

## A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF LOCAL BUDGET PROCESS IN THE SOCIAL-CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION

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### Abstract:

*This paper suggests to analyze the stage of socio-cultural development of the North-East region, analysis based on the information included in romanian yearly Statistical Reports, development which represent the expression of local budgetary process.*

*The budgetary process is in a close connection with the socio-cultural level of the places because public services, supplied by the local authorities ,such as water deliver, sanitation, public lighting, satitary assistance, etc. are based on the budgetary revenue collection. Also, the execution of the expenses ensure the admittance of the population to schools, hospitals and shops and stimulate the establishment and extention of economic agents which can provide a revenue increase and more work places for citizens*

**Keywords:** local budget, public expenditure, government revenue, social-cultural development, welfare, infrastructure

**JEL Classification:** H 72, H 83

### INTRODUCTION

Local development is achieved through effective management of local government in which a definite role and place is played by the development and implementation of local budgets. The progress of the community is assured by the ability of local leaders to adopt the most successful decisions depending on the new economic and social conditions. As a leader, local government must have a thorough knowledge of human, intellectual and financial resources of their community in order to achieve its objectives. From this perspective we think it is interesting to analyze the state of socio-cultural development of the North-Eastern Region on its main components: population and employment, health infrastructure, education and social services infrastructure.

### 1. THE INVOLVEMENT OF BUDGET PROCESS IN THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF LOCALITIES

Local development is a broad concept and can be defines as the process of diversification and economic and social development activities in a territory starting from the mobilization and coordination of existing resources and energies. Local development is an expression of local solidarity, creating new social relations and expresses the will of the residents of a region to exploit local resources. Local development is also a continuous process of strategic planning and implementation of programs and policies for sustainable development for the purpose of getting measurable improvements in the quality of life of the whole local community through the creative use of local resources.

Local development can be interpreted as a phenomenon not only quantitative (economic) but also as a qualitative one (socio-cultural). The socio-cultural component of local development takes into account the creation of a climate of fairness, through the fight against poverty and promotion of individual identity in a wide variety. Also, development takes into account the removal of discrimination between generations, particularly by the care directed towards disadvantaged groups. (Dinca, 2008) In general, one can speak of individual human development and the fortification of the individual abilities through education, adherence to ethical values and social development that

takes into account social and cultural relations, citizen participation in decision-making within public authorities. Economic growth will be associated with development, only in the case of the involvement of structural changes in the socio-economic system, meaning that it will improve the quality of life and environment, will preserve the cultural heritage, and will involve the community in solving common problems and in the joint exploitation of the benefits.

The local budget process is in close connection with socio-cultural development of the territorial-administrative units because it primarily involves collecting revenues on which local authorities provide public services to citizens or ensure the provision of such services by third parties such as: water supply, public transport, sanitation, public lighting, fire prevention, protection and security of citizens, healthcare. Also, through the execution of expenditure, the local government creates and maintains a favorable local climate for local citizens and businesses so they can thrive and stimulate the creation and expansion of economic agents with a direct impact on citizens thus increasing their incomes and creating new jobs.

Public access to schools, hospitals and shops is also provided, and the availability of quality local public services increases the attractiveness of the area both for citizens and businesses eager to settle in that territory. In the context of the local budget process to achieve the common objective of local development, local authorities focus human, intellectual and financial resources of the private sector and the local community, establishing plans and strategies on short, medium and long term.

## **2. POPULATION, HUMAN RESOURCES AND LABOR MARKET IN NORTH-EASTERN REGION**

### **2.1. POPULATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

On 1 January 1998, the total population of North-Eastern Region was 3,785,530 inhabitants, representing 16.7% of the total population of the country, reaching 3,719,102 inhabitants in 2008 according to Statistical Yearbook of Romania from 2009, which means 17.29 % of the total population. In terms of number of inhabitants, the region ranks first in the country.

The region's population is concentrated in 46 urban centers, 506 communes and 2414 villages. The share of urban population (2008), in total the local population is 43.24%, decreasing since 2001. The rural population holds 56.76%. Along with the South and South-West Region, the North-Eastern Region has a population concentrated in the rural area in a share of 56.76%.

At national level in 1998-2008 has been a decrease in the total population in parallel with urban population decrease (except for 2004 for urban population, a phenomenon that could be explained by the fact that some communes became towns). The main causes are both natural growth decrease and the migration from urban to rural areas.

At regional level there is instead a total population growth between 1998 and 2001, followed by a sinusoidal variation between 2002 and 2006 and a decrease in recent years. Surprising is the evolution at urban – rural level. Thus, while between 1998 and 2000 there is a slight decrease in the urban population to the detriment of rural areas, and in 2001 a standstill 2002 is marked by a weakening of the urban population of 8.32%.

Having a look at the development trend of the female population, its trend is in the same direction with the urban population trend. Urban population is more concentrated in more developed urban centers. This migration phenomenon of people from town to village emerged as a necessity of a part of the population to ensure themselves conditions of subsistence, under massive layoffs in the industrial sector (mainly located in urban areas), and correlated to the application of the law of restitution of the agricultural land.

In 2008, the region had an average density of 100.9 inhabitants per square kilometer, thus placing itself at a higher level to the national average (90.2 inhabitants per square km). The county

with the highest density was Iasi, with 150.9 inhabitants per square km, and the one with the lowest density was Suceava, with 82.6 inhabitants per square kilometer.

According to the 2009 Statistical Yearbook of Romania, in 2008, the population growth in the North-Eastern Region was 0.5 per thousand inhabitants, being the the only region in Romania that still registered a positive value.

On the other hand, the infant mortality rate in 2006 was the highest in our region, reaching 15.3 deaths (under one year of age) per 1,000 inhabitants, compared to the national average of 13.9. This could be explained by the high level of poverty, especially in rural areas, and insufficient education regarding health and the minimum conditions of hygiene. Sex structure of the global population, by region, shows a balanced distribution of population in North-East, 49.42% of the total population of the region being men and 50.58% women.

## **2.2. STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF LABOUR MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

In late 2006, the active employed population of the North-Eastern Region was of 1,248,900 persons, representing 33.58% of the total population of the region and 14.27% of the total active population of the country.

In the last decade, the region has shown a continuing downward trend in the share of active employed population. Following the phenomenon of economic decline which has increased, many state-owned enterprises, which mobilized the largest number of employees, have restructured, which meant that, once giving up a number of activities they also gave up to a large number of staff.

At the regional level of the total population 44.9% is employed, 2.1% are unemployed ILO (International Labour Office), and 53% inactive population. In the 15-24 age-group the number of recorded unemployed people is the highest of all the groups - 4.3%. It is followed by age group 35-44 years and 45-54 years by 3.4%. The situation is similar both in urban and rural areas. 47.72% of the total population works in agriculture, 34.40% in services, and 15.17% in industry. Its share in the agricultural field is at least ten times higher than in regions of the European Union countries. In agriculture, of the total population, 18% are aged between 55-64 and 18.2% aged over 65 years - the aging of the population employed in agriculture.

In services, most are active in trade (9.79% of total), public services (public administration and education with 4.18% and 4.30%, health with 3.94%), construction (6.27% of total) and transport, storage and communications with 3.04%. In the hotels and restaurants field operate only 1.01% of the employed population. Predominant is the population aged 25-34 and 35-44.

Of the total employed population, 47.3% are women, the North-Eastern Region being above the national average - in 2008. Also, there is the phenomenon of inter-sectorial mobility by redistributing the employed population in secondary sector and its reorientation towards primary and tertiary sectors. The same phenomenon is also observed at national level, but with less intensity.

In 2008 the average number of employees is approximately 592,399, representing 35.38% of the total employed population. Most are in Iasi with about 164,886 employees, followed by Bac u with 121,996 and Suceava with 101, 602, at the opposite end being the counties of Boto ani with 60,815 employees and Vaslui with 56,570 employees.

North-Eastern Region is facing challenging problems in terms of unemployment. The evolution of the last decade of the twentieth century showed a continuous increase in the number of unemployed, while emphasizing the inability to adapt of state-owned companies to the requirements of the economy based on supply and demand. Given the acute lack of funds necessary for technology and investment, many managers have opted to increase productivity through staff layoff.

This has led to the current situation in the region, which has serious problems especially in areas with low industrial diversification (Boto ani and Vaslui counties, mining areas of Bac u and

Suceava). Thus, on 31/12/2008, if the national average unemployment rate was 4.4, in the North-Eastern Region the unemployment rate registered 5.3% with a minimum of 3.6% in the county of Boto ani and a maximum of 10.2% in the county of Vaslui. Moreover, this phenomenon is accompanied by an increase in the number of unemployed unpaid, due to the entry into force of Law 416 on the minimum guaranteed income, a problem in counties where massive layoffs were conducted in 1993-1995, confirming the extension of the economic decrease trend.

Analyzing the evolution of unemployment rate in the region during 1999 - 2008, we can observe its decrease with an inflection point in 2001. It is noted the emergence of a growing trend starting with 2002, followed by a decrease in the next period and in 2008 we have a slight increase. Encouraging is the fact that the unemployment rate for women is lower than the overall rate of unemployment.

**Table no. 1. Unemployment rate by regions in 1999-2008 compared**  
%

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Romania, out of which	11.8	10.5	8.8	8.4	7.4	6.3	5.9	5.2	4.0	4.4
women	11.6	10.1	8.4	7.8	6.8	5.6	5.2	4.6	3.9	4.4
NE Region, out of which	14.9	13.2	10.6	10.8	9.0	7.8	6.8	6.2	5.1	5.3
women	14.2	12.3	9.6	9.7	7.5	6.0	5.2	4.9	4.4	4.8

Source: Romania's Statistical Yearbook 2000-2009

In 2008, the unemployment rate by sex showed that 58.16% of the unemployed are men and 41.84% women, more affected by the phenomenon of unemployment being the age group 15-34 years.

When considered the staff and level of education, 65.37% of the total number of unemployment beneficiaries are have secondary and vocational education studies, 26.98% people have post high school education and 4.76% persons have higher education.

Among the unemployed who do not get unemployment help, 91.22% are secondary and vocational education graduates, 6.47% are secondary education graduates and 7.64% are university graduates.

Statistical data ranked the North-Eastern Region on the last place in the country in terms of income level, which is illustrated in the table below.

**Table no. 2. Comparative evolution of average net monthly wage in 2000-2008**  
%

Territorial Unit	2008	2000/1999	2001/2000	2002/2001	2003/2002	2004/2003	2005/2004	2006/2005	2007/2006	2008/2007
Romania	1309	40.46	41.16	25.49	27.72	23.70	24.7	16.08	20.32	25.62
North-Eastern Region	1155	39.96	42.38	29.46	26.68	25.48	22.3	15.38	22.61	23.13

Source: Romania's Statistical Yearbook 2000-2009

The level of the average wage in the North-Eastern Region remains at the lowest level. It is to be noted, however, that during 2001-2008 the percentage increases were similar or even exceeded the national average.

### 3. EDUCATION AND HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1. EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Key factor in the development of a national, respectively a regional economy is represented in a large measure by human capital. Although it is difficult to quantify it and it is in itself a controversial concept, human capital could include human resources with a certain level of education.

**Table no. 3. Comparative evolution of the number of schools by level of instruction**

Units of education	Number of educational units 2008/2009 school year		Growth rate in 2002/2003 school year		Growth rate in 2003/2004 school year		Growth rate in 2004/2005 school year	
	Romania	NE Region	Romania	NE Region	Romania	NE Region	Romania	NE Region
Kindergartens	1718	193	-4,34	- 3,15	-20,23	- 0,94	-25,33	- 28,16
Elementary schools (primary and lower-secondary)	4727	832	-1,35	- 0,94	-30,05	- 5,01	-19,41	- 20,69
High Schools	1444	206	0,65	4,23	0,65	1,53	1,29	2,5
Schools of Trades	147	80	-7,06	0	-7,06	- 10,72	-2,54	-12
Post-secondary Schools	79	14	7,7	- 23,53	7,7	- 15,39	-5,96	0
Foreman Schools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	8115	1325						

Units of education	Growth rate in 2005/2006 school year		Growth rate in 2006/2007 school year		Growth rate in 2007/2008 school year		Growth rate in 2008/2009 school year	
	Romania	NE Region	Romania	NE Region	Romania	NE Region	Romania	NE Region
Kindergartens	-33.7	-74	-54.3	- 25.39	0.63	0.52	-0.75	0.52
Elementary schools (primary and lower-secondary)	-8.7	-13.57	-21.3	- 24.47	-6.10	-3.01	-0.21	-0.35
High Schools	-0.21	0	0.78	0.48	0.35	-0.48	1.26	0.48
Schools of Trades	16.8	68.18	27.7	102.7	27.82	0	0	6.66
Post-secondary Schools	-7.1	9	1.28	16.66	5.06	0	-4.81	0
Foreman Schools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Romania's Statistical Yearbook 2000-2009

The number of education units in the region has 16.32% of the total number of schools nationwide. This is consistent with the fact that the region has the largest area and population of the

eight development regions. At the level of kindergartens, elementary schools and high schools in the region there is the same trend with the national one at about the same rate. Opposed trends to the national one were recorded in 2002-2003 and 2005-2006 school years for schools of traders.

Also, the North-Eastern Region has 20.03% of total students at national level, a situation explained by the fact that the region is the largest in the country in size, number of inhabitants, school population and at the same time it has the highest fertility rate i.e. 46 versus 43 held by the next ranked region (central region) and versus 40.6 the country average. The evolution of the number of students in the region by type of education unit has the same trend as the national trend.

A comparative situation of the number of units of education (kindergartens, elementary schools, high schools, vocational schools and apprenticeship, post-secondary schools, foreman schools) can be seen from the following table.

**Table no. 4. Comparison of the number of units of education**

Territorial Unit	Number of educational units for the 2008-2009 school year					
	Kindergartens	Elementary Schools	High Schools	Schools of Trades	Post-secondary Schools	Foreman Schools
North-East	193	832	206	80	14	-
Romania	1718	4727	1444	147	79	-

Source: Romania's Statistical Yearbook, 2009, p. 478-483

In the 2008-2009 school year, the North-Eastern Region has the highest number of schools of trades, while for other types of educational establishments the region is at a medium level. The North-Eastern Region has, except foreman schools, the highest number of students enrolled in units of education in the 2008-2009 school year.

**Table no. 5. Situation of education facilities in the North-Eastern Region in the 2008-2009 school year**

County/Region	Kindergartens	Elementary Schools Primary and lower- secondary schools	High Schools	Schools of Trades	Post-secondary Schools
Bac u	41	175	33	29	2
Boto ani	26	104	28	11	1
Ia i	67	231	52	2	4
Neam	9	116	33	4	2
Suceava	29	129	41	32	4
Vaslui	21	77	19	2	1
Nord-Est	193	832	206	80	14
România	1718	4727	1444	147	79

Source: Romania's Statistical Yearbook, 2009, p. 478-483

At county level, the first three counties that hold about 66% of the total number of schools throughout the region, are also the three university centers, namely: Bac u, Ia i and Suceava, with 21.13%, 26.86% and 17.73% respectively, primarily due to the concentration of students in these university centers, and on the other hand, these counties have the highest school population compared with the other three counties in the region.

The North-Eastern Region includes all forms of education, the number of students enrolled in pre-university system in the 2008-2009 school year being of 651,949 students, approximately 17.52% of the total population of the region, and in terms of higher education in the three university centers there are 79,034 students. If we are talking about ownership of the educational infrastructure in the region, we can say that private education is little developed, especially at pre-university level.

The above data demonstrates the existence of a pedagogical tradition in the region and a continue concern to train the next generations, even if the educational infrastructure is currently facing a number of problems of which the most important are: lack of appropriate space for the educational process, lack of facilities to keep pace with the changing needs of the labor market, lack of cooperation with industry and, an aspect which is very important, lack of correlation of the educational process with the requirements of the labor market, i.e. lack of a training strategy of the human resources in the region.

Thus, after 1989 there has been an increased demand for the profiles: economic, medical, pharmaceutical and legal, while technical and vocational education has been decreasing as the whole Romanian industry, the latter being not able to properly reorganize and keep pace with the labor market demands, although there were introduced new jobs or forms of specialisation in areas like information technology, biochemical engineering, environmental engineering, agromontanology, tourism, marketing and management, civil engineering, etc. with the possibility that some profiles to be studied in an international language widely spoken: English or French.

Although the region has a staff with good experience in training and human resource training and, on the other hand, it has a good potential in terms of number of persons enrolled in various forms of education, another issue facing the region is migration of young graduates to more developed regions or even to other countries because the job offers in the region is extremely low in some fields compared with other regions where there is a better offer for the same fields and better paid.

**Table no. 6. Comparison of the number of libraries**

Territorial Unit	2001	Variation compared to the previous year %	2002	Variation compared to the previous year %	2003	Variation compared to the previous year %	2004	Variation compared to the previous year %
North-East	2589	-2.70	2579	-0.38	2553	-1.01	2408	-5.68
Romania	13442	0.14	13377	-0.48	13169	-1.56	12574	-4.52

Territorial Unit	2005	Variation compared to the previous year %	2006	Variation compared to the previous year %	2007	Variation compared to the previous year %	2008	Variation compared to the previous year %
North-East	2321	-3.6	2149	-7.41	2227	-4.04	2250	1.03
Romania	12455	-0.9	12081	-3.00	12366	-0.71	12359	-0.05

Source: Statistical Yearbooks of Romania 2000-2009

In 2008, the number of libraries in the North-Eastern Region was of 2250, slightly up from the previous year by 1.03. The can be noted that the 2001/2007 trend was downward at national and for every region, the decay rate being in the North-Eastern Region being higher to the other regions. The table shows that in 2008 the number of libraries in the North-Eastern Region increased by 1.03% while at national level the downward trend is maintained.

Most libraries in the region are located throughout the three university centers, but this is quite normal if we take into account the population of these counties, but mainly the concentration of students from the region or of certain students outside the region in these university centers well-known for training and education.

It can be said that regarding the number of libraries in the North-Eastern Region there is a satisfactory number of such units, but the real problems in this sector are, as in education, the poor state of certain buildings and poor computerized facilities that would facilitate the work in this area.

### 3.2. HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The healthcare system in the region is characterized by the difficult transition from centralism, egalitarianism and limitation of freedom of opinion to local autonomy, privatization and competition. Thus, the reforms of recent years has sought to fundamentally change the healthcare system in order to unitary reconstruct the legal and organizational environment, to introduce Social Health Insurance and diversify financial resource generation mechanisms, while shifting the center of gravity of the healthcare services towards ambulatory care.

It was intended to stimulate various forms of privatization, introduction of competition among suppliers and decentralization of the health system by increasing the role of local authorities, of professional associations, of lending institutions, communities, etc.

The funding of hospitals is done more than 90% through agreements between the managements of hospitals and the District Health Insurance Houses. In the OG 124/1999, privatization has been achieved so far almost 100% of primary care in both urban and rural areas and in a percentage of more than 70% of ambulatory specialty care.

The North-Eastern Region ranks first in number of health units (hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, tuberculosis sanatoriums, dental offices, pharmacies, etc.) with 7698 units. At present, both in the North-Eastern Region and throughout the country, there are private medical facilities, but their number is relatively small (except pharmacies and medical offices).

If from this point of view things seem good for the region, on the other hand, all the infrastructure, like that of education, is in poor condition, with a risk that some hospitals may not receive authorization to function. In addition, just as in education, their technical facilities are both physically and morally worn and no longer meet current requirements. These observations are valid for public health services infrastructure, especially for all hospitals in the region, which hardly survive without a support to be rehabilitated, upgraded and equipped at European standards.

**Table no. 7. Number of health units in state majority ownership in 2008**

County/ Region	Hospitals	Clinics	Dispensaries	Health Centers	Tuberculosis sanatoriums	SPA Sanator iums	Preven toria	Nursery
Bac u	12	2	5	-	-	1	-	8
Boto ani	10	-	2	-	1	1	-	1
Ia i	20	1	4	-	-	-	1	14
Neam	7	1	3	-	-	1	-	5
Suceava	11	-	6	1	-	-	-	2
Vaslui	7	6	4	-	-	-	-	4
Nord-Est	67	10	24	1	1	3	1	34
Total	458	269	213	47	5	8	4	280
%	14.62	3.71	11.26	2.12	20	37.5	25	12.14

Source: Romania's Statistical Yearbook, 2009, p. 437-440

It is to be noted that at regional level the best situation is in Ia i county with a relatively large number of hospitals, diversified specialties (neuro-surgery, infectious diseases, emergency, psychiatry, etc.), being due primarily to the great number of people in this county, but also to the fact that it is a university center, having a university hospital and various research centers in this area.



As a share, the North-Eastern Region has 14.62% of the total number of hospitals, 11.26% of the dispensaries and from 12.14% of all existing nurseries at the national level. At county level, most hospitals are located in Iași, Bacău and Suceava.

In the region there is sharp decrease in the number of clinics in the period 2000-2008, by a rate almost identical to the national one. An alarming situation is the decrease by an increasing rate from year to year of medical dispensaries. For the other types of units there was significant variation. Regarding the number of beds in hospitals and doctors in late 2008, the North-Eastern Region was among the first regions in the country with 15.43% of the national total. At regional level it was recorded in 1998-2008 a fluctuated evolution of the number of beds in hospitals, the number of doctors, pharmacists and ancillary medical personnel.

**Table no. 8 Number of beds in hospitals and doctors in 2008 in the North-Eastern Region**

County/Region	Beds in hospitals	Doctors	Dentists
Bacău	3398	1017	294
Botoșani	2609	558	117
Iași	6743	3088	657
Neam	2700	719	222
Suceava	3320	935	251
Vaslui	2552	496	115
Nord-Est	21322	6813	1656
România	138184	50267	11901
%	15.43	13.55	13.91

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Romania, 2009, p. 441

At county level, Iași county far exceeds the regional average, the values of these two indicators being double, sometimes triple compared to other counties in the region (Vaslui, Botoșani).

### 3.3. SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION

Social services in the region are strongly affected by the dominant characteristics of the transition period through which the whole country is passing and by the fact that the region has the largest population compared with other regions, but also the lowest GDP per capita.

On the one hand, the demand for these services has grown increasingly in recent years due to massive layoffs in the economy, but also because of the economic agents' inability to absorb young workforce. In addition, the strong demand is determined by the overall level of poverty of the population, especially in the case of disadvantaged social groups such as the elderly, those with chronic diseases or various handicaps. A consequence of this level of poverty is the increasing number of cases where parents entrust their children voluntarily to placement centers in the region. These children, in turn, require complex and expensive social welfare.

On the other hand, the social service offer was extremely poor in the region, due to general poverty of the local budgets, which has contributed for several years to finance part of these social services. In addition to the allocation of budgetary resources to finance social services, there are also numerous non-governmental organizations involved in social activities, especially in the area of protection of children's and the old people's rights. In this respect, there is also, orphanages and homes for the elderly that are funded by religious establishments.

The counties with the worst situation are Boto ani and Vaslui, occupying the first places in terms of unemployment and poverty of the population.

Another aspect of social services is the social canteens operating in all counties of the region. Here, the poor and those who have no means of existence, including the homeless, receive free daily meals.

**Table no. 9. Number of social canteens in 2005-2008**

Territorial Unit	Number of canteens				Capacity (places)				Number of beneficiaries			
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2005	2006	2007	2008	2005	2006	2007	2008
Bac u	2	2	2	2	120	250	300	330	226	200	200	218
Boto ani	2	2	2	2	1200	450	450	550	341	359	271	285
Ia i	1	1	1	1	300	300	300	300	282	249	228	194
Neam	3	3	3	3	510	560	560	590	443	361	374	535
Suceava	7	7	7	7	1746	2260	2425	2425	1501	1302	1328	1268
Vaslui	4	4	4	4	1850	1370	1320	1410	550	557	585	495
North-East	19	19	19	19	5726	5190	5355	5605	3343	3028	2986	2995
Romania	114	124	121	125	28203	32486	30722	29805	19600	23590	21268	20469
%	16.66	15.32	15.70	15.2	20.30	15.97	17.43	18.80	17.05	12.83	14.03	14.63

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Romania, 2006-2009

In 2008 the number of social assistance canteens in the region is of 19 units, representing 15.2% of the total number of units existing at national level.

The capacity provided by these units is 5605 places, representing 18.80% of the total existing capacity at national level, of which have benefited 2995 people in the year 2008. It is noted that at regional level during the reported period the active capacity exceeds the number of beneficiaries.

### CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we note a number of issues facing the North-Eastern Region compared to other regions in terms of socio-cultural realities. Thus the North-Eastern Region has the highest level of poverty, the annual trend going up and the share of population concentrated in rural areas is high, the region being characterized by the absence of a redistribution of employed population from agriculture to services and industry. Also, statistical data put the North-Eastern Region last in the

country in terms of income levels. If from the point of view of health infrastructure development things seem good, that entire infrastructure, like that of education, is in poor condition, with a risk that some hospitals may not receive the functioning license. In addition, just as in education, their technical facilities are both physically and morally worn and no longer meet current requirements.

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