European Union New Member-Countries Contribution for Development. The Romanian Study Case

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The Romanian membership to the European Union implies, among other things, participating to the administration of the cooperation for development policy, respectively participation to the meeting of the committees of administrating of foreign assistance tools, chaired by the European Commission through the: Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC), European Development Fund (EDF), Committee on Development (DEVE). Romania is also participating to the meetings of the General Affairs and External Relations Councils to development as well as to the ministers informal meetings for development.

First of all, being a part of the European Union development policy means contributing to the European Union budget, by means of which projects and foreign assistance programs are financed in the field of cooperation for development.

Having a contribution to the European Union budget, Romania participates with assistance for all developing countries, including the regions that are covered by the European neighbourhood policy.

The Romanian development cooperation policy subscribes to the purposes, values and principles of the European Consensus on Development beginning with December, 20, 2005. The major interest of our national policy for international development cooperation consist of sustaining the efforts for poverty reduction in those states that are assistance beneficiaries, in the large context of contribution to the Millenium Development Goals.

The CONCORD report, called “No time to waste: European governments behind schedule on aid quantity and quality” was published on May, 23, 2008. Although European Union continues to be the main donor for ODA (Official Development Assistance) at the world-wide level, which means over 60 percent; ODA provided last year had the value of 47,5 mil. Euro (0,39 % from GNI–Gross National Income), as comparated to 46 mil. Euro in 2006 (0,41 % from GNI).

Last year, at the national level, Romania reported an ODA contribution of 0,07 % from GNI – the equivalent of 80 mil. Euro – a figure that includes: Romanian contribution to the European Union budget (ment for the cooperation on development and humanitarian aid, 54 mil. Euro), the contributions resulted from the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs budget and specially directed to the assistance development financing (4,675.000 Euro), as well as the multilateral or bilateral contributions payed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs or other competent ministries. All those shares can be considered assistance for development and a significant part of it was returned to the Romanian Ministry of Education and Researches for different scholarships or grants.
For the current year, a budget for assistance for development, that reaches 17 mil. RON – the equivalent of 4.5 mil. Euro – and which attends to be administrated by Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, using its quality of coordinator of the national development policy.

The events scheduled for this year, which imply the Romanian Parliament support are:

- The launching together with UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) of programmes of the institutional capacities development, education and information in the development in development sector (financed with 825.000 Euro by the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs last year). These implementation will be open to governmental institutions, the Romanian Parliament, some Romanian non-governmental organizations and mass-media – on April, 24;
- The organization of meetings for discussions between the Foreign Affairs Committee representatives as well as with those from Budget and Finance Committee and of European Affairs representatives of the Parliament and Mr. Stefano Manservisi, General Director to Development of European Committee, on the occasion of his visit to Romania – on June, 25;
- Romanian Parliament involvement in the events that will be organized on the occasion of the “Development Objectives Days of the Millenium” – Bucharest, October, 16;
- Romanian Parliament involvement in the events that will be organized on the occasion of the “Development European Days” – Strasbourg, November, 16-17;
- The invitation of the members of the Romanian Parliament to participate to specific actions that will be organized by Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In the following years, between 2008-2013, Romania will have a contribution of about 83.9 mil. Euro at the tenth European Fund on Development, the European Union main financial instrument on the relation with African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP).

Starting from January, first, 2007, Romania became donor of commercial preference for the states in view of development under European Union ’s Generalised System of Preferences (GSP). From the Romanian perspective, the third High Level Forum for Assistance Effectiveness on Development represents a good opportunity for the donors presentation of achievements regarding the Paris Principles implementation and for the sharing useful experiences in the context that implies all the categories of actors involved in the development cooperation policy participating to those events.

Romania issued the Startegy for Development Cooperation which is in conforming with the Paris Principles, regarding to Assistance Effectiveness on Development and it establishes a succession of distinct thematic and geographical priorities, on the basis of the previous transition experience and traditional relations with the European Union western neighbourhood.

In 2007 the assistance for development given to Romania was directed via international organizations or their administrative funds, but startely with 2008 the assistance will be gradually directed through bilateral channels. At that level, efforts of
Paris Principles implementation and the Code for Good Behaviour concerning Labour Division between European Union donors. Thus a large part of bilateral projects or the regional ones from this year will be focused on some main sectors as for instance justice, home affairs, mainly border security, migration control and economic development.