to verify compliance and accuracy of information provided by the Beneficiary. The purpose of field visits is also to identify potential problems that may arise during the project implementation, and to make recommendations and identify successful parts of the project, which could be used as part of the publicity of the program.

During 2008, OPTA MA monitored the stage of OPTA implementation through:

1. Monthly reports on:

- number and value of projects submitted
- number and value of projects approved
- number and value of contracted projects
- payments to beneficiaries

analysed at the level of MA director and forwarded to the Monitoring Directorate within ACIS, which centralised the reports received from all OPs and presented them in the meetings of the Management Committee for the Coordination of SI and of the NCC for SI.

2. Half-yearly reports on the stage of contracting under OPTA, presented in the two meetings of OPTA MC that took place in 2008.

3. Annual Implementation Report for 2007, approved by OPTA MC during the meeting of 16 May 2008.

OPTA Monitoring Committee

Two meetings of OPTA MC were held in 2008, on 16 May and 31 October, respectively, the main decision taken were following:

- approval of the 2007 OPTA Annual Implementation Report;
- approval of OPTA Multi-annual Evaluation Plan;
- approval of the inclusion of the Alliance of Romanian Employers' Confederation and of the National Institute of Statistics in OPTA MC;
- approval of the review of OPTA Communication Plan to include the ACIS Communication Plan;
- amendment of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance as follows:
 - changing of the name "OPTA Coordination Committee" into "Coordination Committee of Technical Assistance ";
 - approval of new indicators for the monitoring and evaluation of the OPTA and of the targets to be reached by the end of 2015 (see details below).

Details on the indicators revision exercise, approved by OPTA MC on 31 October 2008

According to the art.37 of the Regulation no.1083/2006, Operational Programmes must have a limited number of indicators, which should make possible the measurement of progress compared to initial situation and the achievement of objectives

Experience in the field of Structural Funds management has proven that it is difficult to determine the indicators which are of the utmost importance in the monitoring and evaluation of interventions. At European Union's level, the lack of consistence in defining indicators and the possibility of data quantification have always created difficulties in obtaining high quality information regarding the progress of programmes financed from Structural and Cohesion Funds and to compare these data at the level of Member States.

At the same time, in Romania, the measuring the implementation progress of the Operational Programmes and the information related to the status and the effects of interventions financed by SI will be achieved with the support of SMIS–NSRF, by using monitoring and evaluation indicators.

In order to facilitate the definition of indicators which will be entered as SMIS–NSRF parameters, the Evaluation Central Unit (ECU) has started a process of analyzing the lists of indicators for monitoring and evaluation of OPTA and of TA Priority Axes from other operational programmes and proposed a new set of monitoring and evaluation indicators in order to homogenize the information, to allow data organization and comparison and to ensure the possibility of adding them up from bottom to the top for the different levels of Operational Programmes by using SMIS–NSRF.

The following elements were taken into account when the common list of **indicators for monitoring and evaluation of TA Priority Axes and OPTA** was defined:

- The similarity of operations financed through TA Priority Axes, as well as through OPTA;
- The efficiency of monitoring and evaluation systems;
- SMIS–NSRF functionalities and parameterization;

- The quantification of the objectives of the TA Priority Axes achieved in the Operational Programmes and the related Framework Documents of Implementation.

This set of indicators was sent for information and analysis to the Managing Authorities for Operational Programmes and to the Directorate General Regional Policy within the European Commission.

ECU received a limited number of comments and proposals from the Managing Authorities, which were taken into consideration and included in the final list of indicators for monitoring and evaluating the TA Priority Axes.

In the light of the above, at the OPTA CM meeting of 31 October, OPTA MA presented the OPTA monitoring and evaluation indicators in accordance with the revised list of indicators. OPTA MC members unanimously approved the revised indicators and targets proposed for the year 2015.

At the same time, due to an error, which occurred in calculating the new targets proposed for the indicators measuring the training activity under Priority Axis 1 and approved by MC on 31 October 2008, OPTA MA launched, on 10 December 2008, the written consultation procedure for approving the of correction for these targets. On 18 December 2008, the consultation procedure was completed, and the new corrected targets were approved.

As such changes of indicators are not covered by Article 33 of EC Regulation 1083/2006, the amendments approved by MC came into force after an exchange of letters between OPTA MA, ACIS and EC with no need to amend EC Decision No. 3431/2007 approving OPTA. When subsequent amendments will be made under Art. 33, these changes will be included as well.

Conclusions

Given the first progresses registered in OPTA implementation, the monitoring system is assessed as satisfactory and as meeting the needs related to the process of monitoring the programme implementation.

During the year 2008, when the process of data input into SMIS–NSRF started, OPTA MA users identified needs for developing the system for the modules “Parameters”, “Programming” and “Project Management”, as well as the needs for improving the reports generated by SMIS–NSRF within the module "Monitoring". These needs were centralized by the SMIS Central Unit of ACIS and will be addressed starting with 2009, through the project “Developing and ensuring a proper functioning of SMIS-NSRF”, financed under OPTA.

2.7.2. Evaluation

OPTA MC meeting of 16 May 2008 approved the final version of OPTA Multi-annual Evaluation Plan, which includes the following amendments, compared to the version presented in CM meeting of 19 November 2007:

- a new sub-chapter "Resources for evaluation" was included in Section II "Coordination and Management of the Multi-annual Evaluation Plan"
- two annexes were added to the Plan:
 - Appendix 1 - Position of ECU within the Ministry of Public Finance

- Appendix 2 – Responsibilities of the evaluation function
- the deadlines for the activities included in the indicative list of evaluations in correlation with the status of OPTA implementation were revised.

As part of the efforts to improve the performance of the SI in Romania, in July 2008, with support of the PHARE Programme, ECU launched a formative, independent and objective evaluation exercise, which resulted in a **thematic evaluation report** entitled "**Lessons Learned from PHARE, applied to the implementation of Structural Funds**".

The evaluation was conducted by external evaluators, namely the consortium of companies LRDP Kantor, Great Britain and CyclePlan, Lithuania, under the coordination of the Evaluation Central Unit of ACIS. The first version of this thematic evaluation report was issued in December 2008.

The report contains factual findings resulting from the analysis of available documents, a survey among intermediate bodies and interviews of actors involved at various levels of the system, including beneficiaries in the regions. Based on the findings, objective conclusions were drawn and recommendations were formulated to address two major problems:

- complexity of the system;
- quality of communication.

The final report and debates on conclusions and recommendations were scheduled for February 2009. Conclusions and recommendations that may be of relevance for OPTA are presented in Annex 2.

In order to implement OPTA Multi-Annual Evaluation Plan, the tender documentation for the interim evaluation of NSRF and OPTA were published on 29.10.2008. The contract aims to implement the evaluation activities foreseen in the Multi-Annual Evaluation Plans for NSRF and OPTA for 2008 and 2009: a formative evaluation of the Structural Instruments in Romania, first **interim evaluation of the Operational Programme Technical Assistance**, evaluation-synthesis based on the intermediate evaluation reports of Operational Programmes and ad-hoc evaluations based on requests formulated by OPTA Monitoring Committee, National Coordinating Committee or by ACIS directors. The contract will be signed in the first half of 2009.

2.8 National performance reserve

Not applicable.

3. Implementation by priority

1. The monitoring and evaluation indicators are as approved by OPTA MC on 31 October 2008. In addition, the targets for 2015 are as approved in the above-mentioned MC meeting, except the targets for the new indicators proposed for measuring the training activity, related to the Priority Axis 1, approved by OPTA MC written consultation procedure, which took place in December 2008.

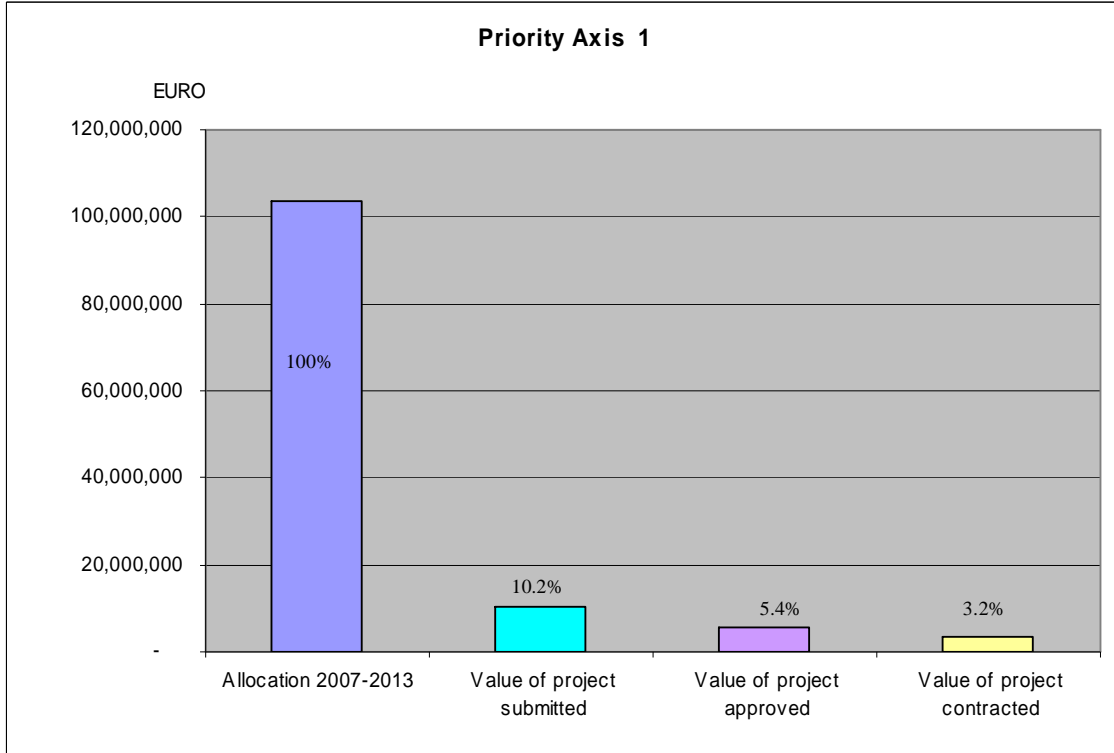
2. Amounts listed below are converted into EURO at the Inforeuro rate of December 2008 (1 Euro = 3.8688 Lei).

3.1 Priority 1 - Support to the implementation of Structural Instruments and coordination of programmes

3.1.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of progress

• Information on the physical and financial progress of the priority

Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Indicator 1: Studies, analyses, reports, strategies	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	121
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 2: Guidelines and methodological documents	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	14
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 3: Events focused on exchanging experience on funds implementation and thematic aspects	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	11
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 4: Meetings of committees and relevant working groups	Achievement	0	8								8
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	130
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 5: Participant training days – beneficiaries	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	42,000
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 6: Participant training days – management structures	Target	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	28,000
	Baseline	0	0								---



Quantification of financial indicators for **Priority Axis 1**, as reported by the SMIS–NSRF on **31.12.2008**:

PA/KAI/Operation	PLANNING		RECEIVED APPLICATIONS		APPROVED APPLICATIONS			CONTRACTS/FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED			Expenditures declared by beneficiaries (LEI)	PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES	
	Public contribution 2007-2013		No	Eligible Budget (LEI)	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of approved applications against financial allocations 2007-2013	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of contracted projects against financial allocations 2007-2013		Amounts (LEI)	% of financial execution
	EURO	LEI											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8=7/3*100	9	10	11=10/3*100	12	13	14=13/3*100
1 Support to the implementation of Structural Instruments and coordination of programmes	103,490,869.00	400,385,473.99	6	40,788,759.00	2	21,538,759.00	5.38	1	12,651,825.00	3.16	218,121.00	174,496.80	0.04
1.1 Support to the management and implementation of Structural Instruments	48,559,988.00	187,868,881.57	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.1.1 *** Support to the management and implementation of Structural Instruments	48,559,988.00	187,868,881.57	0 10,2%	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.2 Evaluation	10,352,164.00	40,050,452.08	4	19,250,000.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.1.2 *** Evaluation	10,352,164.00	40,050,452.08	4	19,250,000.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.3 Horizontal training in the field of the management of programmes/projects	21,954,415.00	84,937,240.75	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.1.3 *** Horizontal training in the field of the management of programmes/projects	21,954,415.00	84,937,240.75	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.4 Functioning of OPTA, ACIS, the Certifying and Paying Authority and the Audit Authority	22,624,302.00	87,528,899.58	2	21,538,759.00	2	21,538,759.00	24.61	1	12,651,825.00	14.45	218,121.00	174,496.80	0.20
1.1.4 *** Functioning of OPTA, ACIS, the Certifying and Paying Authority and the Audit Authority	22,624,302.00	87,528,899.58	2	21,538,759.00	2	21,538,759.00	24.61	1	12,651,825.00	14.45	218,121.00	174,496.80	0.20

▪ **Qualitative analysis**

In 2008, 6 applications for financing were received under Priority Axis 1, with a total value of 40,788,759 lei (10,543,000 Euro). Out of them, 4 applications were rejected: 2 following administrative checks and 2 following technical and financial checks.

The rejection of the above projects - the first projects ever received under OPTA - was the consequence of the first contact of ACIS Directorates (the main beneficiaries of OPTA) with the procedure of applying under OPTA. In order to improve beneficiaries' knowledge in terms of filling in applications for financing and of the application procedure, MA organised 3 training sessions for ACIS and CPA beneficiaries and developed the help-desk function to support the preparation of projects.

As concerns the *two applications for financing approved in 2008*, with a total eligible value of 21,538,759 lei (5,567,297 Euro), activities and expected results are as follows:

- ***Project 1: Support for the functioning of ACIS including the Managing Authority for the Operational Programme Technical Assistance – for which the financing decision was signed in 2008***

Beneficiary: Authority for the Coordination of the Structural Instruments

Objective: to support the functioning of ACIS and OPTA MA by providing the necessary technical assistance and logistics, as well as by covering administrative expenditures.

Expected results:

- Meetings of the National Coordination Committee, of the Management Committee for SI and of the Working Groups, as well as other meetings related to the coordination of SI, successfully organised;
- ACIS supported with expertise in fulfilling its tasks;
- Meetings of the OPTA MC, of the Coordination Committee for Technical Assistance and of other meetings that are relevant for the OPTA implementation (including the launch conference and the annual OPTA conference) successfully organised;
- OPTA MA supported with technical expertise in fulfilling the tasks related to the programme management and for defining and contracting further projects to be financed under OPTA;
- participation ensured for ACIS staff in events and meetings related to the management of SI;
- appropriate logistical conditions ensured for the functioning of ACIS.

For this project, the first payment claim has been received, as well as the related progress report, according to which the following results were obtained between January and December 2008:

- 1 NCC meeting organised
- OPTA launching conference organised
- 6 meetings organised (MC OPTA, WG TA, CC TA, meetings related to the SI coordination)
- Personalised materials elaborated for the MC OPTA meetings and for the annual meeting for the examination of the Operational Programmes
- Participation ensured for ACIS staff in events and meetings related to the management of SI.

The amount declared by the beneficiary was 218.121 lei (56.380 Euro), out of which ERDF funds 174.497 lei (**45.104 Euro**). Following on the spot checking, MA OPTA approved the payment claim submitted by the beneficiary, and in 12.12.2008 paid back the amount requested from the ERDF funds with regards to the expenditures with organizing the reunions, with preparation of personalised materials and with the travelling of the personnel.

Based of the payment claim, MA OPTA submitted to Certifying and Paying Authority, the first declaration on eligible expenditure, in which requested the reimbursement of 80% from the eligible expenses authorized and paid at the level of the Managing Authority, respectively 174.497 lei.

After receiving the declaration of expenditure, the Certifying and Paying Authority performed on the spot checking at the Managing Authority and sent on 23.12.2008, the first request for funds where it certified the amount of 47.670,59 Euro eligible expenses under OPTA, Priority Axis 1, and requested from the EC 80% from the certified expenditure, meaning 38.136,47 Euro from ERDF. In 04.03.2009, the request was accepted by the EC.

- ***Project 2: Developing the capacity of the Certifying and Paying Authority for the efficient management of Structural and Cohesion Instruments***

Beneficiary: Certifying and Paying Authority

Objective: to improve the quality and effectiveness of the activities carried out by the Certifying and Paying Authority in order to ensure successful absorption of funds, by complying with the relevant regulations and requirements for protecting the financial interests of the national and European budgets.

Expected results:

Component 1: Technical Assistance for CPA and support in staff training

- a functional financial management and control system established, in order to ensure the certification of eligible expenditures originating from the Structural and Cohesion Funds;
- a functional system established for monitoring and verifying the financial management and control system and for the procedure related to the statements of expenditures by the main entities involved in the process of absorption of Structural and Cohesion Funds, in line with the regulations on Structural and Cohesion Funds;
- General Directorate's Procedures Manual completed and updated in accordance with the changes that might appear in the national legislation or in the European regulations;
- CPA staff able to prepare qualitative reports for the European Commission;
- A guide for filling in the statement of expenditures at CPA level;
- A guide for carrying out on-the-spot checks;
- A guide for Human Resources Management;
- A guide for the management of irregularities;
- 5 "team buildings", whereas the locations should be defined in cooperation with the beneficiary;
- 4 study visits for transfer of expertise;
- at least one course organised for at least 20 persons/course, for each of the following subjects: certification, management of irregularities, financial management, risk management in managing SI, administrative management of the General Directorate's

- functions; budgetary, treasury and accounting policy for SI; policies, procedures and practices related to state aid and public procurement; development of skills for internal control; financial engineering instruments;
- specific skills and know-how acquired by the General Directorate's staff for fulfilment of General Directorate's functions related to Structural and Cohesion Funds;
- techniques and methods for motivating and retaining staff;
- 2 conferences with participants at European level, concerning the transfer of expertise for 60 persons/conference;
- a Human Resources Strategy prepared for 2010 – 2012;
- 36 participants in the training organised on the following topics: public finance and accounting, project management, internal audit;
- 2 long-term training modules for improving the English and French language skills.

Component 2: Ensuring the technical and material support for carrying out the activities of the Certifying and Paying Authority in accordance with the European standards

- 5 network printers, 5 colour laser multifunctional equipment: copy machines, scanners, fax machines, 70 computers with monitor, 10 ups, 15 laptops, 1 projectors, 2 hand recorders, 6 water purifying equipment needed for the well functioning of the daily activities of the ACP staff purchased;
- consumables purchased ;
- furniture purchased;

Component 3: Creating the prerequisites for implementing an IT application and support for the acquisition of this application

- Action plan and technical documentation prepared for the IT application;
- IT application purchased.

Both projects were submitted and approved in 2008 within the Key Area of Intervention 1.4. „Functioning of the OPTA Managing Authority, of ACIS, of the Certifying and Paying Authority and of the Audit Authority”.

No other application for financing was submitted in 2008 for any other Key Area of Intervention of OPTA Priority Axis 1. However, with the helpdesk support, several applications for financing were prepared and approved by 30 April 2009, as follows:

- Key Area of Intervention 1.1. „Support for the management and implementation of Structural Instruments”
 - o Improving the system of indicators used in the monitoring and evaluation of the Operational Programmes and of the NSRF, amounting a total eligible value of 2.100.000 lei
 - o Technical Assistance Facility, amounting a total eligible value of 27.050.327 lei
 - o Study for the identification of priority reform directions for the Cohesion Policy post 2013 from Romanian perspective, amounting a total eligible value of 139.730 lei.

For all these projects prepared, the procurement procedures started in 2008.

- Key Area of Intervention 1.2. „Evaluation”
 - o Carrying out evaluations during 2009-2010, amounting a total eligible value of 2.400.000 lei. The public procurement process related to this project started in 2008.
 - o Developing the evaluation capacity of the evaluation units within the Managing Authorities and ACIS, amounting a total eligible value of 2.795.000 lei.
- Key Area of Intervention 1.3. „Horizontal training in programme/project management“

- Continuous training in managing Structural and Cohesion Funds in Romania, amounting a total eligible value of 12.281.000 lei.

Under this project, two public procurement procedures started in 2008.

In November 2008, the first payment claim was received under OPTA, for the project „Support for the functioning of the ACIS, including the Managing Authority for the Operational Programme Technical Assistance”; the amount declared by the beneficiary was 218,121 lei (56,380 Euro*), of which **174,497 lei (45,104 Euro)** from ERDF. Based on the checking performed, OPTA MA approved entirely the application and reimbursed the requested amount on 12.12.2008.

Taking into consideration the strategy for developing the growth poles in Romania by creating the concept of pole coordinator responsible for supporting the coordination of the Integrated Development Plan for the related growth pole, in December 2008, it was proposed to ensure the support for the activities of these coordinators within the Operational Programme Technical Assistance, Priority Axis 1, Key Intervention Area 1.1 „Support for the management and implementation of the Structural Instruments.’’

The pole coordinator will support the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the Integrated Development Plan for the growth pole, which will include projects financed under the Operational Programmes and will ensure the collaboration and consulting, at the central and local level with all the institutions involved. His/her activity will be a horizontal key mechanism for the management of the SI within the coordination of Ministry of Public Finance and Ministry of Regional Development and Housing.

In this way, the European Commission agreed with the possibility of financing the support for developing the growth pole activities within the Operational Programme Technical Assistance. In the first part of 2009, a Tripartite Protocol was elaborated, which will be signed between Ministry of Public Finance, Ministry of Regional Developing and Housing and the Regional Development Agencies, and will establish the framework for conducting the pole coordinator’s activity.

3.1.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

The main problem reported in 2008 was the late start in carrying out the public procurement contracts related to the projects approved for financing from OPTA, which caused delays in the actual implementation of those projects and therefore delays in receiving payment claim and in making payments by the MA, compared to the initial estimates.

At the beneficiary's level, the delays were caused by:

- late approval of the 2008 MPF Annual Public Procurement Plan (April), which resulted in delays in launching the contracts;
- difficult advancement of contracts for endorsements and approvals within MFP (the main beneficiaries belong to this ministry);
- certain categories of TA expenditures are not defined in the national legislation, which resulted in various interpretations of certain categories of expenditures by the various actors involved in the approval and signing of applications for financing (legal divisions, own or delegated preventive financial control).

Measures taken to address these issues included:

- creation of a specific annex to the Annual Public Procurement Plan of MPF for projects financed under the Technical Assistance heading, which would be given priority for approval (in 2009, this annex was approved in February);
- improvements of the legislation on public procurement. In 2009, GEO 34/2006 was amended, therefore limits are now set for the time allowed for evaluation and, for certain procedures, the length of time between the date of publishing the notice in the Electronic Public Procurement System (SEAP) and the submission of tenders is reduced;
- a first draft of GD on "financial-accounting regulations and norms for the specific expenses incurred by the authorities and public institutions from the central public administration as beneficiaries of projects funded from Structural Instruments" was agreed upon by the Managing Authorities in a CCTA meeting. The draft was circulated by ACIS at the end of 2008 among the directorates of MPF for endorsement. Given the elections at national level that took place in November 2008 and changes in structures of the ministries after elections, the GD draft was reinstated on the route in February 2009;
- at the beneficiaries' level – simplification of the public procurement data sheet by reducing the number of qualification documents;
- preparation of 2008-2009 Working Plan by OPTA MA, together with the main OPTA beneficiaries (directorates of ACIS and CPA), and monitoring of its implementation. The Working Plan includes objectives, activities, results and budget for each priority axis. Although it did not speed up the submission of projects in 2008, this tool encouraged the beneficiaries to establish their medium term objectives and needs of financing from OPTA. The Working Plan is updated and presented in each MC meeting.

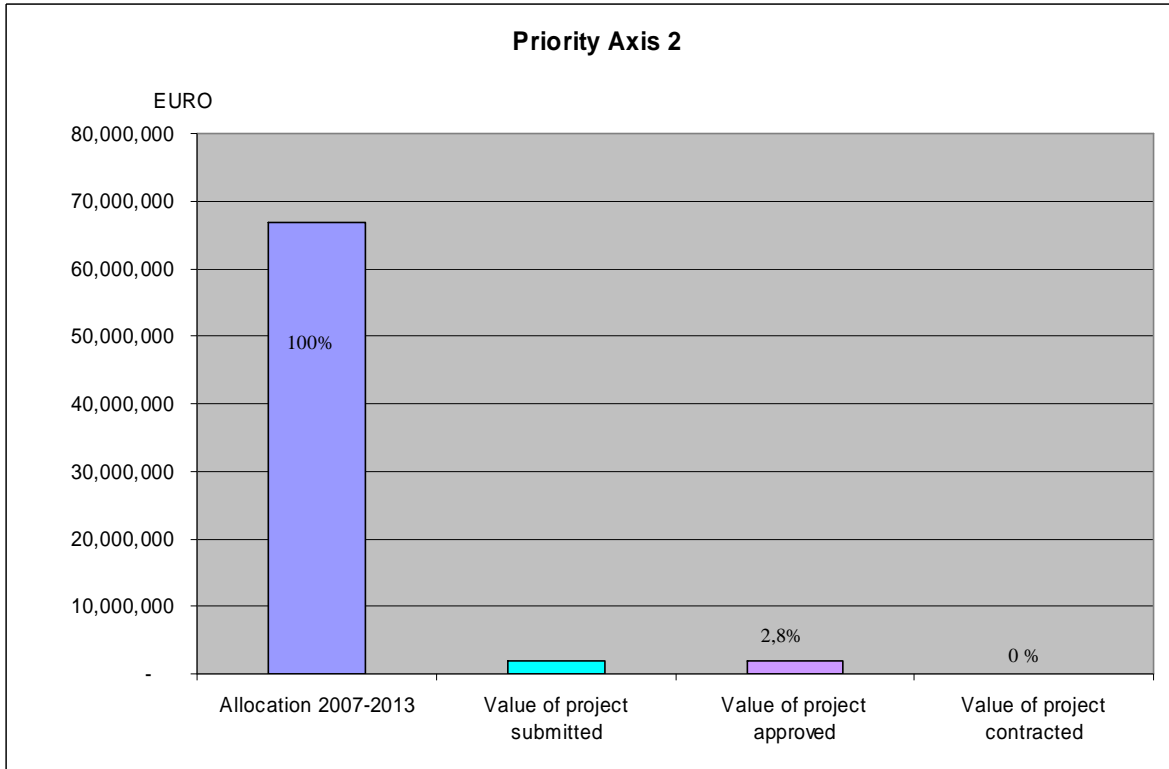
The other problems encountered, common to all Priority Axes, are described under heading 2.3 "Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them."

3.2. Priority 2 - Further development and support for the functioning of the Single Management Information System

3.2.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of the progress

• Information on the physical and financial progress of the priority

Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Indicator 1: Studies, analyses, reports, strategies (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	5
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 2: Guidelines and methodological documents (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	24
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 3: Events focused on exchanging experience on funds implementation and thematic aspects (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	28
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 4: Meetings of relevant committees and working groups (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	28
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 5: Participant training days - management structures (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	20,000
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 6: SMIS versions (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	5
	Basic value	1	1								---
Indicator 7: SMIS Complementary Applications (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	3
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 8: Inquiries received at SMIS helpdesk (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	420
	Baseline	0	0								---



Quantification of financial indicators for **Priority Axis 2** as reported by the SMIS–NSRF on 31.12.2008:

PA/KAI/Operation	PLANNING		RECEIVED APPLICATIONS		APPROVED APPLICATIONS			CONTRACTS/FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED			Expenditures declared by beneficiaries (LEI)	PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES	
	Public contribution 2007-2013		No	Eligible Budget (LEI)	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of approved applications against financial allocations 2007-2013	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of contracted projects against financial allocations 2007-2013		Amounts (LEI)	% of financial execution
	EURO	LEI											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8=7/3*100	9	10	11=10/3*100	12	13	14=13/3*100
2 Further development and support for the functioning of the Single Management Information System	66,737,849.00	258,195,390.21	2	7,320,649.97	2	7,320,649.97	2.84	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.1 Development and maintenance of the SMIS and its digital network	17,693,476.00	68,452,519.95	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2.1 *** Development and maintenance of the SMIS and its digital network	17,693,476.00	68,452,519.95	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2 Functioning of the SMIS Central Unit and coordination network	9,861,651.00	38,152,755.39	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2.2 *** Functioning of the SMIS Central Unit and coordination network	9,861,651.00	38,152,755.39	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.3 Training of the users, distribution of procedural guides and user manuals and information activities related to SMIS	10,007,137.00	38,715,611.63	1	7,228,213.00	1	7,228,213.00	18.67	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2.3 *** Training of the users, distribution of procedural guides and user manuals and information activities related to SMIS	10,007,137.00	38,715,611.63	1	7,228,213.00	1	7,228,213.00	18.67	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.4 Supply of IT&C	29,175,585.00	112,874,503.25	1	92,436.97	1	92,436.97	0.08	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

PA/KAI/Operation	PLANNING		RECEIVED APPLICATIONS		APPROVED APPLICATIONS			CONTRACTS/FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED			Expenditures declared by beneficiaries (LEI)	PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES	
	Public contribution 2007-2013		No	Eligible Budget (LEI)	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of approved applications against financial allocations 2007-2013	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of contracted projects against financial allocations 2007-2013		Amounts (LEI)	% of financial execution
	EURO	LEI											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8=7/3*100	9	10	11=10/3*100	12	13	14=13/3*100
goods and services													
2.2.4 *** Supply of IT&C goods and services	29,175,585.00	112,874,503.25	1	92,436.97	1	92,436.97	0.08	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

▪ **Qualitative analysis**

Two applications for financing, with a total value of 7,320,650 lei (1,892,228 Euro), were received and approved in 2008 for Priority Axis 2, Key Area of Intervention 2.3. "Training of users, distribution of procedures guidelines and user's manuals and information activities related to SMIS–NSRF" and Key Area of Intervention 2.4. "Procurement of IT & C equipment and services". Activities and expected results are presented below in brief.

- *Project 1: Developing an efficient and professional community of SMIS-NSRF users*

Beneficiary: Directorate for System Coordination /ACIS

Objective: to maintain the proper functioning of SMIS-NSRF system and further developments for compliance with the legislative, procedural and institutional needs of the stakeholders.

Expected results:

Activity 1: Development of SMIS-NSRF application and of the reports that are generated by it

- at least two improved versions of SMIS-NSRF as a result of the business analyses, implementation and testing phase based on the improvements suggested by SMIS-CSNR institutional users through the designated SMIS Coordinators.
- a SMIS-NSRF version enabling the electronic transfer into SMIS–NSRF of the information collected from applications for financing, payments claims and progress reports provided by the beneficiaries, as well as the transfer of relevant information from SMIS–NSRF to the public through the Public Information website; information from this website will be further transferred to the website www.fonduri-ue.ro, in accordance with the provisions of EU regulations.
- Implementation of at least 35 new reports in SMIS- NSRF.

Activity 2: SMIS-NSRF Maintenance

- Maintaining the proper functioning of the system during the project implementation

Activity 3: Translation of the SMIS-NSRF application and of the reports generated by it

- Translation into Romanian of the SMIS-NSRF application, including the generated reports

Activity 4: Updating and translation of the SMIS-NSRF system documentation, including user manuals

- Translation into Romanian and updating of all SMIS-NSRF system user manuals

- *Project 2: Support for the functioning of SMIS–NSRF at the Managing Authority for Operational Programme Administrative Capacity Development (OP ACD)*

Beneficiary: Managing Authority for OP ACD

Objective: to establish a technical infrastructure suitable for an efficient management of OP ACD between 2007 and 2013, as well as a technical base for an adequate SMIS–NSRF functioning.

Expected results:

- proper IT&C conditions for the using of SMIS–NSRF by the Managing Authority of OP ACD
- 28 PCs purchased
- 20 UPS purchased.

The implementation of the two projects did not start in 2008, therefore no progress has been registered for this Priority Axis 2 with regard to the indicators defined in the Operational Programme.

However, the procedure for public procurement related to these projects was launched and completed in 2009.

No application for financing was submitted in 2008 for the Key Area of Intervention 2.1. "Development and maintenance of SMIS–NSRF and its digital network" and 2.2. "Functioning of SMIS Central Unit and their network coordinators" of OPTA Priority Axis 2. However, a project aimed at developing and maintaining SMIS–NSRF was prepared, and the related public procurement procedure was launched. Preparation and submission of other projects under Key Areas of Intervention 2.1., 2.2. and 2.4. is expected for the first quarter of 2009.

3.2.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

The problems encountered are described under headings 2.1.6 and 3.1.2.

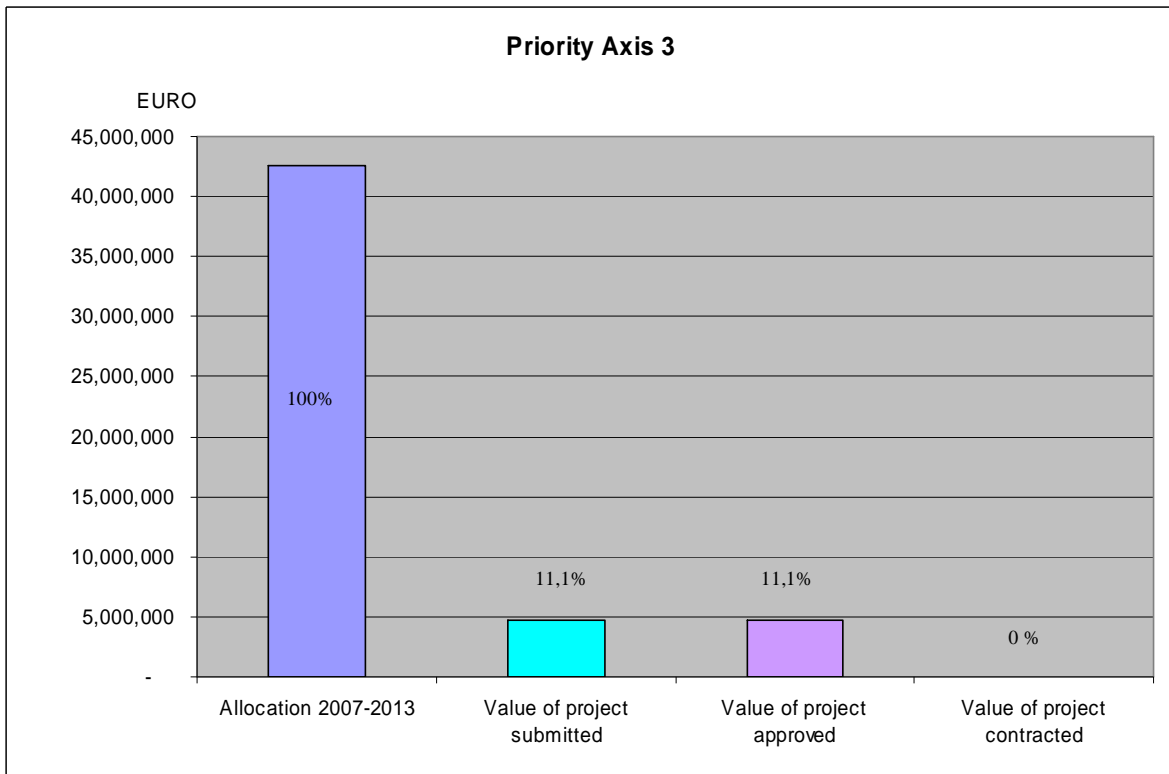
In particular, a small number of applications were registered for this Priority Axis, because of the limited capacity of the main beneficiary (ACIS - DSC) to prepare and manage them. Consequently, provision of expertise in project preparation and management to the main beneficiary has been included in the contract "Support for the functioning of the Authority for Coordination of Structural Instruments, including the Managing Authority for Operational Programme Technical Assistance".

3.3. Priority 3 – Dissemination of information and promotion of Structural Instruments

3.3.1. Achievement of targets and analysis of the progress

• Information on the physical and financial progress of the priority

Indicators		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Indicator 1: Studies, analyses, reports, strategies (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	28
	Baseline	1	1								---
Indicator 2: Communication and publicity events (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	120
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 3: Information and publicity materials (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	72
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 4: Mass-media campaigns (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	10
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 5: Web page visits (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	1,000,000
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 6: Inquiries received by the Information Centre (no.)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	40,000
	Baseline	0	0								---
Indicator 7: Degree of population awareness (%)	Achievement	0	0								0
	Target	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	15
	Baseline	5	5								---



Quantification of financial indicators for Priority Axis 3 as reported by the SMIS–NSRF on 31.12.2008:

PA/KAI/Operation	PLANNING		RECEIVED APPLICATIONS		APPROVED APPLICATIONS			CONTRACTS/FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED			Expenditures declared by beneficiaries (LEI)	PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES	
	Public contribution 2007-2013		No	Eligible Budget (LEI)	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of approved applications against financial allocations 2007-2013	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of contracted projects against financial allocations 2007-2013		Amounts (LEI)	% of financial execution
	EURO	LEI											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8=7/3*100	9	10	11=10/3*100	12	13	14=13/3*100
3 Dissemination of information and promotion of Structural Instruments	42,568,520.00	164,689,090.18	1	18,340,333.82	1	18,340,333.82	11.14	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.1 Dissemination of general information and publicity activities regarding the Structural Instruments allocated to Romania	29,115,819.00	112,643,280.55	1	18,340,333.82	1	18,340,333.82	16.28	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 3.1 *** Dissemination of general information and publicity activities regarding the Structural Instruments allocated to Romania	29,115,819.00	112,643,280.55	1	18,340,333.82	1	18,340,333.82	16.28	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.2 Operation of the Structural Instruments Information Centre	13,452,701.00	52,045,809.63	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 3.2 *** Operation of the Structural Instruments Information Centre	13,452,701.00	52,045,809.63	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

▪ **Qualitative analysis**

One application for financing was received and approved in 2008 for the Priority Axis 3, Key Area of Intervention “Dissemination of general information and development of publicity activities related to the Structural Instruments allocated to Romania”, with a total value of 18,340,334 lei (4,740,574 euro). Activities and expected results are presented below in brief.

○ *Project 1: Support for implementation of ACIS Communication Plan*

Beneficiary: Directorate for System Coordination /ACIS

Objective: to support the implementation of the Action Plan for Communication, prepared by ACIS, thus supporting the objective of Priority Axis 3, namely to ensure a nation-wide coordinated dissemination of general messages related to the Structural Instruments.

Expected results:

- 20 events for 3400 persons organised;
- 15 types of publications edited, printed and distributed;
- 10 workshops for journalists organised;
- 20 press release distributed;
- 10 press conferences organised;
- 500 press articles generated;
- 5 TV spots (audio and video) distributed;
- 15 interviews distributed;
- 3 TV transmission/programs produced;
- 15 advertising boards placed in Bucharest and 100 nation wide;
- 10 lighting boards placed in Bucharest and 20 nation wide;
- 50 000 pieces of promotional products with SI logo (for SI generally and for OPTA);
- 2 opinion polls conducted;
- 5 studies and questionnaires completed.

Taking into account that the project implementation did not start in 2008, no progress was registered for this Priority Axis 3.

3.3.2. Significant problems encountered and measures taken to overcome them

The problems encountered are described under headings 2.1.6. and 3.1.2.

In particular, a small number of applications were registered for this Priority Axis, because of the limited capacity of the main beneficiary (ACIS - Directorate for System Coordination) to prepare and manage them. Consequently, provision of expertise in project preparation and management to the main beneficiary has been included in the contract "Support for the functioning of the Authority for Coordination of Structural Instruments, including the Managing Authority for Operational Programme Technical Assistance".

4. ESF programmes: Coherence and Concentration

Not applicable.

5. ERDF/CF: major projects

Not applicable.

6. Technical Assistance

MA benefited from Phare assistance in 2008 through the RO/06/IB/SPP/01 twinning project "Support to the Authority for Coordination of Structural Instruments - ACIS – to ensure a sound and efficient management of the EU Structural Funds" - Component II for supporting the development of MA capacity to implement the OP and coordinate the TA; the project started in September 2007 and ended in April 2009.

7. Information and publicity

At the meeting of 31 October 2008, the OPTA MC approved the revision of OPTA Communication Plan to include ACIS Communication Plan. After the MC meeting, ACIS received several comments from the EC regarding the amended Communication Plan. The final version was agreed in 2009.

In 2008, the following OPTA information and publicity actions took place:

- OPTA launching conference, on 22 February 2008. The conference reunited 90 participants, including EC representatives, high level representatives from public administration, and socio-economic and civil society partners. During the meeting, the OPTA and the Applicant Guide were presented, as well as the Polish experience in the implementation of Technical Assistance.
- OPTA official website (www.poaat.ro) was developed and launched on 3 December 2008. The website presents the list of OPTA beneficiaries (according to Art. 7 of EC Regulation no. 1828/2006), OPTA Applicant's Guide, information on OPTA MC and CCTA, etc. The website is permanently uploaded and updated and between 3 -31 December 2008, the number of visitors was 900. MA organised 3 training sessions for ACIS and CPA beneficiaries, regarding the preparation and implementation of projects and the eligibility of TA expenditures.

Quantification of OPTA financial indicators as reported by the SMIS–NSRF on 31.12.2008 (see Chapter 2.7 Monitoring arrangements):

PA/KAI/Operation	PLANNING		RECEIVED APPLICATIONS		APPROVED APPLICATIONS			CONTRACTS/FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED			Expenditures declared by beneficiaries (LEI)	PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES	
	Public contribution 2007-2013		No	Eligible Budget (LEI)	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of approved applications against financial allocations 2007-2013	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of contracted projects against financial allocations 2007-2013		Amounts (LEI)	% of financial execution
	EURO	LEI											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8=7/3*100	9	10	11=10/3*100	12	13	14=13/3*100
1 Support to the implementation of Structural Instruments and coordination of programmes	103,490,869.00	400,385,473.99	6	40,788,759.00	2	21,538,759.00	5.38	1	12,651,825.00	3.16	218,121.00	174,496.80	0.04
1.1 Support to the management and implementation of Structural Instruments	48,559,988.00	187,868,881.57	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.1.1 *** Support to the management and implementation of Structural Instruments	48,559,988.00	187,868,881.57	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.2 Evaluation	10,352,164.00	40,050,452.08	4	19,250,000.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.2.1 *** Evaluation	10,352,164.00	40,050,452.08	4	19,250,000.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.3 Horizontal training in the field of the management of programmes/projects	21,954,415.00	84,937,240.75	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.3.1 *** Horizontal training in the field of the management of programmes/projects	21,954,415.00	84,937,240.75	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1.4 Functioning of OPTA, ACIS, the Certifying and Paying Authority and the Audit Authority	22,624,302.00	87,528,899.58	2	21,538,759.00	2	21,538,759.00	24.61	1	12,651,825.00	14.45	218,121.00	174,496.80	0.20
1.4.1 *** Functioning of OPTA, ACIS, the Certifying and Paying Authority and the	22,624,302.00	87,528,899.58	2	21,538,759.00	2	21,538,759.00	24.61	1	12,651,825.00	14.45	218,121.00	174,496.80	0.20

PA/KAI/Operation	PLANNING		RECEIVED APPLICATIONS		APPROVED APPLICATIONS			CONTRACTS/FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED			Expenditures declared by beneficiaries (LEI)	PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES	
	Public contribution 2007-2013		No	Eligible Budget (LEI)	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of approved applications against financial allocations 2007-2013	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of contracted projects against financial allocations 2007-2013		Amounts (LEI)	% of financial execution
	EURO	LEI											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8=7/3*100	9	10	11=10/3*100	12	13	14=13/3*100
Audit Authority													
2 Further development and support for the functioning of the Single Management Information System	66,737,849.00	258,195,390.21	2	7,320,649.97	2	7,320,649.97	2.84	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.1 Development and maintenance of the SMIS and its digital network	17,693,476.00	68,452,519.95	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2.1 *** Development and maintenance of the SMIS and its digital network	17,693,476.00	68,452,519.95	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2 Functioning of the SMIS Central Unit and coordination network	9,861,651.00	38,152,755.39	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2.2 *** Functioning of the SMIS Central Unit and coordination network	9,861,651.00	38,152,755.39	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.3 Training of the users, distribution of procedural guides and user manuals and information activities related to SMIS	10,007,137.00	38,715,611.63	1	7,228,213.00	1	7,228,213.00	18.67	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2.3 *** Training of the users, distribution of procedural guides and user manuals and information activities related to SMIS	10,007,137.00	38,715,611.63	1	7,228,213.00	1	7,228,213.00	18.67	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.4 Supply of IT&C goods and services	29,175,585.00	112,874,503.25	1	92,436.97	1	92,436.97	0.08	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2.2.4 *** Supply of IT&C goods and	29,175,585.00	112,874,503.25	1	92,436.97	1	92,436.97	0.08	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

PA/KAI/Operation	PLANNING		RECEIVED APPLICATIONS		APPROVED APPLICATIONS			CONTRACTS/FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED			Expenditures declared by beneficiaries (LEI)	PAYMENTS TO BENEFICIARIES	
	Public contribution 2007-2013		No	Eligible Budget (LEI)	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of approved applications against financial allocations 2007-2013	No	Public Contribution (LEI)	% of Public Contribution of contracted projects against financial allocations 2007-2013		Amounts (LEI)	% of financial execution
	EURO	LEI											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8=7/3*100	9	10	11=10/3*100	12	13	14=13/3*100
services													
3 Dissemination of information and promotion of Structural Instruments	42,568,520.00	164,689,090.18	1	18,340,333.82	1	18,340,333.82	11.14	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.1 Dissemination of general information and publicity activities regarding the Structural Instruments allocated to Romania	29,115,819.00	112,643,280.55	1	18,340,333.82	1	18,340,333.82	16.28	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 3.1 *** Dissemination of general information and publicity activities regarding the Structural Instruments allocated to Romania	29,115,819.00	112,643,280.55	1	18,340,333.82	1	18,340,333.82	16.28	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.2 Operation of the Structural Instruments Information Centre	13,452,701.00	52,045,809.63	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 3.2 *** Operation of the Structural Instruments Information Centre	13,452,701.00	52,045,809.63	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL:	212,797,238.00	823,269,954.37	9	66,449,742.79	5	47,199,742.79	5.73	1	12,651,825.00	1.54	218,121.00	174,496.80	0.02

Findings	Recommendations
<p>Findings on the environmental impact Disproportionate use of documents on paper</p>	<p>Implementation of all operational programmes should be supported by document management systems, including the introduction of electronic signature. In this respect, it is necessary to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disseminate best practice examples for electronic applications; • conduct a study on technical solutions for converting paper-based procedures into electronic procedures.
<p>Findings on possible bottlenecks in implementation There is confusion and dissatisfaction among beneficiaries regarding the uncertainties and waste of time related to the calculation of project indirect costs</p>	<p>A percentage of indirect costs should be urgently set for every call for projects, when allowed by the Community rules. For this purpose, a study should be conducted to establish the percentage by operational programme, priority axis, project type, beneficiary type, project size, etc.</p>
<p>Findings on possible bottlenecks in implementation Beneficiaries lack a clear vision on the relevance of funding opportunities in relation to their own needs and strategic plans and vision of the time required by the application of administrative procedures</p>	<p>Future training of beneficiaries should be focused on the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to assess whether the financing opportunity fits the beneficiary's needs and plans; • how is a contractor selected in the public procurement procedure and how the selected contractor should be supervised; • how is the project budget developed and managed; • how to design a realistic timetable for project implementation, by taking into account both aspects of content and administrative issues.
<p>Findings on possible bottlenecks in implementation Investments are too small in increasing the capacity of local consultants and training institutions to enable them to provide high-quality Technical Assistance specific to Structural Funds</p>	<p>A programme to train consultants and trainers should be initiated. The substantial funds foreseen for the training of trainers should support combinations of local and foreign teams in order to ensure the transfer of knowledge and skills to the local partners.</p>
<p>Findings on the quality of communication SMIS-NSRF has been developed by involving each managing authority, the Certifying and Paying Authority and the Authority for Coordination of Structural Instruments, through the SMIS coordinators appointed to these structures (to ensure the effectiveness of development). Involvement of staff responsible for monitoring in ACIS and Managing Authorities has sometimes been limited</p>	<p>In order to have a more valuable participation of the major stakeholders in the further development of SMIS, practical training should be organised for specific functions of the system for a larger group of users from Managing Authorities and Intermediate Bodies having indirect information needs.</p>