ABSTRACT
The impact of the Cohesion Policy.
Case study - Romania

The main objective of this paper is to contribute to making strategic planning more efficient, at governmental level, in the management of the instruments that implement the Cohesion Policy in Romania. Articulated around the need to optimize the national absorption of European Cohesion Policy funds, the four secondary objectives of this research guide the content of the analytical approach and inspire the structure of the paper. All these objectives are complementary.

In order to achieve the overall objective and the secondary objectives, this paper is guided by four research assumptions. If the first hypothesis postulates that the diachronic dynamics of Cohesion Policy have a certain predictive value, the latter formulates the idea that transdisciplinary critical analyzes allow improvement of the methodology of addressing this phenomenon. Based on the idea that the forecasting ability of the implementation of the European Cohesion Policy in Romania is growing more accurately when using econometric models, the third research hypothesis inspires the position that the normative calibration of this type of forecast is an incontestable methodological requirement. This idea inspires the fourth hypothesis of research, namely that the implementation of Cohesion Policy in the case of Romania can be optimized by implementing an evolutionary set of normative recommendations, capable of improving the institutional architecture involved in this process.

At the same time, starting from the way the management and control systems operated in the 2007-2013 period and from their functioning during this programming period, an institutional re-establishment of the Cohesion Policy Funds management authorities is required. This type of institutional architecture would respond to identified needs at European level to ensure adequate administrative capacity to manage and implement the funds, to implement measures of reducing the bureaucracy and to simplify the use of funds. This proposal for institutional reform contributes to the achievement of the fourth objective of the paper. Thus, together with an absorption forecasting tool, a reliable and efficient structure for managing European funds creates the premises for an efficient and effective implementation of the Cohesion Policy funds, maximizing its impact through appropriate strategic planning.
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KEYWORDS

European Cohesion Policy
Cohesion Policy on Romania
European funds
European integration
Macroeconomic models
Efficiency and effectiveness of structural instruments
Strategic planning
Absorption of European funds
SUMMARY
The impact of the Cohesion Policy.
Case study - Romania

Considered to be a binder susceptible to doubling national horizontal solidarities through vertically mobilizing the economic interests of territorial communities, for the benefit of the European Union, European Cohesion Policy is intended to be an antidote against Europe's "balkan-ization". Despite the existing expansion projects, the resurgence of national egoisms in the context of economic and migration crises brings new challenges for the European Union. Given that Brexit has shown that the process of European integration is not irreversible, the Union's coherency becomes an important political stake, especially with regard to the economic integration of the Eastern European countries. Considering the impact of Cohesion Policy on newer members such as Romania, the predictive analysis of its socio-economic consequences is essential for structuring national policies. Focused on this scientific and social stake, this PhD thesis is dedicated to analyzing the impact of the Cohesion Policy on Romania in order to improve its institutional implementation framework at national level.

Understanding the historical evolution of the European Cohesion Policy and the dynamics of the regulatory framework associated with the structural instruments it involves is an essential theoretical premise for this work. There are a number of questions the thesis proposes to answer. What is the historical dynamics of European Cohesion Policy and what would be the institutional architecture appropriate to efficient and effective management of its European funds at national and regional level? The answer to such questions helps to understand not only the effects of the Cohesion Policy in the case of Romania, but also the socio-economic limits in managing the tools through which this policy is implemented. Understanding the complexity of the institutional mechanisms for implementing the European Cohesion Policy, their coherence and incoherence, is the preliminary step of this research. Consequently, this demanding comprehension becomes the first objective of this thesis.

The second objective of this paper is to encourage a critical appreciation of the impact of the European Cohesion Policy in Romania, given the analytical accuracy of the various theoretical guidelines and macroeconomic models dedicated to assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of structural instruments. The scientific approach aims at identifying the answers to the following questions. To what extent does the conceptual framework, the methodological approaches or the macroeconomic modeling confirm the socio-economic coherence of the European Cohesion Policy in general, but also in the particular case of Romania? To what extent are the results and interpretations obtained on the basis of existing methodologies sufficiently reliable in the development of strategic planning? What are the possibilities of improving macroeconomic modeling in terms of timely validation of the forecasts, in order to analyze the impact of the European Cohesion Policy in Romania?
Improving the reliability of predictive analyzes on the impact of Cohesion Policy implies innovative solutions. The use of econometric modeling, to predict the absorption of Cohesion Policy instruments in order to estimate its impact, is the third secondary objective of this paper. The analysis started from identifying answers to a series of questions. To what extent would the estimation through the econometric modeling of the absorption of these funds contribute to the coherency of the implementation of Cohesion Policy? Designed to respond to the analytical needs of this study, the model for estimating the absorption of European funds for the implementation of the Cohesion Policy, in the case of Romania, may have intra-European relevance.

In order for government institutions to be able to base their main economic policy measures using this Cohesion Policy forecasting instrument, certain conditions are necessary. The justification, elaboration and presentation of this type of solutions is the fourth objective of this thesis, in which the author proposed to identify the answers to the following questions. What are the conditions for optimizing the economic impact of European Cohesion Policy in the case of Romania? To what extent can these solutions improve strategic planning and the use of structural instruments? Designed to complement the reliability of forecasts, these conditions are a normative framework that would allow better institutional governance of European Cohesion Policy at national level.

The paper mobilizes three complementary methodological approaches: historical analysis of institutional dynamics, regression analysis and macroeconomic modeling. In order to accurately determine the historical coherency of institutional practices in the management of Cohesion Policy instruments, of normative frameworks and of economic dynamics, the first two chapters of the paper favors the historical analysis of European Cohesion Policy and its impact on the Romanian economy. The verification of the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the instruments necessary for the implementation of the Cohesion Policy in the case of Romania and by a counterfactual regression analysis carried out using macroeconomic models is part of this thesis. A type of econometric approach is adopted in the analytical approach aimed at detecting the main variables likely to influence the optimization of the implementation of the Cohesion Policy in the period 2021-2027. Made using E-views, this forecast is based on quantitative variables. The efficiency of the operation of such a model is conditional on ensuring a coherent institutional framework for managing Cohesion Policy instruments, together creating the strategic planning capability at government level, that may underlie the effective implementation of Cohesion Policy in Romania in the future.

In order to articulate qualitative and quantitative approaches, the analytical architecture of this thesis mobilizes sources of different typologies, starting from macroeconomic indicators, sociological data, macroeconomic modeling, and programmatic normative discourse. The main source of the data used is the European Commission's portal and associated websites. The macroeconomic data for Romania consulted were those provided by the National Institute of Statistics, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of European Funds.
The structure of the thesis includes the Introduction, together with the Current state of the research, the Established objectives and the Research methodology. The five chapters of the thesis aim at achieving the purpose and the four objectives of the scientific approach.

A first chapter presents the evolution of Cohesion Policy as the main policy of the European Union, with aspects related to its evolution and its role at European level. The analysis focuses on the flexibility of this policy in terms of its adaptation to the challenges of the European Union's enlargement or to the economic crisis. The future of the Cohesion Policy after 2020 is presented from the perspective of the lessons learned in the past but especially in the context of debates on the future of Europe, the finances of the European Union and, in particular, the start of the negotiations on the Cohesion Policy framework for the period 2021-2027. Special attention is paid to the contribution of Cohesion Policy to the development of Romania since its accession to the European Union to date. The analysis carried out within this chapter contributes to the achievement of the first objective of the PhD thesis.

The second chapter analyzes the legal and institutional framework for the management of Cohesion Policy instruments. The analysis is centered on the relevant elements of the management and control of European funds during the programming period 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, highlighting the problems and solutions that could be chosen in the period 2021-2027, emphasizing the need of bureaucracy reducing and simplification. A series of proposals are formulated regarding the position Romania can adopt in the perspective of the negotiations for establishing the norms related to the implementation of the Cohesion Policy in the period 2021-2027. Good governance and administrative capacity are the elements that complete the proposals made in this chapter, thus contributing to achieving the first objective of this paper.

Focused on the objective of a critical analysis of the impact of European Cohesion Policy in Romania, the third chapter proposes a transversal analysis of the existing specialized literature on the impact of Cohesion Policy and the factors that condition its success and failure. They were highlighted by the contextual factors, the conditioning factors (contextualizing), or the "net" impact of the policy estimated by counterfactual methods. Exploring existing empirical studies, in the prospective Cohesion Policy analysis, is driven by the hypothesis that different methods and approaches should be used in a convergent, synergistic way to provide policy makers with relevant information on a variety of important features of the regional development process Europe.

If the methodological elements for evaluating the Cohesion Policy were presented in the previous chapter, the fourth chapter highlights the concrete results of the Cohesion Policy at European Union level, insisting on the 2007-2013 programming period of the intermediate results for the period 2014-2020, making these conclusions more specific to Romania as an element of the case study of the PhD thesis. Such an approach is intended to confirm the cerebral hypothesis that postulates the need for a normative recalibration of the results of empirical analyzes. Last but not least, a reflection of the global context of the European
Union economy will be provided, thus contributing to the achievement of the second goal of the PhD thesis.

The fifth chapter is the contribution of the author proposing a set of measures to optimize strategic planning, in order to optimize the use of the resources allocated to the implementation of Cohesion Policy. The first proposal for this set of measures is the use of an instrument to predict the absorption of Cohesion Policy funds over the period 2021-2027, of the type of an econometric model. On the basis of the results obtained, the impact on Romania's GDP in the analyzed period will be estimated. This tool provides the possibility of forecasting, covering a relevant period to justify an economic or social policy decision, and allows quantifiable macroeconomic effects to be measured in a credible manner, starting from the operation of a national economic model that contributes to the simulation with an acceptable probability of the real functioning of the national economy. The instrument helps to achieve the fourth objective of the paper.

The relevance of this theme is given by the perspective of the analysis of a topic of great relevance, both at the level of the European institutions or at the level of the European Union Member States’ governments, as well as at the level of the public opinion, given the debates on the future of the Union in the Post - 2020 Period. The opportunities for Romania in the near future, and the vision of their successful use, are demonstrated and substantiated by the present scientific approach that can be of interest both to the scientific community and decision-makers in the central public administration involved in the management of Cohesion Policy instruments 2007-2013 and 2014-2020, but also in defining the new multi-annual financial framework 2021-2027 in Romania. Last but not least, the theme is generally of interest to the business community and to ordinary citizens, who are interested in improving economic performance and institutional transparency in the implementation of Cohesion Policy.

As the implementation of Cohesion Policy involves much more than the reflection undertaken in this PhD thesis, the results obtained in this analysis open up as many analysis tracks. Beyond any requirement of completeness, the proposed solutions, the normative reflections or the methodological limits advanced in this analysis represent as many invitations to the scientific community to validate and continue research in this field.
## Curriculum Vitae

### Europass

#### Personal Information
- **Surname/First name**: DOBROTA Carmen-Elena
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- **E-mail**: dobrotacarmen@yahoo.com
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- **Date of birth**: 14.05.1977

#### Work Experience

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<td><strong>February 2011</strong> - <strong>present</strong></td>
<td>General director</td>
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<td><strong>Management of European Funds allocated to Romania through the European Social Fund by the Operational Programme Administrative Capacity Development 2007-2013 and the Operational Programme Administrative Capacity 2014-2020</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name and address of employer</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, 1A, Revoluției Square, sector 1, Bucharest</td>
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<td><strong>Type of business or sector</strong></td>
<td>General Directorate European Programmes Administrative Capacity</td>
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<td><strong>Dates</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Occupation or position held</strong></td>
<td>Office director</td>
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<td><strong>Advising the secretary of state for local communities on specific matters such as: the relation with the territorial-administrative units and the associative structures, social dialogue, state aid for which the Ministry of Administration and Interior is the initiator or the provider, industrial parks, regulation and monitoring of the community services for public utilities, issues related to the public administration reform process, fiscal policies and local budgets, accession of Structural Funds by the structures and the authorities of the public administration.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name and address of employer</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Administration and Interior, 1A, Revoluției Square, sector 1, Bucharest</td>
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<td>Main activities and responsibilities</td>
<td>Planning, organising and implementing control missions at the level of the subordinate structures of the Ministry of Administration and Interior – public administration section, in order to assess their functioning, drafting analyses and reports at the level of the Minister’s Control Department, monitoring the achievement of objectives of the evaluated structures.</td>
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<td>Name and address of employer</td>
<td>Ministry of Administration and Interior, 1A, Revoluției Square, sector 1, Bucharest Minister’s Control Department</td>
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<td>Public administration - analysis, monitoring and control</td>
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<td>Principal councillor – Archivist</td>
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<td>Ensuring the visibility of the actions undertaken by the minister and the secretaries of state within the Ministry of Administration and Interior, contact point for the mass-media in relation to the senior officials’ agenda and activities, organising press conferences and briefings for the senior officials on national and international topics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name and address of employer</td>
<td>Ministry of Administration and Interior, 1A, Revoluției Square, sector 1, Bucharest Spokesperson’s Office</td>
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**Education and training**

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</table>
Archival Studies - History
Title of qualification awarded
BA in Archival Studies - History
Level in national or international classification
Undergraduate education

April 2017
National School of Administration, France

The new relations administration - citizens (International specialised cycle for public administration)
Specialisation certificate

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<td>October 2015</td>
<td>S.C. ATC&amp;IT SOLUTIONS S.R.L.</td>
<td>Project evaluation</td>
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<td>Training programme</td>
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<td>September 2015</td>
<td>European Training Centre in Paris</td>
<td>Results and Indicators:</td>
<td>Certificate of participation</td>
<td>Training programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td>European Academy for Taxes, Economics and Law in Berlin</td>
<td>How to make more user-friendly indicators at programme and project levels?</td>
<td>Certificate of participation</td>
<td>Training programme</td>
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February 2015
Public Research SRL
Creating an ethical culture
In MA OPACD: conduct, anti-fraud, integrity
Certificate of completion
Senior Civil Servants

April 2014
D.S. Consulting S.R.L.
Management
Certificate of completion - Manager
Specialisation programme

November 2013
Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration – National Agency for Civil Servants
Certificate of completion
Specialisation programme
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<td><strong>December 2012</strong></td>
<td>Ministry of Administration and Interior – Institute of Studies for Public Order control</td>
<td>Reinforcing your Integrated Territorial Initiatives</td>
<td>Certificate of completion</td>
<td>Specialisation programme</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>October 2011</strong></td>
<td>CEPOL European Police College</td>
<td>National European Funding Officer</td>
<td>Certificate of participation</td>
<td>Training programme</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>September 2011</strong></td>
<td>European Training Centre in Paris</td>
<td>Structural Funds Integretation Seminar: Making you a better Project and Programme Manager</td>
<td>Certificate of participation</td>
<td>Training programme</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>February 2011</strong></td>
<td>Grupul de Consultanta pentru Dezvoltare DCG, Bucharest</td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Certificate of completion – Project manager</td>
<td>Specialisation programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>April 2012</strong></td>
<td>Grupul de Consultanta pentru Dezvoltare DCG, Bucharest</td>
<td>Public Procurement</td>
<td>Certificate of completion – Public procurement expert</td>
<td>Specialisation programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>May 2011</strong></td>
<td>University of Rouen, France</td>
<td>Archival Studies - History</td>
<td>Certificate of completion – Training of experts to build a European system of competencies in archival studies and history within the Leonardo da Vinci programme</td>
<td>Specialisation programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2006</strong></td>
<td>University of Rouen, France</td>
<td>Archival Studies - History</td>
<td>Certificate of completion – Training of experts to build a European system of competencies in archival studies and history within the Leonardo da Vinci programme</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Directorate of Archives of France, Paris</td>
<td>Archival studies – theory and practice – IT&amp;C</td>
<td>Completion diploma</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Maison des Cultures du Monde, Paris</td>
<td>Archival theories and practice – IT&amp;C</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>National Institute of Public Administration, Romania</td>
<td>Public management and European affairs</td>
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### PERSONAL SKILLS AND COMPETENCES

- **Mother tongue**: Romanian
- **Other languages**: English - Reading: good, Writing: good, Speaking: good; French - Reading: very good, Writing: very good, Speaking: very good
- **Organisational skills and competences**: Organisational abilities, of coordination, control and planning. Highly observant, high resistance to long hours and stress. Analytical and conceptual thinking, communication abilities. Ability to integrate into multi-cultural environments due to participation to training stages. Team spirit.
- **Computer skills and competences**: Advanced knowledge of Office: Word, Excel, Power Point
- **Driving licence**: Category B
- **Social skills and competences**: 2016 - present – associate professor, Faculty of Administration and Business, University of Bucharest, course *Management of European projects*
  
  2004 - 2006 – associate professor, Archival Studies Faculty, course *International standardisation of archives*
  
  2005 - 2009 – president, Romanian Archivists’ Federation (professional association)
  
  2010 - trainer, *project management* – National Agency for Civil Servants
  
  2012 - 2013 – trainer, *expert European Funds accession*, commercial society
  
  2011 - present – member of the *Committee for European Social Fund, European Commission*
  
  2011 - present – member of the *Monitoring Committees of the Sectoral Operational Programmes in Romania*