

## **ASSESSING THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT DEGREE - STEP THREE: ANALYSIS OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FIELDS**

**Dragoș DINCĂ**

National School of Political Science and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania  
*dragos.dinca@administratiepublica.eu*

**Cătălin Daniel DUMITRICĂ**

National School of Political Science and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania  
*catalin.dumitrica@administratiepublica.eu*

**Teodora I. BIȚOIU**

National School of Political Science and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania  
*tdinu@snsa.ro*

**Abstract:** *The territory can be seen as a space power equated in modern societies with the state. From this perspective, the state is responsible for shaping the framework to ensure development of the territory, local development. The concept of local envisages territorial communities, including urban, regional, communities that have been in the spotlight the last few years to address the complex problems faced in different fields: economy, environment, spatial planning, governance, science and research, education and training, social development. Therefore, state governments and primarily local ones, should cooperate with each other and with civil society players that taking into account the legal, operational, institutional and inter-relational, to solve major problems in local communities, in terms of sustainable development, so with responsibility to present generations, but especially to future generations. This article aims to present two specific fields of local development in Romania, through development indicators: local governance and science and research field.*

**Keywords:** *local development, fields, governance, regulation, science, research*

### **1. GOVERNMENT AND REGULATIONS - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FIELD**

Lately, local development represents one of the most common used and debated concepts. The concept's timeliness is obvious both at theoretical level, where numerous studies and articles are published, and also in practice where various activities are included within the sphere of development and many initiatives are designed to support these trends<sup>1</sup>.

*Grand Dictionnaire de la langue française* defines government as "the art or manner of governing to ensure economic, social and institutional development, sustainable, maintaining the balance between state, civil society and economic environment".

---

<sup>1</sup>Balogh Martin (2012) Non-governmental organizations – factors for local development, *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, Special Issue, pp. 20

Government involves today a unique philosophy that seeks to transform the citizen into a major player in the development of the territory. The state is seen as an "ecosystem with a plurality of dimensions - social, environmental, urban, economic, political, cultural etc. and a plurality of interacting actors".

The phrase government has many meanings. One can speak of a "world government" closely linked to the processes of globalization, or a "European Governance" which refers the reform of European institutions and the relations of local communities with these institutions. One can also speak of a "local government" to define territorial practices aimed at endogenous and exogenous development and mobilizing local development actors in agreement with the state or European policies.

From a development perspective, governance is a process of collective decision therefore it requires cooperation between institutions and different stakeholders who exercise their responsibilities and powers to achieve an overall strategy in the long term.

After the Second World War development has become an objective of each society<sup>2</sup>. Today the term is defined as a process that leads to increased welfare. Economic activity and material welfare are important, but the development is not confined to increasing gross national product. Education, health, culture and environment are equally important:

1.1. the number of public authorities within a region - this indicator analyzes the distribution of sources of authority in the regions;

1.2. the number of civil servants / local elected officials - this indicator aims to analyze the administrative capacity in terms of quantity - local human resources.

1.3. number of normative acts issued by the county authorities - this indicator aims to analyze the regulatory capacity of local public authorities.

1.4. financial resources transferred from the state budget to local communities - the indicator analyzes the dependence / autonomy degree of local authorities towards the state.

### **1.1. The number of public authorities within a region<sup>3</sup>**

Within this indicator, we performed an analysis of the commune, town and city number of public authorities in the 8 regions of Romania. It appears (Chart no. 1) there are wide discrepancies in terms of number of communal public authorities: 32 in Bucharest- Ilfov region to 519 in South - Muntenia region. Even if we remove from the analysis Bucharest - Ilfov region, which is very specific, the difference between the region with the least communes (West-281) and the region with the most communes is a considerable one.

---

<sup>2</sup>The development is the unfolding and succession of processes and natural and / or social phenomena over time. Growth is development in the amplifier sense, the term is borrowed from biology and referring to the quantitative side (Ionașcu G.(2003), *Dezvoltarea și reabilitarea așezărilor umane din România* (Development and rehabilitation of human settlements in Romania),Ed. Tempus, București, p. 11, 12.

<sup>3</sup>Data were collected by consulting county councils websites, the decisions approving the organizational charts and lists of positions for 2015 and the decisions approving budgets and budget revisions for 2015.

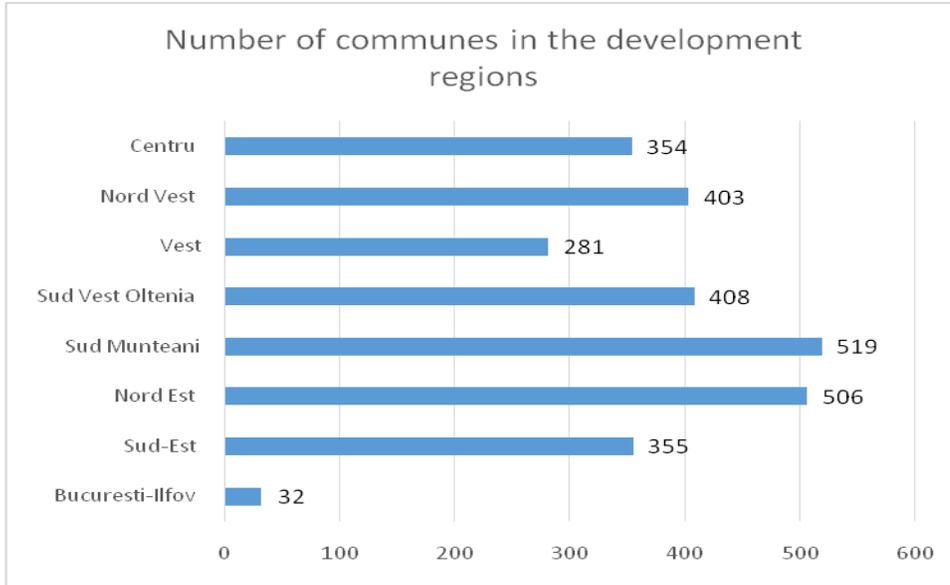


Chart no.1

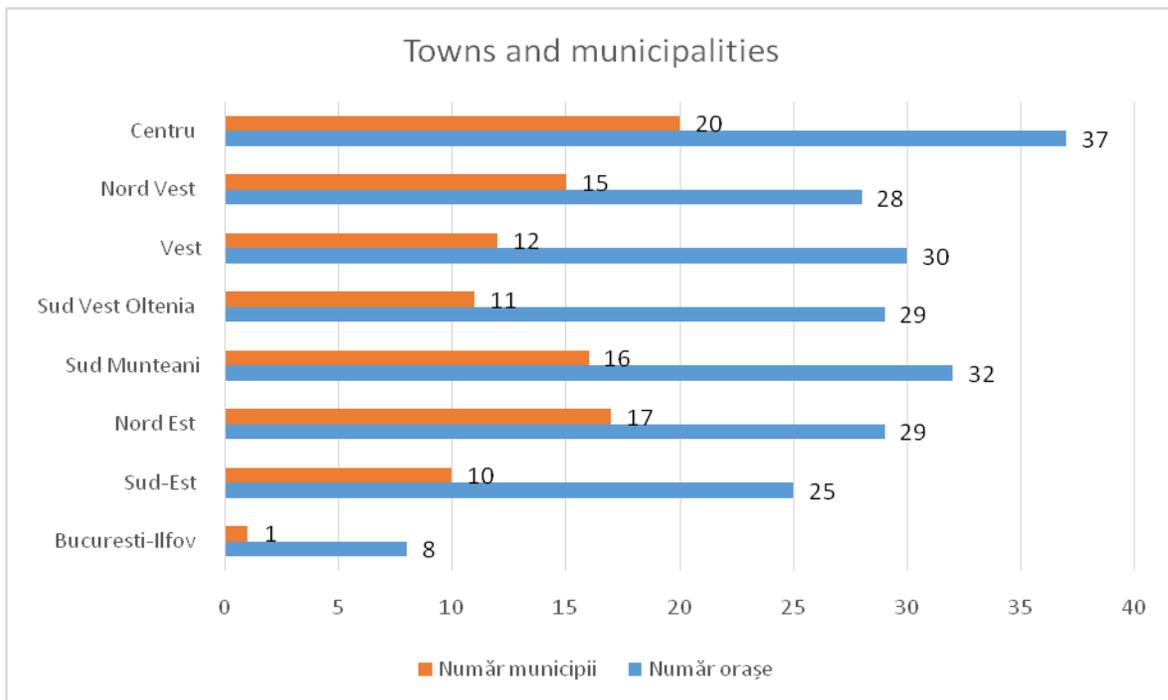


Chart no.2

Regarding the town and municipal authorities there is, except for Bucharest - Ilfov, some balance (Chart no. 2). Five of the Regions have a similar situation. The region with the highest rate of urbanization is the Center Region.

## 1.2. The number of civil servants / local elected officials

This indicator aims to analyze the administrative capacity in terms of quantity - human resources at local level. Thus, we analyzed the number of county councilors in each region and number of employees and civil servants at county councils in each region. For Bucharest, we took into account the number of local elected officials in the General Council.

This indicator shows that the extremities are West region (130 county councilors) and South Muntenia (226 county councilors). This indicator is directly proportional to the population of each region, given that there is a representation quota of the number of inhabitants.

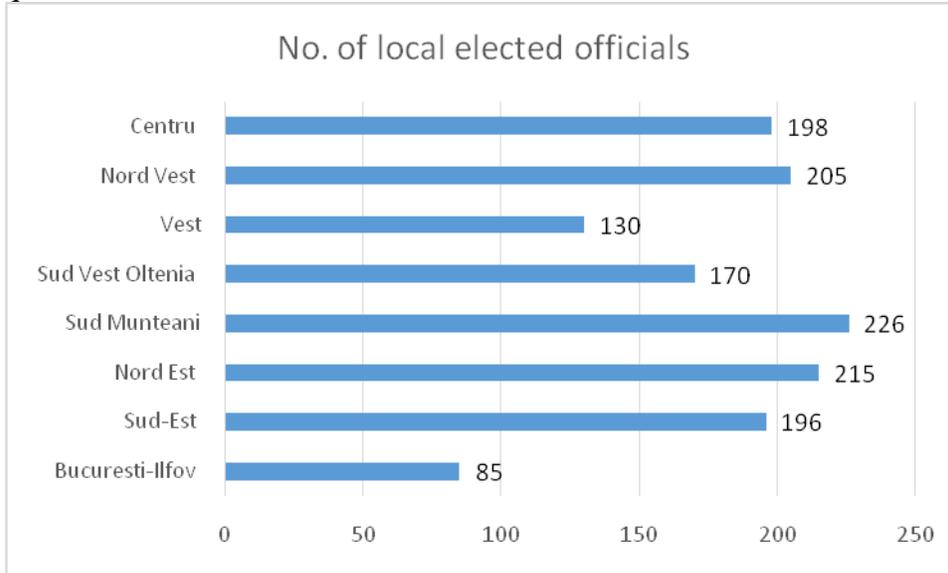


Chart no.3

In terms of number of employees and the number of civil servants from county councils, extremes are also represented by South - Muntenia and West, as in the case of county councilors, because the specialist apparatus at county council level is dimensioned also, relative to the population. We consider this criterion as being unrepresentative for the activity of the county.

The indicator is relevant from the perspective of the Romania's territorial-administrative regionalization, when future regional authorities should take over from the current staff in the county authorities. But simple sizing the counties' specialist apparatus in proportion to the population does not give us information about administrative capacity or administrative performance.

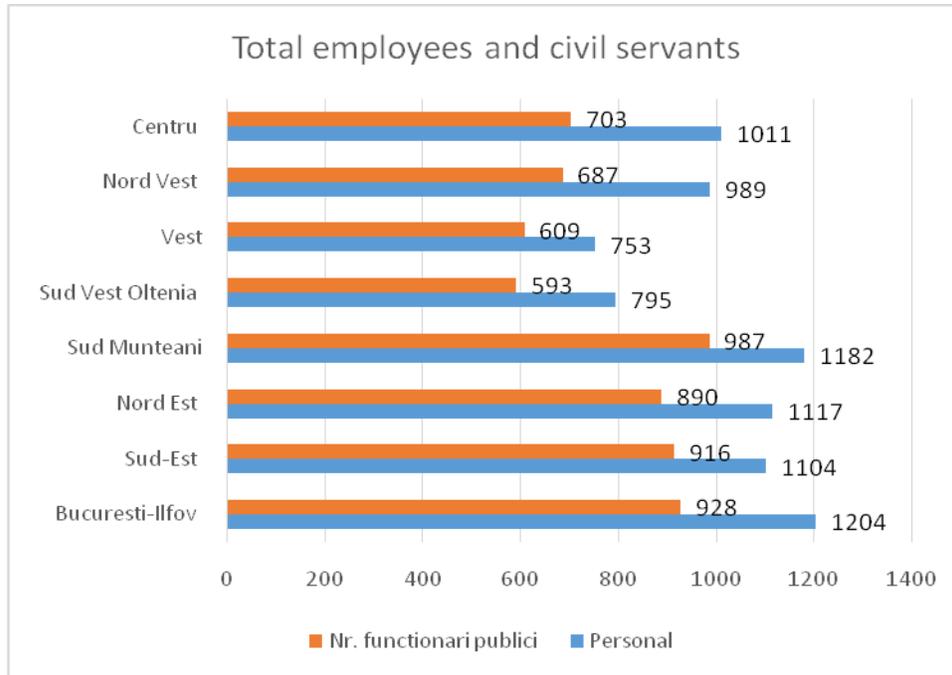


Chart no.4

### 1.3. The number of normative acts issued by the county authorities

This indicator aims to analyze the regulatory capacity of local authorities. Although the number of decisions of county councils is dependent upon the issue of local and synonymous categories of issues covered (e.g. the county budget) it can be seen that there are big differences between counties (Ilfov 131 decisions or Dâmbovița 438 decisions) and these differences are directly proportional to the differences between the number of county councilors of each region. Paradoxically, most decisions are in regions with most county councilors (Chart no.5).

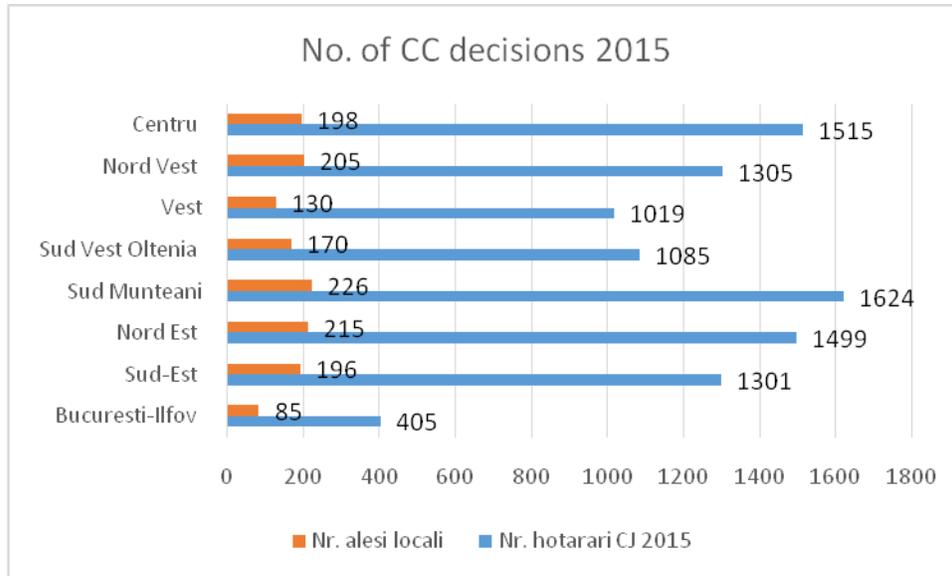


Chart no.5

#### 1.4. Financial resources transferred from the state budget to local communities

The indicator analyzes the dependence / autonomy of local authorities towards the state. We analyzed grants from other levels of public administration in 2015 and the amounts received from the EU / other donors for payments made and pre-financing.

The poorest regions (North East) received the largest grants from other levels of government in 2015, natural process for supporting the elimination of development discrepancies.

A special case is represented by the amounts received from the EU / other donors' payments made and pre-financing. The difference between South Muntenia and Center is over 300%.

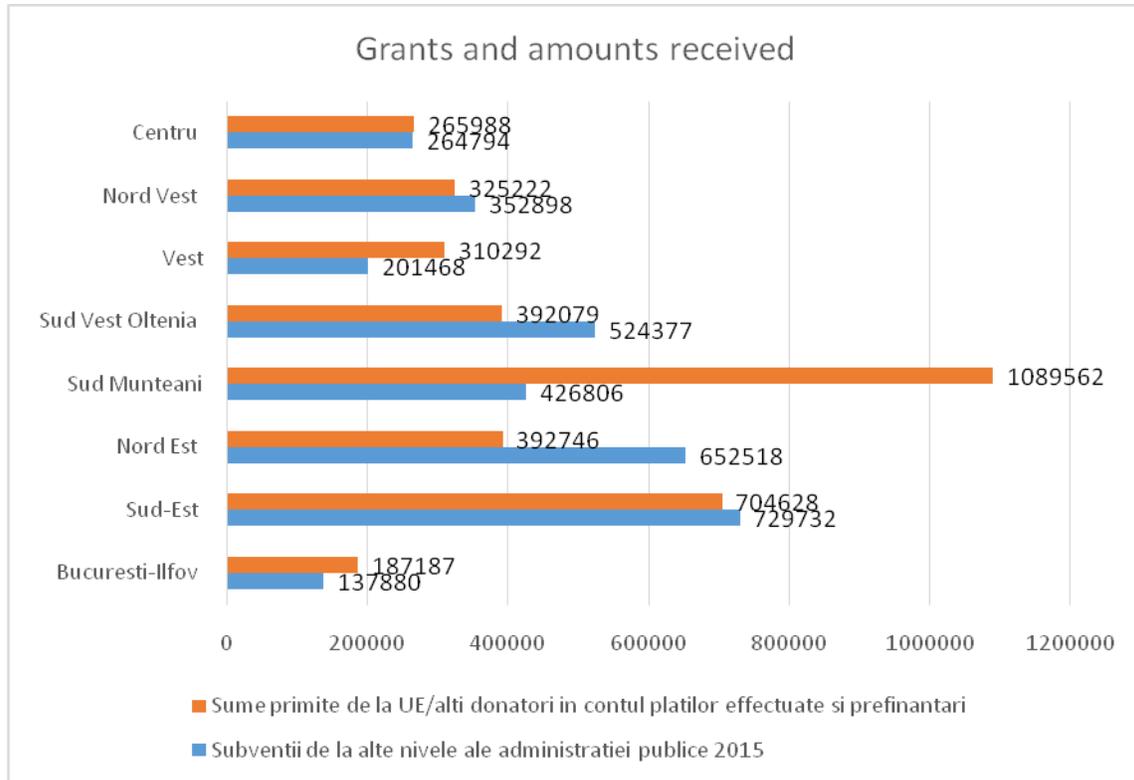


Chart no.6

## 2. SCIENCE AND RESEARCH - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FIELD

Science and research should be the starting point for any development. This means harnessing local human potential as well as knowledge and existing information. Within each area of development research is needed to substantiate development programs promoted by each actor<sup>4</sup>.

Research is the one determining the quality increase of administrative measures as well as for various activities undertaken by public authorities. Advances in science make much easier achieving the primary goal of public administration namely satisfying the general welfare. Also research in information technologies make easier the communication of authorities with citizens, improves citizens' access to public information.

The generation and exploitation of knowledge have become vital sources of global wealth growth. Knowledge is also central to determining competitiveness and as such states of the world, especially the developed ones, have engaged in a systematic generation, developing national systems and more sophisticated international interactions. In the knowledge triangle of education-research-innovation, the last item is most closely related to the impact on welfare and the most

<sup>4</sup>Dincă, D., Dumitrică, C. (2010), Dezvoltare și planificare urbană' (Urban development and planning) Ed Pro Universitaria, București

problematic in terms of the related policies. Innovation, process with many variables, is in the center of the cooperation between research and industry. In the last decade, developed countries have proposed intermediary entities or forms of interaction and collaboration through which to create bridges between the two sectors, allocating these entities increased public financial resources.

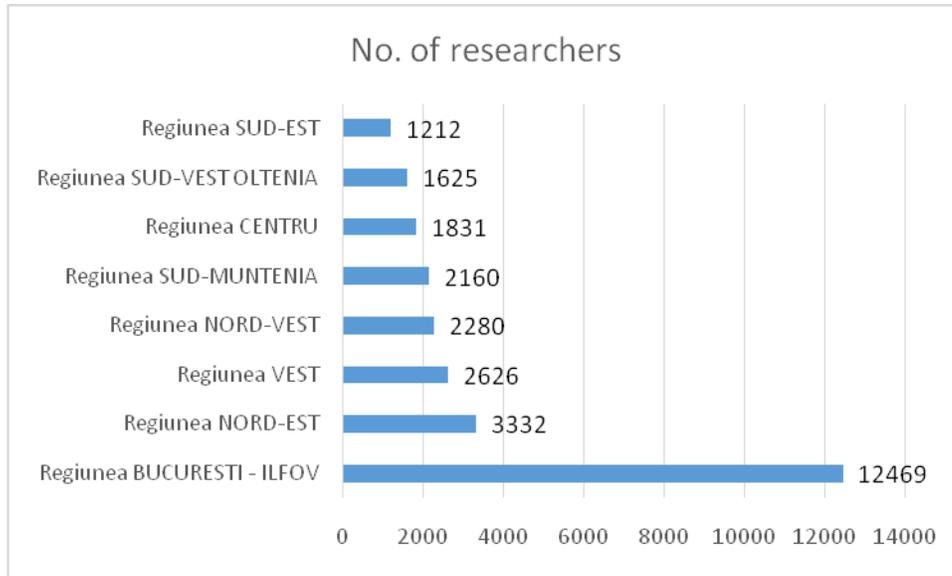
- From the perspective of regional development, we are interested in:
- number of existing decentralized research entities in the region - this indicator reveals decentralized local research capacity;
  - number of research institutions, including universities in the state system existing in the region - the indicator aims to analyze research capacity at regional level;
  - number of existing researchers at regional level - this indicator analyzes regional research capacity in the human resources perspective.
  - number of research projects aimed at local development -the indicator examines the extent to which local / regional development lies at the heart of research;
  - number of partnerships between research institutions and public authorities - this indicator shows the degree of cooperation and integration of the research results in the development processes.

According to existing data in the Tempo Online INS database, the researchers' situation in 2014 was as follows:

NORTH-WEST region	2280
Bihor	59
Bistrița - Năsăud	103
Cluj	2068
Maramureș	20
Satu Mare	7
Sălaj	23
CENTER region	1831
Alba	238
Brașov	917
Covasna	32
Harghita	4
Mureș	326
Sibiu	314
NORTH-EAST region	3332
Bacau	254
Botoșani	4
Iași	2572
Neamț	83
Suceava	374

Vaslui	45
SOUTH-EAST region	1212
Braila	24
Buzau	32
Constanta	736
Galati	339
Tulcea	77
Vrancea	4
SOUTH-MUNTENIA Region	2160
Argeş	1711
Călăraşi	73
Dâmboviţa	154
Giurgiu	1
Prahova	207
Teleorman	14
BUCHAREST– ILFOV region	12469
Ilfov	2147
Bucureşti municipality	10322
SOUTH-WEST OLTENIA region	1625
Dolj	1474
Gorj	26
Olt	2
Vâlcea	123
Regiunea VEST	2626
Arad	686
Caraş - Severin	119
Hunedoara	226
Timiş	1595

Thus, the number of researchers, per regions is linked to the existence of university centers: Bucharest, Iaşi, Timișoara, Cluj Napoca.



**Chart no.7**

Regarding research entities at the national level there is a decrease in the number of private entities (Chart no.8) in 2011-2014 and a slight increase in the nonprofit and governmental sector. Public research entities, however, do not operate in a decentralized system but possibly only deconcentrated, subordinated to central public authorities (E.g. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) or universities. Basically, it works locally with decision-making and financial independence especially research entities in the private sector.

Regarding partnerships between public authorities and research entities, for 2016 we have identified five calls from local public authorities to conclude agreements for submission of applications for funding for institutional development projects.

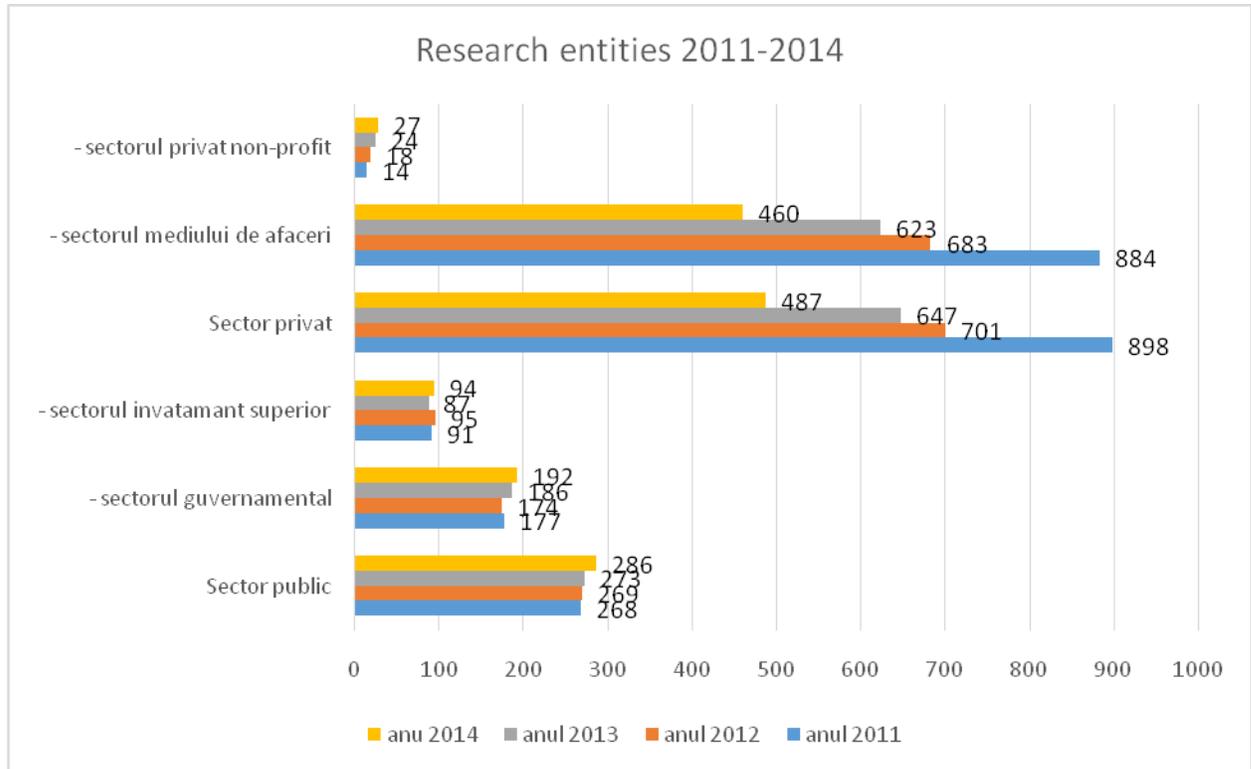


Chart no.8

## CONCLUSIONS

From the perspective of local government, there are several discrepancies among development regions, both in terms of quantity and quality of the administrative acts. This finding leads to the necessity of regional reorganization, possibly the administrative-territorial regionalization, but in a formula that does not take account of the eight regions that currently exist.

From the research perspective, we consider that in general there is not an appropriate communication and collaboration between research entities and county, town and communes public authorities, much less research undertaken jointly. We believe that the only permanent form of cooperation is the public procurement procedures undertaken by public authorities for accomplishing various studies (studies of opportunity, strategies, plans etc.), but overwhelmingly they are made by private entities. Public entities have not yet developed mechanisms for tenders and participation in competitions launched by local authorities.

## References

- Baza de date Tempo a Institutului Național de Statistică (Tempo database of the National Institute of Statistics)

- County councils decisions approving the budgets, corrections and budget executions in 2015
- Decisions approving the organizational charts of county councils and state functions in 2015
- Dincă, D., Dumitrică, C. (2010) "Dezvoltare și planificare urbană" (Urban development and planning) Ed Pro Universitaria, București
- Ionașcu G. (2003), Dezvoltarea și reabilitarea așezărilor umane din România (Development and rehabilitation of human settlements in Romania), Ed. Tempus, București
- Balogh Martin (2012), Non-governmental organizations – factors for local development, Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences, Special Issue