



# 1 Business Development

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing developed economy in this Euroregion, based on the position both municipalities (Ruse and Giurgiu) have in the national and regional economies of both countries</li> <li>Diverse business profile based on favourable factors: location beneficial to transport, qualified workforce availability; industrial experience</li> <li>Significant export-oriented branches and industries in both municipalities of the Euroregion;</li> <li>Existing developed sub-branches of the food industry branch acting as the processing home front of the agrarian sector</li> <li>Leading functions in the corresponding national economies in certain industries: river transport, river ship building, chemical industry, etc.;</li> <li>Development of modern approaches to territorial concentration of modern industries, logistics and other services, such as free zones, business parks, etc.</li> <li>“Mirror” location of the free zones and business parks in the two towns, one of each of the two kinds in Ruse and in Giurgiu;</li> <li>Existing adequate business infrastructure in both sections of the Euroregion: bank and insurance companies, business associations, business incubators, etc.;</li> <li>Availability of vocational schools where workforce for leading branches and industries is trained;</li> <li>Existing similar characteristics of the business profile of the two municipalities in the Euroregion, namely:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SME place and role;</li> <li>the agrarian sector is subordinated to the general business development;</li> <li>similar sector and branch employment structure;</li> <li>availability of qualified workforce in certain industries</li> </ul> </li> <li>Leading position of transport seen as a business activity in the Euroregion based on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the existence of the two largest ports on the Lower Danube</li> <li>the role of the Euroregion as a crossing point of two European transport corridors;</li> <li>the existence of the only bridge so far between the two countries, which is the main cross-border transfer possibility for railway and road transport between Bulgaria and Romania;</li> </ul> </li> <li>Development of tourism as a cross-border cooperation development factor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar negative characteristics of the agrarian sector in this Euroregion:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>large fragmentation of arable lands ownership;</li> <li>strong irrigated field reduction trend;</li> <li>growing trend of mono-culture land farming;</li> <li>slow upgrading of the existing machine park and agriculture technologies</li> </ul> </li> <li>Insufficient competitiveness of industries that are key businesses for the region;</li> <li>Insufficient number of hi-tech industries in branches that are fundamental for the economy of this Euroregion: machine engineering, textile and clothing, food industry, etc.</li> <li>Insufficient partnership between companies in the same sector and between the existing sectors in this Euroregion</li> <li>Missing business structure links to the agricultural sector (e.g. fruit and vegetable processing);</li> <li>Outdated vocational school curricula not meeting the local business needs;</li> <li>Disproportional tourist infrastructure development and shortage of such infrastructure in Giurgiu is a barrier to keeping part of the transit tourist flow in the area;</li> <li>Insufficient number and small efficiency of joint cross-border tourism projects;</li> <li>Lack of ideas and projects related to old business zone function improvement, including conversion.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Possibilities to use European funding through national operational programmes for the business development of the two municipalities;</li> <li>Possibility to use the Romania-Bulgaria Cross Border Cooperation Strategy to prepare and offer business project proposals of common interest for the Euroregion;</li> <li>Possibilities for cross-border business cooperation in the Euroregion to open possibilities to go to the Romanian and Bulgarian market;</li> <li>Existing training organisations and financial possibilities for re-training or new key competences while at work</li> <li>Finalisation of the restructuring process of business branches traditional for Ruse and Giurgiu;</li> <li>The territorial potential of the two riverside zones of Ruse and Giurgiu can be used to build new business facilities - business infrastructure predominantly - with a new modern communication infrastructure;</li> <li>Different funding programmes can be used (including private investment capital) to build new technology parks;</li> <li>Possibilities and incentives can be offered to attract new investors and open new jobs.</li> <li>Integrated policy of tourism resource promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The global business and financial crisis is taking longer than estimated;</li> <li>Long-term high standards for credit collateral and high interest rates for business development credits;</li> <li>persisting investment capital orientation to tertiary sector branches rather than investments in hi-tech industries;</li> <li>Absence of any coordination policy to overcome the sector and branch development disproportions in the business development of Ruse and Giurgiu;</li> <li>Unpunished unfair competition practiced by big investment companies in the industry and service sector, which impedes the operation of small businesses;</li> <li>Any long-term keeping of the existing differences between the tax systems and the product and service prices in Bulgaria and Romania will hinder any investment interest covering the whole Euroregion.</li> </ul>

## 2 Transport Infrastructure

Strengths (different from the business development SWOT analysis)	Weaknesses (different from the business development SWOT analysis)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of Corridor No. 7</li> <li>Part of the rail and road infrastructure of Corridor No. 9</li> <li>Key trans-European transport route: the north-south axis through the bridge across the Danube River</li> <li>A crossing point of strategic regional and national transport routes;</li> <li>existing ideas on the government level to develop the Euroregion transport infrastructure;</li> <li>existing reconstruction projects for Port Giurgiu</li> <li>Existing road infrastructure projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor condition of the road infrastructure</li> <li>Dropping rate of the merchandise traffic level in the roads and via Port Giurgiu;</li> <li>Absence of yacht ports</li> <li>The railroad infrastructure parameters do not meet the European standards</li> <li>Insufficient infrastructure to enable adequate access to tourist sites</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to attract investments for road infrastructure rehabilitation</li> <li>to reconstruct Port Giurgiu</li> <li>to enable a combined use of all existing transport routes in order to improve the transit region concept</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>failure to use the possibility to have access to EU funding</li> <li>insufficient administrative capacity to prepare and manage EU-funded projects</li> </ul>

## 3 Other Technical Infrastructure

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of the gas supply network in a joint system based on building a Ruse-Giurgiu gas line</li> <li>Implementation of the Integrated Water Project for a better water cycle in Ruse and for finalisation of the Giurgiu water and sewer network;</li> <li>A very good level of coverage by electronic communication networks in the whole region and existing infrastructure that keeps developing;</li> <li>the electricity supply systems are in a good condition;</li> <li>insufficient landscaped areas and insufficient maintenance of the existing ones.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poor energy efficiency of the existing buildings</li> <li>insufficient water and sewer network in Giurgiu</li> <li>it is necessary to reconstruct part of the existing distribution networks.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerated gasification</li> <li>Introduction of renewable energy sources and power saving technologies;</li> <li>The energy potential of household waste can be used;</li> <li>The efficiency of Giurgiu Thermal Power Station can grow hence the level of harmful emissions will drop</li> <li>No construction shall be allowed on landscaped areas;</li> <li>The maintenance and adequate reconstruction of trees and shrubs on public landscaped areas can be activated</li> <li>There is a possibility to use operational programme funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main threats for the Euroregion are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduced amount of public investment resources that does not meet the needs</li> <li>a possible deepening or recurrence of the economic crisis;</li> <li>insufficient administrative capacity to write project proposals and apply for external funding.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## 4 Demography

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High population density in the region</li> <li>• Homogenous ethnic structure of the population, dominated by the main ethnicity of each country, Bulgarians and Romanians respectively.</li> <li>• The number of the population in their working age is growing;</li> <li>• Stable condition of the economically active population in the region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a noticeable depopulation trend;</li> <li>• negative natural and mechanical growth;</li> <li>• emigration of population in the reproductive age;</li> <li>• disproportional economically active population;</li> <li>• symptoms of gradual ageing of the population</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To build a policy to keep the population in the reproductive age</li> <li>• To enable adequate employment possibilities for young people, such as development of hi-tech industries, attractive living environment, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the continuing economic crisis stimulates employment migration;</li> <li>• employment migration grows;</li> <li>• the emigration of young highly educated professionals continues</li> </ul>

## 5 Social Infrastructure

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good educational infrastructure in the region, with adequate educational network coverage enabling steady access to education</li> <li>• Availability of all levels of education (higher education in Giurgiu is via branches of Romanian universities);</li> <li>• The educational establishments for children in both municipalities of this Euroregion correspond to the needs of the population;</li> <li>• some of the vocational schools in Ruse and Giurgiu, the colleges and the University of Ruse have a regional or national scope;</li> <li>• the network of outpatient and inpatient medical establishments in this Euroregion is balanced to the needs of the population;</li> <li>• the degree of availability of in-patient hospital beds in this Euroregion is compatible to the rate in developed countries;</li> <li>• There is a wide variety of medical professionals;</li> <li>• existing developed infrastructure of cultural establishments including establishments above the municipal level: drama companies, an opera company in Ruse, a regional and a district library, a district and regional museum of history, etc.</li> <li>• The national authorities and the local governments are committed to the development (including funding) of the educational, health, culture and other infrastructure;</li> <li>• Private investment capital in education, health, culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• disproportions between the two parts of this Euroregion in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the rate of average occupancy of kindergartens and schools is better in Giurgiu;</li> <li>- the network of vocational schools is better developed in Ruse;</li> <li>- university education is represented by a big university in Ruse and two university branches in Giurgiu;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is poor correspondence between vocational education and the business community; there are no partnerships with the business community regarding a better education process;</li> <li>• the municipality of Giurgiu has no specialised hospitals while there are 7 such hospitals in Ruse;</li> <li>• an emerging problem for both municipalities arises from shortage of funding for healthcare and medical establishments;</li> <li>• outdated medical equipment in the health establishments;</li> <li>• a common problem of the Euroregion is the poor health status of the Roma minority.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To build conditions to enable access to university education in the Euroregion</li> <li>• To make decentralisation of school education adequately regulated by law;</li> <li>• To overcome the legal restrictions regarding the population of Giurgiu using specialised hospitals in Ruse</li> <li>• To use the possibilities provided by the European structural funds and other donors to improve the healthcare infrastructure and procure modern medical equipment;</li> <li>• Existing international programs for cooperation and support in education, humanitarian activities and healthcare.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the negative demographic trends in the region lead to a dropping number of children in the schools;</li> <li>• the rate of children off school or dropping out of school grows;</li> <li>• neglected danger of local epidemic and pandemic diseases that may arise and spread and are hard to control.</li> </ul>

## 6 Real Estate

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Satisfactory average habitation standard level showing an improvement trend</li> <li>Relatively homogenous residential areas with dispersed or compact service facilities</li> <li>A relatively active residential property market ; industrial facilities in most of the cases are in industrial zones</li> <li>Availability of substantial free land reserves for new construction in the existing industrial zones</li> <li>A process of some of the industrial zones being converted into service zones</li> <li>Significant service functions are concentrated downtown in both towns;</li> <li>Big shopping centres located outside downtown areas in the recent years</li> <li>Concentration of service points in some of the residential areas, around which secondary city centres may grow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conflict-generating co-existence of production functions and residential areas next to them or inside them;</li> <li>super density trend when reconstructing residential areas of worn out low-rise buildings</li> <li>no engineering measures for the available reserve lots for future residential areas</li> <li>poor energy efficiency of the existing mass panel buildings</li> <li>absence of high-standard residential area lots</li> <li>apartments dominate in the residential property offers on the market</li> <li>unattractive environment for new investments in the existing industrial areas and unplanned conversion process; small size of the available industrial lots</li> <li>a relatively low average size of the newly built offices;</li> <li>there are no trade fair facilities, no amusement parks, bicycle racing tracks, etc.</li> <li>the municipalities have nearly no land resource available to implement an effective urban planning and investment policy</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the areas of heavily worn-out buildings around the downtown areas of both towns are a valuable resource for modern residential construction projects;</li> <li>the development of the residential areas and the transfer of ownership on the land around residential buildings to the corresponding apartment owners will considerably increase their price;</li> <li>the urban plans of both Ruse and Giurgiu include development of high-standard residential areas;</li> <li>a second industrial park can be built in Ruse at the western entrance to the town;</li> <li>a logistics centre and an inter-modal transport terminal can be built;</li> <li>secondary town centres around the concentration of service points in some residential areas;</li> <li>the interest declared in some real estate agencies in buying land along the main roads is a possibility to build large shopping and/or amusement centres.</li> </ul>	<p>The main threats for the Euroregion are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduced amount of public investment resources that does not meet the needs</li> <li>low level of personal income</li> <li>a possible deepening or recurrence of the economic crisis;</li> <li>absence of legal regulations regarding the transfer of ownership of the land around residential blocks to the apartment owners;</li> <li>exceptionally scarce land resources available to municipalities</li> <li>low level of effecting public-private partnership to build entrepreneurial structures for residential areas renewal;</li> <li>low level of building similar industry promotion structures to use the land reserves in the existing industrial zones.</li> </ul>



## 7 Cultural Heritage - Culture - Tourism

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing well-preserved diversity of tangible and intangible heritage within the Euroregion; moreover, its cultural and scientific value goes beyond the local boundaries.</li> <li>A relatively high concentration of single and grouped heritage sites in historically developed downtown areas, which are important for the local town identity</li> <li>Tools are used to enable protection in conformity to the national systems; defined legal status (partially)</li> <li>The issue of heritage and its preservation is covered in strategic, programming and planning documents at different administrative and territorial levels; administrative capacity is available;</li> <li>Conservation, adaptation, socialisation and promotion projects have been performed concerning sites of key importance for the local heritage awareness</li> <li>Existing good network of museums and other institutions as well as civil society structures active in cultural heritage exploration, preservation and promotion;</li> <li>Favourable geo-strategic location on the crossways of culture corridors and European routes;</li> <li>Exceptionally rich cultural heritage in this Euroregion's hinterland;</li> <li>Beneficial combination of cultural and nature sites</li> <li>existing local and regional, including cross-border, itineraries between Ruse and Giurgiu;</li> <li>This Euroregion is part of popular European tourist itineraries;</li> <li>Existing companies and organisations specialised in culture tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>poor physical condition of some of the immovable heritage sites;</li> <li>partially destroyed environment of some of the sites, especially in Giurgiu</li> <li>shortage of public and private financial resources for specialised activities related to preservation, socialisation, maintenance and security;</li> <li>failure to prevent incompetent interventions; shortage of specialised executive staff;</li> <li>absence of any regular monitoring and belated response to harmful impacts, especially with sites outside the towns and villages;</li> <li>insufficient prevention against potential harmful impacts;</li> <li>delay in bringing the protection status and regimes in conformity with the current laws and situation (in Ruse);</li> <li>insufficient heritage promotion;</li> <li>insufficient information and educational work with the local community and the young people on preservation matters;</li> <li>absence or poor condition of the existing road, tourist service and information infrastructure of the sites outside towns and villages;</li> <li>absence or poor quality of tourist services;</li> <li>absence or inefficient security at the sites, especially outside towns and villages;</li> <li>insufficient variety of culture tourism packages;</li> <li>insufficient tourist product promotion.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active and wide implementation of the European financial tools, donor programs and public-private partnership activities to preserve, socialise and promote heritage;</li> <li>Expansion and larger theme diversity of the regional cultural itinerary network, including additional sites within and beyond the Euroregion.</li> <li>The Euroregion can turn into a popular destination for short inland trips in both countries; cooperation with other municipalities;</li> <li>A larger diversity of tourist packages based on combinations with other types of tourism and tourist attractions;</li> <li>Promotion and use of the intangible cultural heritage of the Euroregion as a tourism resource; larger diversity of the culture calendar events of both municipalities;</li> <li>New jobs in the domain of heritage preservation and tourist services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>permanent damage or destruction of sites by unfavourable natural effects and/or vandalism.</li> <li>permanent damage or destruction of original structures of cultural or historical significance by incompetent or unlawful interventions;</li> <li>historical town environment discredited by inappropriate construction interventions;</li> <li>vulgarisation of values and their environment in the process of their development into tourist attractions.</li> </ul>



## 8 Environment

Strengths (different from the business development and technical infrastructure SWOT analysis)	Strengths (different from the business development and technical infrastructure SWOT analysis)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good general condition of the environment components;</li> <li>• big bio-diversity</li> <li>• existing Natura 2000 protected areas;</li> <li>• wild game variety</li> <li>• conditions to grow herbs, forest fruit and mushrooms</li> <li>• active modern household waste collection and transportation organisation, and separate waste collection;</li> <li>• an active regional site for non-hazardous, inert and hazardous waste in Ruse</li> <li>• functioning noise level control system</li> <li>• special cargo vehicle traffic organisation</li> <li>• existing strategic noise map for the agglomeration of Ruse;</li> <li>• a considerable land resource of highly fertile soils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• air polluted by fine dust particles</li> <li>• pollution emissions by the thermal power stations of Giurgiu and Ruse-Iztok</li> <li>• High household heating pollution emission levels;</li> <li>• the existing fresh water system has a high level of power consumption;</li> <li>• a big number of direct outflows of untreated waste water or insufficiently treated waste water from industrial companies into the Danube;</li> <li>• absence of household waste pre-treatment facilities;</li> <li>• absence of protected area management plans;</li> <li>• high level of transport noise in the main city streets</li> <li>• insufficient maintenance of public landscaped areas.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recreation potential of the Natura 2000 protected areas can be used;</li> <li>• untreated waste water discharged into the Danube can be stopped;</li> <li>• priority development of public transport to reduce car transport noise level;</li> <li>• further collaboration between the municipalities concerning environmental issues;</li> <li>• opportunities provided by the European structural funds and other donors to improve environment components.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main threats for the Euroregion are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reduced amount of public investment resources that does not meet the needs</li> <li>- a possible deepening or recurrence of the economic crisis;</li> <li>- absence of sufficient administrative capacity to write project proposals and apply for external funding.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>