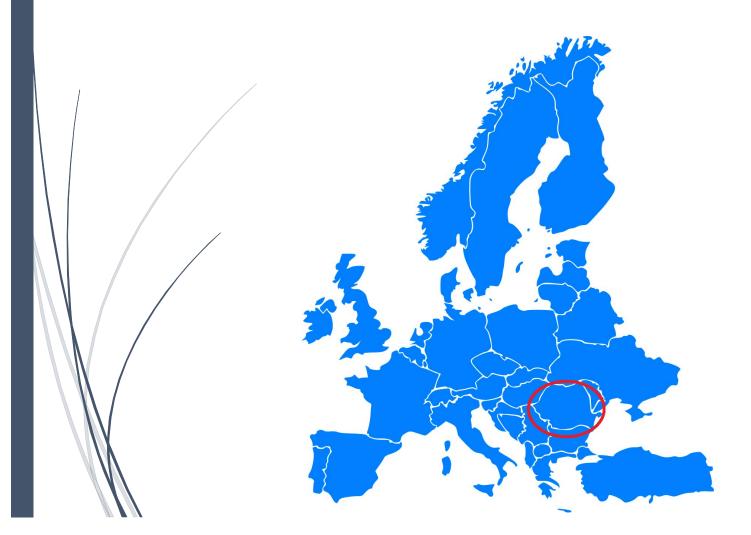
FRD Center

Market research, Strategic business introductions at Decision Maker level, pre-M&A assistance, New Leads generation, Trade Missions, New Suppliers Search & Selection

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OPPORTUNITIES for MARKET EXPANSION, TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN ROMANIA 2024



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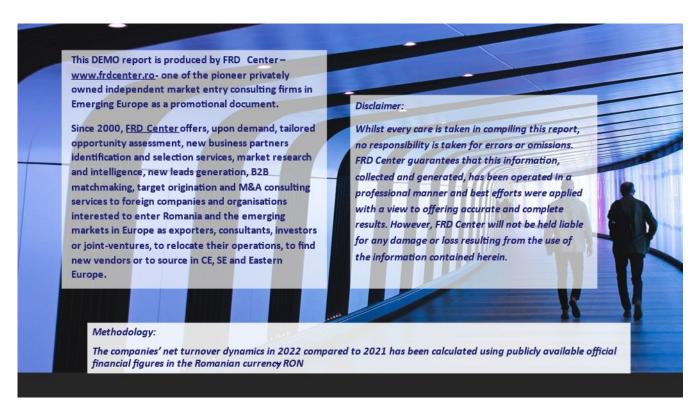
As part of the CSR activity, FRD Center endorses the Sibiu International Theatre Festival FITS www.sibfest.ro



with a tradition of 30 editions so far, the Sibiu International Theatre Festival is the most complex festival in Romania. Internationally, it is recognised as one of the most important performing arts festivals in Europe, alongside Edinburgh International Festival (Great Britain) and Avignon Festival (France).

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the 31th edition in June 2024!





WHY ROMANIA? WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ROMANIA IN 2024?

MACROECONOMIC DATA AND ESTIMATIONS FOR 2021 - 2026

| Indicator | 2021 | 2022 | 2023e | 2024e | 2025e | 2026e |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| GDP - bn RON | 1,181.9 | 1,409.8 | 1,583.5 | 1,733.8 | 1,880.6 | 2,032.3 |
| Real GDP growth rate % | 5.7 | 4.7 | 2.0 | 3.4 | 4.2 | 4.6 |
| FDI - bn EUR | 8.940 | 10.039 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Consumer Price Index (CPI) - annual average | 5.1 | 13.8 | 10.5 | 6.0 | 4.0 | 2.9 |
| ILO unemployment rate % | 5.6 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.4 | 5.1 | 4.7 |
| General government gross debt, % of GDP | 48.5 | 47.2 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Balance of trade - bn EUR | -23.70 | -34.09 | -30.59 | -33.57 | -35.99 | -38.14 |
| Current account balance - bn EUR | -16.76 | -26.04 | -22.71 | -23.85 | -24.41 | -24.84 |
| | | | | | | |

Source: Eurostat, National Bank of Romania, National Commission for Strategy and Prognosis

Romania is a strong democracy and the second largest market in Emerging Europe, after Poland.

For almost 20 years, Romania has been a NATO member-state and a full EU member since 2007.

It has a strong industrial manufacturing sector, oil & gas industry, agriculture, superb IT & software development. It has several maritime ports, considerable logistic sector and strong shipbuilding industry.

According to the official data published by the National Bank of Romania, the foreign direct investments in Romania reached 5.060 billion EUR in the first nine months of 2023.

As for the GDP, it increased y-t-y by 1.1% as gross series in the first nine months of 2023. It is expected to record a real growth rate of 2% in 2023, according to the National Commission for Strategy and Prognosis.

In spite of the the war in Ukraine, international players have been developing their operations in Romania.

For example, over the last three years, Unilever invested EUR 48 mEUR in their Ploiesti Food Factory, expanding it from 6,000 sqm to 17,000 sqm. It is now one of the most modern Unilever facilities in Europe and, starting with 2024, it will focus exclusively on food production.

The estimated value of the NATO NSIP projects in Romania for the period 2023-2027 is of 149.9 mEUR. Romania allocates 2.5% of her GDP to the Defense Sector as part of the NATO structures

As it results from the FRD Center analysis, in the first nine months of 2023 compared to the same period of the previous year, the turnover in the manufacturing industry in Romania increased by 1.8% in nominal terms, while the new orders in this sector rose by 4.9%.

In regards to the manufacture of computers, electronic and optical products in Romania, according to the FRD Center analysis, in the first nine months of 2023 it recorded a y-t-y growth as gross series of 10.4% while the manufacture of road transport vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers increased by 5.4%.

The volume of the construction works in Romania increased by 6.6% as gross series in the first eight months of 2022 compared to the same period of 2021, as it results from the FRD Center analysis.

Romania will benefit of 29.18 bn EUR European funding through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP).

One of the sectors to receive funding through the NRRP is the Romanian hospital sector. They will receive 1.7 bnEUR to develop the hospital infrastructure and 400 mEUR for the digitalization of the healthcare system in Romania.

Also through the NRRP, Romania receives 1.3 bn EUR for waste management projects and must implement the planned projects by 2026. One priority is the digitization of the waste management sector.

Romania has qualified professionals with Industry 4.0 skills and a developed IT infrastructure allowing the implementation of the latest technologies in the sector of the autonomous mobile robots.

According to Eurostat, with a production of 2.6 million of bicycles in 2022, Romania is the second largest manufacturer of bicycles in the EU.

According to the Global Innovation Index 2022 of the World Intellectual Property Organization, Romania ranks 11th among 132 countries for the ICT services exports (% total trade).

Romania is one of the leading countries in the region in terms of BPO, ITO and SSC. Major global companies opened centres in Romania for R&D, business services, custom software development etc. According to the Association of Business Service Leaders, Romania ranks 2nd place in Europe and 6th place worldwide among countries operating in the business services industry.

In respect to agriculture, Romania is one of the largest players in Europe, with the utilised total agricultural surface of around 14 million hectares.

In the 2022 - 2023 commercial year, Romania was the second-biggest grain exporter of the EU.

Within the National Programme for the rehabilitation of the irrigation infrastructure, the Romanian Government approved in August 2022 allocations from the national budget of 1.5 bn EUR by 2027, with the target is to increase the irrigated surface of Romania from 1.8 million hectares to 2.6 million hectares.

The National Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 - Investments in Agriculture has a budget of 1.7 bn EUR for 2023 in Romania. Examples of relevant funding lines are: investments in zootechnical sector, modernisation of the irrigation infrastructure, purchase of agricultural machinery for the vegetal sector, support for setting up young farmers, investments in small farms.

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SECTORS OF INTEREST

- 1 BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION
- 2 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS INVESTMENTS
- 3 INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING AND METALWORKING
- 4 ANIMAL FARMING DEVELOPMENT
- 5 ENERGY EFFICIENCY, PHOTOVOLTAIC, COGENERATION, BIOFUELS
- 6 BPO AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT OUTSOURCING
- 7 CIRCULAR ECONOMY, RECYCLING, WASTE MANAGEMENT

1 – BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION

The construction sector reached a share of 6.7% in the GDP in Romania in 2022.

Based on the data centralised by the Ziarul Financiar newspaper using information from the National Trade Register Office, the Romanian construction sector registered over 92,000 companies at the end of 2022, with more than 423,000 employees and a cumulated turnover of around 33 bn EUR.

The cumulated turnover of the players in the domestic construction sector recorded a growth of 16% in 2022 compared to the previous year.

The construction engineering works increased by 33.6% in Romania in the first seven months of 2023 compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.

According to the official data from the National Institute of Statistics, in the first

According to Cushman & Wakefield Echinox, the construction and real estate sector in Romania attracted foreign direct investments (FDI) of around 1.2 bn EUR in 2022, thus this sector reaching a share of 17.2% in the total FDI balance.

seven months of 2023, the volume of construction works in Romania increased by 12.4% as gross series, compared to the same period of 2022. Furthermore, the volume of the construction works increased by 12.9% as gross series in 2022 compared to 2021.

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As it results from the data published by the National Commission for Strategy and Prognosis in August 2023, the construction sector in Romania is forecasted to record y-o-y growths of 6.5% in 2023, 8.7% in 2024, 10% in 2025, 8% in 2026 and 6.7% in 2027.

By structure elements, rises in the first seven months of 2023 compared to the same period of 2022 were reported as follows:

- capital repair works: +33.5%
- new construction works: +10.5%
- maintenance and current repair works: +10.4%

According to the Romanian Statistics Institute, the companies that provide architecture and engineering services reported in the first eight months of 2023 an increase in turnover of +20.6% compared to the similar period of 2022.

According to RisCo, in 2022, the companies active in the Romanian construction sector reached a cumulated turnover of 66.4 billion lei, up from 59.5 billion lei in 2021, cumulated from 40,000 companies.

The Romanian Ministry of Finance supports construction sites and protects infrastructure projects with European funds and loans from privatization revenues, registered in the general current account of the State Treasury, up to 1 billion lei, in order to provide opportunities for infrastructure modernization, such as road rehabilitation, construction of schools and hospitals or development of public transport infrastructure.

The Ministry of Health announced in October 2022 investments of over 200 mEUR for the hospitals' digitalization in Romania through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan.

For some Examples of Major Projects in the Romanian Building Sector Road Infrastructure consult the FRD Center DEMO report at https://www.frdcenter.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Building-Sector-in-Romania.pdf



WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ROMANIAN DEFENCE SECTOR?

As it results from the FRD Center analysis, over two billion lei were allocated for Romanian defense infrastructure investment works for the year 2023. Up to September, works worth 493.63 mRON have been executed and settled.

Currently, investment projects financed from European funds submitted under the Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 are in various phases of development.

The estimated value of the NATO NSIP projects in Romania for the period 2023-2027 is of 149.9 mEUR. Projects with EU contribution of approx. 48 mRON were recently finalized or are nearing completion. Romania allocates 2.5% of her GDP to the Defense Sector as part of the NATO structures

For some Examples of Major Projects in INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT in the ROMANIAN DEFENCE SECTOR consult the FRD Center DEMO analysis at the link https://www.frdcenter.ro/opportunities-in-the-romanian-building-sector/

WHAT IS THE AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR INVESTMENT IN THE ROMANIAN BUILDING SECTOR?

The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) is expected to have a major favorable impact on all segments of the construction market in Romania, if the projects are implemented on time.

The Transport Program 2021 - 2027 has allocated funds of 9.4 bn EUR in Romania.

The total value of the NRRP investments that could reach the construction sector exceeds 17.5 bnEUR by the end of the implementation period, in all market segments: infrastructure, residential, renovations, energy and utilities.

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure is the Management Authority for the Transport Program.

The expected results following the implementation of the Transport Program are:

- 632 km of new or rehabilitated roads
- 488 km of new or rehabilitated railways
- 223 infrastructures for alternative fuels (refueling/recharging points)
- 3,390 km the total length of roads equipped with road safety elements
- 16 new or modernised railway stations
- 40 trains purchased
- 12 km of new tram and subway lines
- 216 km of reconstructed or modernised tram and subway lines
- 70 km of new, rehabilitated or modernised inland waterways
- 8 new or upgraded intermodal connections

Are you looking to research the Romanian market and study the local players?



Upon demand from Clients, FRD Center is generating data collection, primary research, market and sector studies, players analysein Romania and other markets in CE Europe, Eastern Europe and SE Europe.

FRD Center identifies and selects the local players according to the Client's criteria, provides InDepth Analysis and Target Origination services.

For over 23 years, <u>FRD Center</u> facilitates commercial relations between foreign manufacturers, investors, exporters with local key decision makers and provides B2B matchmaking at Decision Maker level, Market Research etc.

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with your specific demand for local support

For more details contact the FRD Center at email: europa@frdcenter.ro

Who are some of the LARGEST AND MOST RELEVANT PLAYERS in BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION sector in ROMANIA?

Set up in 2011, **Keyboard** provides services of road construction and rehabilitation. The company has own asphalt and concrete station. In 2022, Keyboard reached a turnover of 10.5 mEUR, up 64% compared to the previous year. The firm has over 60 employees.

Founded in 1994 by Romanian entrepreneurs, **Arcada** is a major construction contractor specialised in tunnelling. With some 800 employees, its turnover exceeded 108 mEUR in 2022, 62% higher compared to 2021. One of the company's main projects is the construction of the railway connecting the Bucharest North Railway Station and the Otopeni Airport.

Elektra Invest is specialised in electrical installation works. The company was established in 2005. Its turnover exceeded 23 mEUR in 2022, up 65% compared to the previous year. It has approximately 90 employees.

Founded in 1993, **General Me.El Electric** is a Romanian electrical installation contractor. The company has around 2,500 clients. Some of its main customers are Haier Europe, CTPark, Schlumberger, Forja Neptun, Lidl, Ploiesti Shopping City etc. With a team of over 180 employees, the firm reached in 2022 a turnover of 24.3 mEUR, 89% higher than in 2021.

BTDConstruct & Ambient is a 100% Romanian company, established in 2013. With over 130 employees, it operates in the field of civil, commercial, industrial and infrastructure construction. The company registered in 2022 a turnover of over 90 mEUR, up 46% compared to the previous year.

Established in 1990, **Constructii Erbasu** is a major Romanian general contractor with experience in civil and industrial buildings. Currently the firm is involved in large projects, both building and rehabilitation. With a team of approx. 1,800 people, the company registered a turnover of approximately 205 mEUR in 2022, 54% higher compared to 2021.

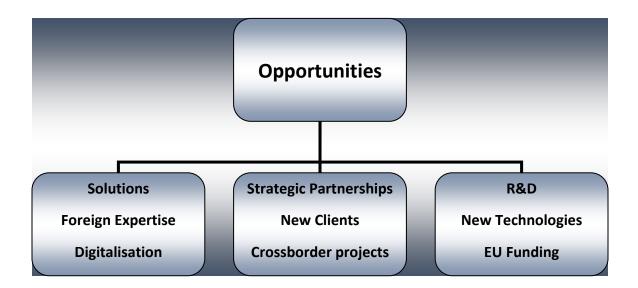
Acvatot executes complex works of water, sewage, gas or heating networks, as well as electrical installations for wind farms or complete water/canal/road works for commercial complexes. In 2023 the management of the company estimates an increase of over 25% compared to the level of 2022.

The construction and installations company **CONI** was set up in 1992. They are specialized in water, gas, sewage, plumbing and infrastructure works. Their TO in 2022 was of 37.9 mEUR which according to the FRD Center analysis is 69% higher than the TO they registered in 2021.

Mega Company is a developer and builder of refrigerated logistic storage spaces and facilities. Set up in 1992, they have the largest cold storage in Romania, where products can be stored at temperatures of up to -24 degrees Celsius. ACT Cold Storage is the largest cold storage in Romania and one of the largest in Eastern Europe.

Masterbuild – General Contractor & Developer is a privately - owned construction company established in the early 2000's in Bucharest, Romania with good experience in the refrigerated warehousing. They are currently building a logistics park of over 16,000 sqm, built on a land area of 34,000 sqm, located north of Bucharest.

For for details about the opportunities in the Romanian Building Sector consult the FRD Center DEMO report at https://www.frdcenter.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Building-Sector-in-Romania.pdf



2 – PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS INVESTMENTS in Romania

Romania will receive EU funding through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP).

From the research conducted by FRD Center it results that recently, there has been a focus on developing the oncology sector in Romania, both the in public and in the private medical sector. Similarly, there is increasing interest in the high-tech medical equipment, digital technologies for healthcare and diagnosis.

One of the sectors to receive funding through the NRRP is the **Romanian hospital sector**. They will receive 1.7 bnEUR to develop the hospital infrastructure and 400 mEUR for the digitalization of the healthcare system in Romania.

According to the FRD Center analysis, the Romanian advanced diagnostics, medical imaging and oncology therapy market

segments are in full development, receiving both public and private investments.

Some of the most important projects in the Romanian hospital sector identified by the FRD Center are:

The construction of New County Emergency Hospital in Focsani

The Construction of Regional Emergency Hospital in Craiova

The Construction of New Oncology and Cardiology Hospital in Constanta

With an estimated total budget of around 588 mEUR including VAT, it is financed through the European Social Fund & European Regional Development Fund.
With an estimated project value of almost 570 mEUR, it is funded from the Regional Operational Programme 2014 – 2020. Its implementation period is of 104 months, during 01.05.2018 - 31.12.2026. The hospital will have 807 beds and 23 imaging rooms.
Funded 95% from the NRRP, its project value exceeds 102 mEUR, without VAT. The financing contract was signed in April 2023. The construction works are expected to start at the beginning of 2024. The hospital will have 9 operation rooms and over 350 beds.

The Governmental investment plan "New public hospital infrastructure" envisages the partial financing of the construction of at least 25 new hospitals and clinics in Romania.

HOW ABOUT OTHER HOSPITAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS? CONTACT THE FRD CENTER AT EMAIL europa@frdcenter.ro for more details.

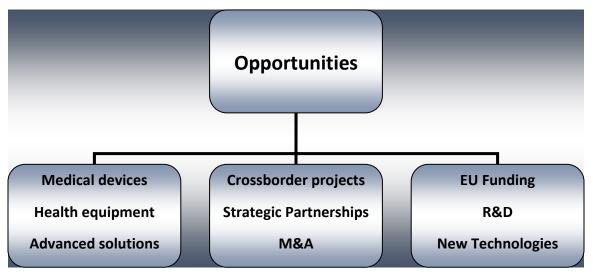
Currently, we are witnessing an infusion of capital from the European Union whose fixed goal is the development of the medical system in Romania, with the modernization of hospitals and outpatient clinics, with the support of national programs to fight cancer. All this strategy brings with it the acquisition of high-performance medical equipment.

Relevant for the subject of this report is Pillar V of the PNRR: Health and institutional resilience, Component 12: Health, Investment: I2. Development of public hospital infrastructure, namey: Specific investment, I2.1 – New public hospital infrastructure and Specific investment: I2.2 – Medical equipment and apparatus

The private medical services market has continued to grow in 2023 and is expected to do so for the following years. The big players will invest in organic development in new clinics, laboratories and hospitals, but also in acquisitions to strengthen their position in the market.

Here are some examples, identified by FRD Center:

- **1 Gral Medical** set an investment budget of approximately 13 mEUR for the construction of two greenfield oncology hospitals, and at the same time to increase its network of clinics in the province. The newest investment is the clinic in the city of Ploiesti, which is scheduled to be opened at the end of 2023.
- **2 Medisprof Cancer Center,** founded by a Romanian doctor, is currently building an Oncology Centre in Piatra Neamt, expected to be completed by the end of 2023, with an investment of around 2 mEUR. In 2024, it plans to start the construction of its second Oncology Hospital in Cluj Napoca, an investment estimated at 22 mEUR, out of which 10 mEUR for medical equipment. The execution period is estimated at 24 months. Medisprof already has an Oncology Hospital in Cluj Napoca, open in 2018.



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3 – INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING AND METALWORKING

Industrial manufacturing is one of the strongest sectors of the Romanian economy. Romanian industrial sector was responsible for 22.5% of the Romanian GDP in 2022.

As it results from the FRD Center analysis, in the first nine months of 2023 compared to the same period of the previous year, the turnover in the manufacturing industry in Romania increased by 1.8% in nominal terms, while the new orders in this sector rose by 4.9%.

Metalworking is an industrial manufacturing sector well developed in Romania. According to the FRD Center research, there are over 150 major players involved in the metalworking sector in Romania: manufacturing as well as trade.

FRD Center facilitates – upon demand from the International Players – strategic search and selection of local manufacturers that could become their suppliers. More details at the link: https://www.frdcenter.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/FRD-Center-New-Suppliers-Search-and-Selection-services-Presentation.pdf

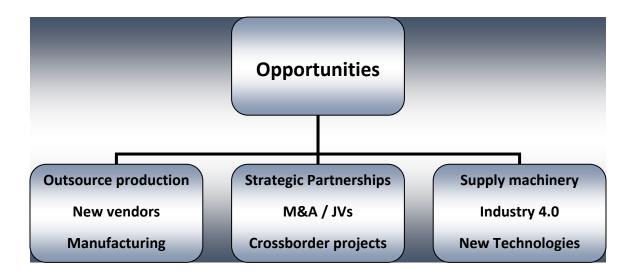
Some of the main activities and technologies used in this sector in Romania are:

- Manufacture of metal products obtained by plastic deformation, such as Forging, pressing, stamping and roll-forming
- Powder metallurgy
- Embossing, machining, welding and assembly services
- Forming metal wires and tubes
- Painting in electrostatic field, galvanizing
- Casting of light metals, light metal fabrications
- Forging
- Manufacturing of metal constructions and aluminum component parts
- Anti-corrosion protections
- Manufacture of metal structures and parts of structures
- Treatment and coating of metals: thermally and electrolytically galvanized metals
- Manufacture of cast iron castings for machine-tools

According to the <u>FRD Center</u> research, some of the companies in Romania that use die casting are: Rubitech Romania SRL, Ferochim SRL, Faist Mekatronic SRL, CIE Matricon SA, Altur SA, GF Casting Solutions SRL and NBI Industrial Oradea SRL.

Some of the players on the Romanian metalworking market that use injection molding are Flaro Prod SA and Subansamble Auto SA - GIC Group.

How to find and select reliable manufacturing partners and new suppliers in Romania and Eastern Europe? More details in this link: https://market-entry-romania.blogspot.com/2023/09/are-you-looking-to-outsource-production.html





Some examples of RELEVANT PLAYERS IN THE ROMANIAN INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING – METALWORKING sector

Thunder Tools SRL is a company with private capital, 100% Romanian. It is an authorized distributor of products under its own brand Thunder Tools, Alfra Germany, NUI Italia, UDI, Carmon Ergus Italia, Klingspor, MOB&IUS, Kennedy Professional. Having its headquarters and central warehouse in Sanpetru, Braşov county, and large stocks of cutting tools, it can deliver from stock through its own agents or by fast courier, throughout the country and abroad.

ADALCO GROUP specialize in metal cutting. They address customers in the automotive industry, producers of welded or rolled pipes and other sectors of the metal processing industry, with a unique combination of circular cloths (HSS, TCT, Segmentate) brand Kinkelder BV Holland, bimetal ribbon cloths (M42, M51, TCT) brand Honsberg Metallsagen GmbH Germany, and HSS circular saw blade sharpening service provided by Adalco Group on Loroch CNC machines.

Compa SA has a long tradition in manufacturing components for injection systems; blades, arms and arm heads for windshield wipers; central housing, nozzle ring and rollers for turbochargers; steering gears, steering column components; springs; stamping parts; drive shafts; mechanically welded assemblies; components for air conditioning installations; industrial equipment.

FAIST MEKATRONIC SRL is one of the manufacturing sites of Faist Light Metals Division. The company is located in Oradea, Romania having at the moment around 1100 employees. FAIST Light Metals Division is one of the five Business Divisions of FAIST Group. It is a leading supplier of high value-added, aluminium die cast components for the mobile communications network equipment industry, the global automotive industry and other industrial fields such as energy management, power tools and household.

FEROCHIM Ltd. is an independent private firm, producer of a large variety of metallic accessories - steel, metal, zamak - for furniture and has now become one of the leaders amongst the producers of metallic accessories for furniture. Some of the technologies they use are die casting, drilling, polishing, electroplating, stamping and they have an automated painting line.





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4 – ANIMAL FARMING DEVELOPMENT in ROMANIA

Romania counts with one of the largest animal head-count in the region. According to official data from the National Veterinary Sanitary and Food Safety Authority, there are 926 EU approved meat establishments in Romania, including animal farms and slaughterhouses.

According to the FRD Center analysis based on the official statistic data, in 2022, the number of sheep and goats as well as the poultry in Romania increased.

At the end of 2022, Romania had over 1.8 million cattle, more than 3.3 million pigs, almost 11.7 million sheep and goats, and over 78.3 million poultry

According to the data provided by the Agency

for Rural Investment Financing to Ziarul Financiar, over 400 beef, dairy and pig farms were built, expanded or modernized with European funds of 383 mEUR through the National Rural Development Programme 2014 - 2020.

The **National Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027 - Investments in Agriculture** has a budget of 1.7 bn EUR for 2023. The responsible authority is the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development through the National Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture.

Examples of relevant funding lines are:

| investments in zootechnical sector | 225 mEUR |
|---|----------|
| support for setting up young farmers | 250 mEUR |
| investments in small farms | 108 mEUR |
| modernisation of the irrigation infrastructure | 400 mEUR |
| purchase of agricultural machinery for the vegetal sector | 100 mEUR |

For some other details and opportunities in the digitalization of Romanian agriculture consult the link: https://market-entry-romania.blogspot.com/2023/08/opportunities-in-digitalization-of.html

A number of 49 farms in Romania have at least 250 milk cows and last year they received subsidies through the "Coupled zootechnical support" of over 4 mEUR, according to APIA (The Romanian Agency for Payments in Agrigulture) quoted by ZF.

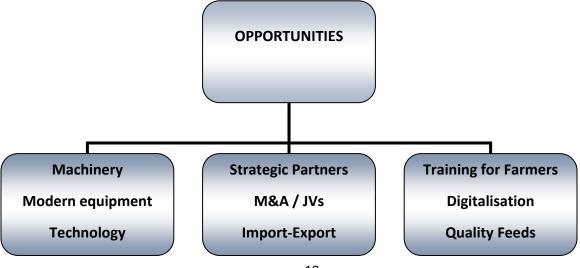
WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ROMANIAN ANIMAL FARMING SECTOR?

Some examples of RELEVANT PLAYERS IN THE ANIMAL FARMING sector

Maria Trading has six animal farms with the capacity of 6,000 cattle heads and 80,000 sheep heads. Furthermore, it has a slaughterhouse covering an area of 44,000 sqm. With a team of around 370 employees, Maria Trading registered a net turnover of approximately 75 mEUR in 2022, up 15% compared to 2021. Founded in 1995, the company is owned by Lebanese entrepreneurs.

DN AGRAR Group, the largest integrated livestock farm in Romania, leader in cow's milk production, achieved a net turnover of 80 million lei in the first six months of 2023, increasing by 29% compared to the same period of the previous year. DN Agrar includes 15 companies, of which 4 farms whose main activity is the breeding of dairy cattle (Prodlact farm), the production of cow's milk (Cut, Lacto Agrar and Apold farms), as well as vegetable agricultural production. Moreover, the Dutch group is the leader in the production of cow's milk in Romania with a quantity of 150,000 liters daily.

Kosarom Group, controlled by a Romanian entrepreneur, is an integrated business, comprising a pig farm (Suinprod), a poultry farm (Avi-Top), two fodder factories, a manufacturer of meat products and own chain of stores. Kosarom raises annually approximately 130,000 pigs and 7.5 million chickens in its farms. The group invested over 8 mEUR in the past years in its activities and announced investments of around 3 mEUR for 2023 mainly for the efficiency increase of the production costs and the development of the store network. With a team of approximately 1,400 employees, Kosarom Group forecasts a turnover of 101 mEUR in 2023, compared to 94 mEUR in 2022



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5 – ENERGY EFFICIENCY, PHOTOVOLTAIC, COGENERATION, BIOFUELS

Romania ranks second in the region, after Poland, in terms of green energy production potential, but it needs to accelerate the transition with the help of financing mechanisms, said the Country Managing Partner of **Deloitte Romania and Moldova** quoted by **energynomics**.

Energy from renewable sources can play a central role both in decarbonization efforts and could contribute decisively to ensuring the energy security of Romania and Europe. It is therefore easy to understand why increasing the share of green energy is a priority.

Already in 2022, 43% of national energy production in Romania came from renewable sources, of which 16% was wind and solar. However, if we compare these figures to the targets for 2030 established by the integrated National Plan in the field of energy and climate change, namely 55.8% renewable energy, of which 35% wind and

solar, it is clear that we must accelerate the transition, mainly with the help of the financing mechanisms within the PNRR and the Modernization Fund, i.e. in total more than 1.5 billion non-refundable euros, to which, of course, bank and capital financing are added

According to players in the field, Romania has a considerable capacity for biofuels production, mainly bioethanol, from the agricultural waste and from plants such as potatoes, rape or sugar beet.

In 2022, Romania produced over 1.2 mt of rape, more than 2.8 mt of sugar beetroot, almost 1.35 mt of potatoes and more than 10.5 mt of green forage from arable land

The Romanian banks support energy efficiency projects through dedicated financing. One example is BCR, part of Erste Group, which grants loans for investments in renewable energy production units and energy efficiency projects.

The main types of projects eligible for the BCR funding are:

- investments in equipment that improve the energy performance of the industrial process
- industrial equipment or an industrial facility
- investments in the rehabilitation of buildings that improve their energy performance
- respectively investments in renewable energy and high energy efficiency cogeneration

The Electric-up Programme is the financing programme for small and medium-sized enterprises and economic operators in the HoReCa field for the installation of photovoltaic panel systems to produce electricity with an installed power between 27 kWp and 100 kWp, necessary for own consumption. The surplus energy would be delivered to electric car recharging stations and into the national energy system. By July 2023, 2,500 files were submitted within the

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programme, out of which 1,835 were accepted and financing contracts with a cumulated value of over 120 mEUR were signed.

Managed by <u>Innovation Norway</u>, the "Energy Programme in Romania" provides grants for investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and electrification of households. The

Energy efficiency is a strategic priority for the EU by promoting the principle of "energy efficiency first" through several sources of co-financing of investments. Romania targets to attract as many EU funds as possible for the energy efficiency and to meet the EU requirements. financing is ensured through the EEA and Norway Grants. The programme budget is 62,826,500 EUR. The Norway Grants and the EEA Grants represent Norway's contribution towards a green, competitive and inclusive Europe.

The Component C6 - Renewable energy and energy efficiency within the Pillar I - Green transition of the National Recovery and

Resilience Plan in Romania has the initial negotiation budget of 1.3 bn EUR.

The EU Large Infrastructure Operational Programme aims to increase the energy efficiency and to protect the natural resources. The programme focuses on eight priorities, out of which clean energy and energy efficiency in order to support a low carbon economy and increased energy efficiency in centralised heating systems in selected cities.

The Ministry of European Investments and Projects, through the Management Authority for the Large Infrastructure Operational Programme in Romania, launched in September 2022 the guide for applicants for 500 mEUR dedicated to energy efficiency for the business environment. It includes the following schemes:

- State aid measures to support small and medium-sized enterprises and large enterprises for thermal rehabilitation of buildings: 200 mEUR
- State aid measures for energy production from renewable sources for own consumption for enterprises: 200 mEUR
- De minimis aid scheme for energy efficiency for enterprises: 100 mEUR

The Romanian Energy Efficiency Fund (FREE) is a public interest entity, with legal personality, independent and financially autonomous, set up in 2001 through Government Decision, at the initiative of the World Bank and the Global Environment Fund, which offered the Romanian government a grant of 8 mUSD for investments in the energy efficiency sector. The fund awarded cumulated funding of almost 30 mUSD for 51 contracts, which generated an annual carbon reduction of over 206,000 tonnes. FREE mainly analyzes projects with a payback period of 6 - 7 years and the financing contracts are made only in USD. The fund finances a maximum of 80% of a project, the minimum amount must be at least 100,000 USD while the maximum is

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1 mUSD per project, but these thresholds can be exceeded or reduced with the approval of the Fund's Board of Directors.

Biomass production in Romania represents a viable and sustainable development direction of the Romanian agricultural sector. It has a high profitable potential, with significant economic and environmental benefits.

The energy potential of biomass in Romania is evaluated at a total of 318,000 TJ/year, having an equivalent of 7.6 million toe. This potential results from:

| agricultural waste (cereals, stems of corn, vegetable residues of vines, etc.) | 63% |
|--|-----|
| residues from forestry and wood exploitation of fire | 16% |
| • residues from livestock farms | 8% |
| wood waste-sawdust and other scraps wood | 6% |
| urban household waste and residues | 7% |

According to the Romanian Ministry of Energy, the technical energy potential of Romanian biomass is approx. 518,400 TJ.

The Romanian Farmers' Club supports, encourages and promotes farmers who are interested in investing in the development of biomass energy crops. The option of a farmer or rural investor to produce biomass can make the farm or local industry more competitive, increasing its profitability. Biomass production brings benefits to Romanian farmers and has a positive impact on agricultural businesses, according to the Director of the Romanian Farmers' Club.

According to the <u>European Biogas Association</u>, Romania's biogas and biomethane market is still nascent. Biomethane production potential can replace at least 20% of Romania's natural gas consumption - 26.5 TWh - by 2030. Long-term potential of biogas and biomethane combined

could substitute up to 35% of natural gas demand (ranges from 50 to 70 TWh)

Why produce biogas and biomethane in Romania?

Biogas production involves the transformation of organic waste into valuable resources. This reduces the amount of waste going to landfills and minimizes soil and water pollution.

Green biogas production is a source of renewable energy, which reduces dependence on fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions. This contributes significantly to combating climate change and improving air quality.

According to the <u>European Commission</u>, industry estimates Romania's sustainable biomethane potential as 2.0 bcm (1.9 bcm from AD and 0.1 from gasification) Considering the sustainable potential, Romania could be among the top biomethane markets in the EU27, with significant

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national benefits.

Some conclusions of the EC study are:

- Romania has ability to replace about 80% of current NG imports with biomethane.
- Romania represents one of the least developed biogas markets in the EU27.
- Current number CNG filling stations (3) are not sufficient to have a larger uptake of biomethane in transport.
- Romania has ability to replace about a quarter of current NG imports with biomethane which would be beneficial for both energy security and GHG emission reduction from energy sector.
- To have full effect of biomethane production on the green transition, biomethane production is to be linked with agrifood industry that is the largest employer (2M persons or 89%)6 in the current bioeconomy and generates most of the feedstock for biomethane production. Short supply chains to reduce transportation costs and close to the end-user or NG gas pipeline, with digestate use as a local source of nutrients.
- Romania could additionally reduce NG import dependency by including the synthetic fertiliser production capacities in improvement and marketing of digestate, or extract of macro-nutrients for bio-fertilizers.

More details at: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-09/Biomethane-fiche-RO-web.pdf

Here is one example of a FRD Center Case Study in Renewable Energy: https://www.frdcenter.ro/portfolio/ma-advisory-in-renewable-energy/



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Some examples of ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND GREEN ENERGY sector

INVL Renewable Energy Fund I, a fund that invests in renewable energy projects managed by INVL Asset Management, has signed an agreement with Kommunalkredit Austria AG (Kommunalkredit) for a EUR 25 million loan. The loan will be used to finance the construction of solar power plants with a capacity of 51 megawatts (MW) in Romania. They see Romania as a market with a very fast development in the European Union, with a strong focus on the development of renewable energy projects. They expect that the Fund's investment in the development of electricity production capacity from renewable sources will make a significant contribution to reducing pollution and improving energy security in Romania

RAAL, manufacturer of cooling systems for the automotive industry from Bistrita, has launched a new 7.4 MW solar park, built by the Swiss <u>nextE Group</u>. The park was co-financed with the help of a 3.15 million euro loan offered by ProCredit Bank Romania. The 7.4 MWp photovoltaic park is located in Bistriţa-Năsăud county, according to Transilvania Business. The project of this photovoltaic park is based on a long-term bilateral PPA (Power Purchase Agreement) contract.

Energy production is estimated at 7,200 MWh/year, and taking into account the plant's consumption profile, approximately 80% of the energy produced will be provided for domestic consumption, while the surplus energy will be injected into the national grid. The production will offset approximately 1,043 tons of CO2 emissions annually.

The drug manufacturer Zentiva has carried out over 153 energy efficiency projects for which it has allocated over two million euros in the last eight years. Zentiva's business increased in the January-September 2023 period to 684 million lei, from 538 million lei in the similar period of 2021. In 2022, Zentiva managed to save 4,875 MW of energy, the "biggest advance" in a single year recorded so far. For comparison, in 2015, when the company initiated the process of implementing energy efficiency solutions, energy savings totaled 779 MW.

According to the President of Antares Group, who spoke at the "Energy efficiency for energy transition" conference organized in Bucharest by Energynomics together with the Romanian Fund for Energy Efficiency - FREE and the Directorate for Energy Efficiency within the Ministry of Energy, the compressed natural gas (CNG) is the only viable solution in the transition to climate neutrality as it generates 25% less polluting emissions than traditional fuels.

Antares Group has developed the first network of CNG filling stations in the country. The network consists of 14 stations, and the investment in such a unit amounts to 800,000 euros.

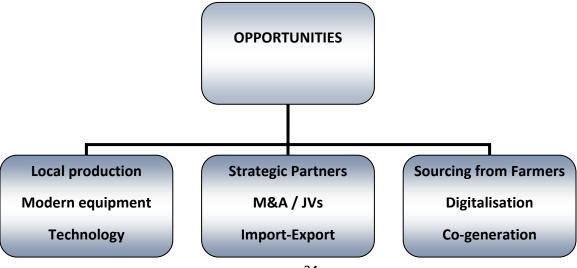
For the creation of this network, the group received European funding of 4.4 million euros and a credit of 3 million euros from the Romanian Energy Efficiency Fund.

ProCredit Bank Romania has successfully completed the granting of financing in the amount of 3.15 million euros to the nextE Group, as part of an innovative project on the renewable energy market. With the completion of this agreement, ProCredit Bank initiates the financing of EaaS (Energy as a Service) projects of particular importance for the business environment in Romania. The project has agreed a PPA (Power Purchase Agreement) for 25 years, of the corporate onsite type, according to the contract that nextE has already signed with RAAL.

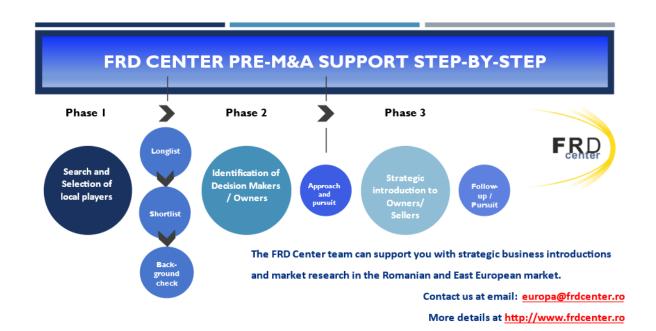
OMV Petrom, the largest integrated energy company in Southeast Europe, signed the contract for the acquisition of 50% of the shares of the Romanian company "Respiră Verde" SRL, a local leader in the collection of used cooking oil. Established 12 years ago, "Respiră Verde" collects up to 10,000 tons of used edible oil per year from economic agents in areas such as the hospitality industry (hotels, restaurants) and retail.

The Danes from **European Energy** aim to develop plants for the production of green hydrogen and e-methanol in Romania, after the company announced the completion, this year, of the world's largest production facility for the two types of fuel, located in Denmark. Recently, Switzerland's Metafuels AG and European Energy A/S initialed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on the development and implementation of a sustainable aviation fuel production facility in Denmark.

WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ROMANIAN ENERGY EFFICIENCY and RENEWABLE ENERGY SECTOR?







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6 – BPO AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT OUTSOURCING

Romania is one of the leading countries in the region in terms of BPO, ITO and SSC. Major global companies opened centres in Romania for R&D, business services, custom software development etc.

So far, the FRD Center team has assisted several International Buyers with their <u>off-market deal sourcing</u> in the BPO, ITC and call center field in Romania and the Region. More details at the link <u>https://www.frdcenter.ro/portfolio/case-study-three-market-expansion-support-in-bpo-sector/</u>

According to the Association of Business Service Leaders (ABSL), Romania ranks 2nd place in Europe, after Poland, among countries operating in the business services industry.

Bucharest is the biggest outsourcing hub in Romania. It is characterised by a strong high-tech

service sector growing steadily, various universities, the largest talent pool in the country and dynamic companies in the SSC, BPO, IT and R&D sectors. Other outsourcing hubs in Romania are Cluj Napoca, Timisoara, lasi, Brasov and Sibiu.

Based on the most recent ABSL data, the revenues generated by the business services industry in Romania amounted to 9 billion EUR. Furthermore, the contribution of the business services sector to Romania's GDP exceeded the European average in the recent years.

The Romanian software outsourcing is attractive

for players looking for a convenient geographic location in Eastern Europe, growing economy, stable political and banking systems, developed IT sector, extensive talent pool, tech expertise, language skills and high-quality services at reasonable costs.

The IT companies can save up to 50 - 60% in labour costs when outsourcing to Romania.

The number of the employees in the business services sector in Romania accounts for over 2% of the country's active population. The number of the employees in this industry increased steadily in the past three years, with a cumulative rise of approximately 30%.

As the investors see Romania as a suitable destination for business services, more companies developed new operations areas defined by complex services.

One of the country's most significant advantages for diversifying services in the

business services sector is the fact that the highest number of foreign languages in all CEE countries is spoken in Romania. According to the latest ABSL report, 23% of the companies in the business services sector in Romania perform activities in 11 -15 foreign languages while 15% of companies cover 16 - 20 foreign languages.

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Romania is currently one of the top 20 software development countries in the world, with a yearly growth rate of approximately 25% in the domestic software market. Currently the opportunities for enterprises and fintech startups in the IT field in Romania are booming. The domestic IT industry is one of the most profitable investments for large tech companies.

For an example of a Case Study about Off Market Deal Sourcing in the Software Sector in Romania provided by the FRD Center consult the link:

https://www.frdcenter.ro/portfolio/off-market-deal-sourcing-in-software-sector-in-romania/

Romania ranks 6th place worldwide among countries operating in the business services industry, according to ABSL.

The Romanian software outsourcing is attractive for players looking for a convenient geographic location in Eastern Europe, growing economy, stable political and banking systems, developed IT sector, extensive talent pool, tech expertise, language skills and high-

quality services at reasonable costs.

The centres of excellence developed in the last years bring solid expertise in areas such as IT, procurement, finance and accounting, making Romania a preferred destination for high-value-added services.

The European Cybersecurity Competence Center (ECCC) was officially opened in May 2023 in Bucharest. ECCC targets to ensure the functioning of the EU-wide Cyber Shield and to increase the cybersecurity capacities and competitiveness. The center is based at the Politehnica University of Bucharest.

The segments in the business services industry in Romania that recorded the most significant increases in the last three years are IT, customer support, finance and accounting.

Based on the most recent ABSL data, the revenues generated by the business services industry in Romania amounted to 9 billion EUR. Furthermore, the contribution of the business services sector to Romania's GDP exceeded the European average in the recent years.

Romania ranks 6th place worldwide among countries operating in the business services industry, according to ABSL.

According to official data from the National Bank of Romania, the Romanian exports of IT&C services recorded almost 6.7 billion EUR in the first eight months of 2023, generating a trade

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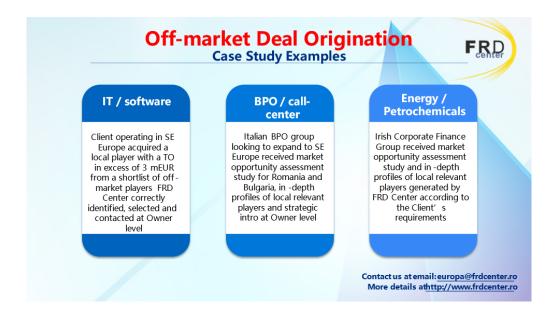
surplus of around 4 billion EUR. The Romanian exports of IT&C services increased by approximately 14.5% in the first eight months of 2023 compared to the same period of 2022.

Romania is emerging as a top development services and software outsourcing location mainly due to:

- the stable political and economic environment
- the timely cost of business and workforce development
- the educational system performance
- an extensive software developer expertise
- the governmental support in the education and training
- the flexible, educated, multilingual and talented professionals with Industry 4.0 skills such as cyber security, IoT and AI
- a large number of foreign language speakers
- the rise of the tech hubs
- the growing use of advanced dev tools to build and manage software solutions
- a booming IT market accelerating digital transformation and modernised software

For more details about the OPPORTUNITIES and DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ROMANIAN BPO AND SOFTWARE OUTSOURCING sector consult the FRD Center DEMO sector brief available for free download at the link:

https://www.frdcenter.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/BPO-AND-OUTSOURCING-IN-ROMANIA-2022-brief-by-FRD-Center.pdf



Some examples of M&A – including crossborder – new market entries and corporate development in the Romanian Software and BPO sector

In April 2023, the Romanian software development and outsourcing company **AROBS Transilvania Software** completed the acquisition of **Future WorkForce Global Group** from Cluj Napoca, NW Romania, specialised in providing complex business process automation solutions. Therefore, AROBS consolidates its expertise in the intelligent automation market through Robotic Process Automation, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. AROBS is listed on the Bucharest Stock Exchange.

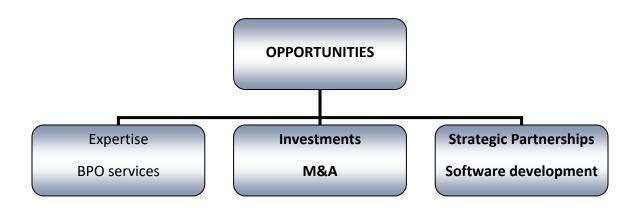
Alten Group completed the acquisition of the technology and innovation company **Qualitance** in January 2023, following the approval of the acquisition transaction by the Romanian Competition Authority. Founded in Romania, Qualitance has two business lines: technology innovation services, including product design and development, and technology outsourcing services.

Headquartered in Silicon Valley, **GlobalLogic Inc, a Hitachi Group** Company and Digital Engineering Leader, completed in February 2023 the acquisition of 100% of the shares of **Fortech**. Founded in 2003, Fortech is a software services provider and digital engineering firm based in Cluj Napoca, NW Romania. It delivers services such as software outsourcing, architecture design, software development, DevOps, quality assurance, data analytics for clients in the automotive, banking, finance, telecom, manufacturing, healthcare, professional services, technology or media sectors.

The US BPO company **SupportNinja** entered the Romanian market in September 2022. The company hires skilled Romania-based customer support experts working entirely remotely to service international clients with various product and language needs. Romania serves as a stone for additional expansion in Europe.

In October 2023, Genpact opened a new collaboration hub in Iasi, NE Romania. The hub is expected to generate approximately 1,000 jobs in finance, risk management, sales, commercial, IT support, data analytics and content moderation sectors.

FRD Center has been assisting Foreign Buyers with Off-Market Deal Sourcing and Strategic Business Introduction at Decision Makers in the Software and BPO sector in Romania and the Region. More details at https://www.frdcenter.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/FRD-Center-Off-Market-Target-Origination-and-Deal-Sourcing-in-Romania-and-the-Region-2.pdf





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7 - CIRCULAR ECONOMY, RECYCLING, WASTE MANAGEMENT

Romania will benefit from EU funding worth 1.3 bnEUR by 2026 for waste management modernisation.

With the help of the PNRR investments, Romania must reduce the waste that ends up in landfills by around 75%, out of the total waste generated, by 2025. The money that Romania will receive from the European Commission for the development of the waste management sector will be able to be accessed by companies in the field, but also by local

administrations. By the year 2026, the overloaded landfills will have to disappear, the waste must be recovered, the selective sorting must be realised, and the monitoring of the waste route must also be done by installing scanners on the garbage collection vehicles.

The projects will finance activities aimed at making initial investments in separately collected waste recycling facilities, aimed at reducing the negative effects of waste on the health of the population and on the environment, reducing the consumption of primary resources in order to promote sustainable economic development.

The calendar proposed by PNRR mentions the construction and commissioning of at least 26 new recycling facilities by 30.06.2026.

Romania, on the recommendation of the European Commission, also undertakes to ensure the management of agricultural waste. Through European money, the following will be achieved in this area:

- The development of platforms in small and medium farms for the collection, management and utilization of manure;
- Increasing the operability and sustainability of existing platforms and reducing greenhouse gases, at the level of the farm or administrative units;
- Investments in storage, management and aerobic composting systems;
- Investments in composting and biogas stations, packaging and pelletizing;

Investments for recycling facilities, including equipment and facilities related to the activities of preparing for recycling, recycling and obtaining finished products from the materials obtained in the recycling process, as appropriate, are

Romanian companies active in the waste management sector, including SMEs, will be able to obtain financing of 500,000-8.4 million euros per project, for investments in this field.

carried out on the basis of the Regional State Aid Scheme for investments aimed at reducing the negative effects of waste on the environment and the reduction of the consumption of

primary resources, approved by the Order of the Minister of Environment, Water and Forests no. 2269/24.08.2022.

Romania has 220 million euros available for the "Recycling Factories" program through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR). Although these non-reimbursable funds can contribute to the revival of the Romanian economy and its transition to the circular economy, the program was delayed by the Ministry of the Environment, which transferred the Project Implementation Unit from the Administration of the Environmental Fund (AFM) to the ministry.

The long-awaited Guarantee-Return System, managed by RetuRO, was launched on November 30, 2023. It is the largest national circular economy project at the moment and it becomes mandatory for all manufacturers and traders who sell products in SGR packaging. The products

In regards to the waste-to-energy sector,
Romania enjoys a very high biofuel potential,
mainly resulting from the agricultural,
livestock and food processing sector.
Through capitalizing on the Romanian
agricultural residues, there is a high available
green energy potential.

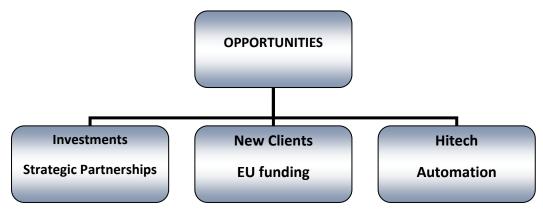
that are part of the SGR will gradually arrive on store shelves, in a period of several months after the launch of the System on November 30, depending on the stocks of products in non-SGR packaging existing in the market.

According to the Romanian Minister of Environment, quoted by **ecologic**, the only solution to comply with the landfill diversion

targets set at EU level is to properly collect the biodegradable fraction, which represents approximately 50% of the more than 6 million tons of waste we generate annually in Romania. Currently, there are high-performance solutions for the recycling of bio-waste, which are ready to take these quantities, process them and introduce them into the circular economy.

Romania is one of the most important agricultural producers in Europe. More details in the FRD Center analysis at the link:

https://market-entry-romania.blogspot.com/2021/08/record-wheat-crops-for-romanian.html



Some examples of RELEVANT PLAYERS IN RECYCLING and WASTE MANAGEMENT sector

GreenGroup, a leader in the circular economy and waste management in Eastern Europe, has concluded an agreement to acquire a majority stake in **Expert Cleaning**, a provider of specialized cleaning solutions for heavy industries and DIY stores in Romania, thus strengthening its portfolio of sustainable solutions addressed to industrial customers. This acquisition brings valuable synergies to GreenGroup's subsidiary **Eltex Recycling**, which manages industrial waste, and creates new sources of income and growth opportunities for the group.

Source: ecologic

Genesis Biopartner, a member of the Baupartner Grup, is a success story that has recently celebrated 10 years of active presence on the Romanian market. They are specialized in the production of biogas through the anaerobic digestion of organic waste. This process involves breaking down organic materials such as food scraps, manure or other biodegradable waste to produce biogas, a mixture of methane and carbon dioxide. The company operates modern biogas plants that use advanced technologies to maximize energy yield and minimize environmental impact.

Genesis Biopartner has become the national leader in the production of green energy from biogas by recycling organic waste, thus laying the foundations of the circular economy in the field. Moreover, the company's achievements have been recognized by competent European institutions, such as Interreg Europe and the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. The Genesis factory annually produces over 6.5 million cubic meters of biogas

Source: ecologic

Romcarbon Buzău signed an agreement with for the development of a new recycling activity. The collaboration with Swancor aims to develop the activity of recycling thermosetting materials on the territory of the European Union. The partnership concluded by Romcarbon with Swancor is part of the efforts of the company from Buzău to develop its recycling activity and align it with the principles of the circular economy. The company has expanded and intensified its efforts to scale the current recycling activity, as the European and global decarbonization objectives have been defined.

Source: ecologic

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