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Book of Proceedings

The Seminar

**AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT -
CHALLENGES OF TRANSITION AND
INTEGRATION PROCESSES**

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**ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY AND PERFORMANCE
OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF FARMS AND
AGRIBUSINESS SUBSECTORS**

A RANKING OF SERBIAN DISTRICTS BASED ON THE EFFICIENCY OF SMEs IN AGRIBUSINESS¹

Radojka Maletic², Blazenka Popovic³

Summary

Due to the different geo-morphological, climatic, economic and social factors, Serbia represents a very heterogeneous area with specific historical legacies that are hard to overcome. Therefore, the regional specificities represent a starting point for planning the development of the economy as a whole, and of the agribusiness in particular. It is important to properly identify the regional peculiarities of agriculture in order to contribute to the agricultural development of Serbia as a whole. First of all, the attention should be placed to overcome the problems of underdeveloped areas that would contribute to a more stable and harmonious development of agriculture in Serbia. Balanced regional development policies should encourage better use of natural resources, especially in lagging behind areas. Spatial planning is a tool to create quality changes, especially in rural areas, linking different sectors (agriculture, food processing, tourism, environmental protection, etc.). The achievement of set objectives is highly dependent on the level of development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in agribusiness. Agribusiness is particularly interesting field for the development of SMEs as it is a complex area that involves the production and processing of agricultural and food products. Therefore, by using the appropriate mathematical and statistical methods, evaluation of the operational efficiency of SMEs in agribusiness in districts of Serbia was performed, in order to address the deficiencies and improvement opportunities in business in some areas.

Key words: *Ranking of district, SME, DEA analysis, operational efficiency.*

JEL classification: C38; L26; O13; R11;

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1. Regional development of Serbia and role of SMEs in this process

Regional disparity is not a „new thing“, this problem reaches back to the past. It has become popular in recent years in Serbia because of the growing problems faced by underdeveloped regions. Given that the transition process has already started, the problems of certain regions are more pronounced. It is now clear that the economy in these regions was based on ill foundations. However, the problem of uneven regional development is not only present in Serbia, it is the problem of global nature. Also, the experience of other countries shows that the problems of uneven regional development are complex and that there are no universal and predefined solutions. Modern technology, mass production, and to some extent changed way and style of living of the world's population create a picture of uneven regional development. Therefore, it is clear that one of the most important issues of macroeconomic policy of each country, including Serbia, is the balanced economic development throughout its territory. However, until the present day, socio-political action in Serbia relevant to this social process have always been determined as the partial issue or as a matter of party affiliation program, rather than serious and general social-state project that can not be realized without fundamental reconstruction of the political system.

The complexity and importance of regional development is shown by the fact that these issues are in the constitutions of many countries. Therefore, the Republic of Serbia adopted in year 2009 „*The Law on Regional Development*“ outlining the new regionalization and specifying the regional development objectives. The Parliament of RS also passed „Regional Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia“ for the period from 2007 to 2012. Its adoption and implementation is necessary because of the pro-European orientation of Serbia.

The differences in the level of development within Serbia are much discussed, but there is relatively little analytical materials that deal with these issues. The website www.makroekonomija.org presents the research by Zdravkovic M. That, based on the population and national income, calculates national income per capita and the deviation of this data in the cities and districts in relation to the average value (Table 1). The main conclusion of this study is that after year 2000, there has been a sudden increase in the difference in the development level as measured by per capita national income, and that the current differences in the level of development are comparable to the period of 40 years ago. The increase of industrial production in the seventies, and reduction of external trade imbalances, in the eighties of the last century, have resulted in reduction of differences in level of development between districts and between Belgrade and Novi Sad, on the one hand, and other parts of Serbia, on the other hand.

Serbia is a country with one of the largest regional disparity in Europe – the difference between the most developed and the least developed district is closer to

double digit figures, and it is even higher at the municipal level. The current system leads to polarization, i.e., rich municipalities become richer and the poor municipalities poorer, while the deepening of regional differences affects the very unfavourable demographic indicators in some areas. In general, we see that the northern part of the Republic of Serbia is considerably more developed in comparison to the southern territories.

Table 1: Deviations from the average in the development of districts

Districts	Y E A R S				
	1970	1980	1989	2000	2005
Serbia	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Vojvodina	107.1	119.6	124.2	118.1	117.8
Central Serbia excl. Belgrade	76.7	76.4	79.9	79.1	68.0
Novi Sad	184.8	181.0	133.8	132.1	188.6
Belgrade	166.4	140.8	121.7	128.3	151.5
Nis – city	123.8	106.1	106.7	100.6	118.4
South Backa district, excl. Novi Sad	114.0	135.0	130.8	120.9	116.5
North Banat	106.1	127.9	127.7	136.4	115.5
North Backa	121.4	127.0	112.2	119.6	109.3
West Backa	105.4	113.5	132.7	114.6	108.2
South Banat	82.9	101.2	131.7	112.3	107.7
Central Banat	101.2	114.1	118.8	87.6	103.2
Morava	84.6	102.1	101.9	98.9	95.6
Macva	64.4	65.7	66.7	72.3	87.4
Branicevo	54.3	55.0	77.3	69.4	78.6
Srem	86.5	95.0	106.0	90.4	77.8
Pomoravlje	82.1	79.8	68.9	85.6	77.4
Pirot	68.2	67.2	82.4	72.0	70.5
Kolubara	48.2	73.7	78.5	86.7	68.8
Sumadija	91.6	92.0	74.6	67.5	67.1
Zlatibor	76.2	93.0	84.0	84.5	67.0
Rasina	77.3	87.5	104.6	90.5	65.3
Zajecar	72.7	78.5	79.3	92.1	58.4
Raska	65.2	62.8	57.9	61.5	51.5
Toplice	52.8	63.8	61.8	72.4	49.5
Pčinje	44.8	50.1	59.7	81.1	49.1
Nisava – excl. Nis	50.6	54.9	50.6	64.2	47.5
Podunavlje	75.9	73.4	84.7	84.7	45.7
Bor	109.5	107.3	142.6	77.5	44.1
Jablanica	53.9	57.5	64.0	60.1	42.9

Table taken from the site www.makroekonomija.org and necessary calculations are performed by Zdravkovic M. based on data from Statistical Yearbook of Yugoslavia and Serbia

The most developed city is city of Belgrade. Somewhat more developed is the district of South Bačka with the city of Novi Sad as its centre. There are four medium developed districts of which three are in Vojvodina (North Bačka, Sout Bačka and West Bačka districts) and one in eastern Serbia, Niš, including the surrounding areas (Nišava district). Undeveloped districts are as follows: Mačva, Kolubara, Zlatibor, Raška, Rasina, Bor, Zaječar, Toplice, Pirot, Pčinje districts. Jablanica is the least developed district (Table 1).

In addition to the many economic reasons for regional disparities, social and political factors are also significant: the war in the 90's, followed by economic sanctions, bombardment of Serbia in the year 1999, etc.

Bogdanov (2007) states that “the reform of the agricultural sector, in addition to changes in the ownership structure and privatization of processing capacities, market liberalization, also includes forming of a general environment for the establishment of new, completely different economic and business structures”. It can be said that the objective of rural development is the creation of equally valuable and good quality conditions for living (work and rest) in all areas. The realization of defined goals largely depends on the level of development of small and medium enterprises in agribusiness. According to Beck and Demirguc-Kunt (2006) it is of major importance to determine the factors affecting the performance and business of the companies, since they are mainly funded from their own revenues with only an insignificant help from the state. The small and medium enterprises in Serbia should be the main backbone of economic development and the future (as is the case in developed countries), especially in the rural areas of Serbia (*Ceranic and Maletic, 2010; Popovic, 2011*). However, the level of development of small and medium-sized enterprises in the agribusiness of Republic of Serbia is far below potential and satisfactory. A great opportunity for small and medium businesses, and therefore for the development of agribusiness is underutilized economic potential of agriculture (*Ceranic et al., 2006*). SMEs are extremely flexible which contributes to a higher degree of efficiency in utilization of inputs. Therefore, optimal use of agricultural resources, increase of production volume, creating a stable market, the increase in exports of agricultural and food products and the realization of an integrated agricultural, rural and regional development are the strategic goals for the development of agriculture of the Republic of Serbia (*Ceranic and Maletic, 2009; Maletic et al. 2011*)

The development strategies, among other things, of the government that aims to promote and provide guidelines on how things should take place over a longer or shorter period, show how important is the development of small and medium enterprises in transition countries. One example is the Serbian government documents: *The Strategy for Development of Small and Medium Enterprises in the Republic of Serbia in 2003 - 2008, the Action Plan to Stimulate the Development of Small and Medium Enterprises, 2005-2007*, and the latest *Strategy and*

Development of Competitive and Innovative SMEs for the Period of 2009-2013. Their goal is to promote entrepreneurship and create a framework for opening of a sustainable, internationally competitive and export-oriented sector of small and medium sized enterprises in the future and thus ensure the economic and social well-being of the Republic of Serbia.

Starting from this position, the aim of this study is (i) to evaluate the efficiency of SMEs in agribusiness and (ii) make a ranking of districts in Serbia according to the results obtained. The results of these studies can be useful to determine the optimal production orientation of certain areas and to further develop agricultural zoning. Numerous authors considered it of major importance to estimate the efficiency of the agricultural sector (*Shenngen and Xiaobo, 2002 Jirong et al., 1996*). It is therefore necessary to apply appropriate mathematical and statistical methods in order to fully study the problem of multi-dimensional development concept. A number of methodologies can be used for this purpose. Thus, in the research by Popovic et al. (2011) a method of cluster analysis was used and homogeneous groups of municipalities of Serbia were defined based on indicators of the development of SMEs in the agribusiness, and for the assessment of the efficiency of SMEs in agribusiness in the municipalities belonging to the DRB (Danube river basin), Maletic and Popovic (2011) have used the I-squared distance for ranking municipalities and the DEA methodology, as a special technique for determining the effectiveness of numerous entities of the same in the same field.

2. Concept of DEA method

In regard to above mentioned, to measure the efficiency of SMEs engaged in agribusiness by districts, the DEA (*Data Development Analysis*) technique will be used in this study as an effective instrument in the process of measuring of the business efficiency. DEA method has proven to be an excellent technique for determining the efficiency of multiple entities of the same area. Besides the evaluation of the efficiency and determination of their causers, as well as of the reasons of inefficiency and ways for their elimination, the DEA has a model that provides the decision maker with the ability to make observations and rank entities. This model will be used in this study to rank the districts of Serbia on the basis of business success of their agricultural enterprises.

Suppose that DMU_j (j=1, ..., n) uses inputs x_{ij} (i=1, ..., m) to produce outputs y_{rj} (r=1, ..., s). The input-oriented weighted version of Andersen-Petersen's super-efficiency DEA model is as follows (*Andersen and Petersen, 1993*):

$$(Max)h_k = \sum_{r=1}^s \mu_r y_{rk} \tag{1}$$

Subject to:

$$\sum_{i=1}^m v_i x_{ik} = 1 \quad (2)$$

$$\sum_{r=1}^s \mu_r y_{rj} - \sum_{i=1}^m v_i x_{ij} \leq 0, \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, n \quad j \neq k \quad (3)$$

$$\mu_r \geq \varepsilon, \quad r = 1, 2, \dots, s \quad \text{and} \quad v_i \geq \varepsilon, \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, m \quad (4)$$

where:

h_k – the relative efficiency of k DMU

n – the number of DMU to be determined

m – number of inputs

s – number of outputs

μ_r – coefficient of significance for output r

v_i – coefficient of significance for input i .

The optimal values of efficiency scores h_k are obtained by solving the linear model (1)-(4) k -times (once for each DMU in order to compare it with other DMUs). Efficiency score h_k is greater or equal to 1 for all efficient units and smaller than 1 for inefficient units. In this way, ranking of units, according to their efficiency, is enabled. The smaller value of efficiency score h_k the less efficient is the unit. The resulting rankings were used to analyse the sensitivity of DEA techniques. The result of this model shows how much individual units could be worse and still be effective (they are all over 100%), and the one with the highest score is the highest-ranked, while the one with the worst score is ranked last. In this regard, super-efficient units, i.e. those units with a score over 100%, represent so called *exemplary units* (benchmark) for inefficient units. Based on selected indicators to monitor development of districts in Serbia, their ranking was carried out on the basis of the efficiency indicators using EMS software (*Efficiency Measurement System*) (<http://www.wiwi.uni-jena.de/Mikro/pdf/ems.pdf>).

The following SME indicators will be monitored: the total income, profit, long term assets, non-current/long-term assets, the number of firms, number of employees, and the losses. Home database was obtained from the Bureau of Statistics on the basis of SMEs' annual final accounts for a four year period 2008-2011.

The application of DEA for ranking and estimating the efficiency in agriculture has already been discussed by a number of authors. Some of them used DEA in order to determine the influence of manpower, fertilizers, irrigation, capital and seed on yield of different crops (*Lilienfeld and Asmild, 2007*). Other authors focused their interest on the efficiency in the production of meat and cereals based on inputs such as agricultural machinery, labour, fertilizer, sown area (*Monchuk et al, 2010*). Vennesland (2005) used the same methodology in determining the development efficiency of the rural regions of Norway. Based on four input and four output indicators, Martic and Savic (2001) focused on ranking 30 regions of Serbia, of which 17 proved efficient.

3. Ranking of districts in Serbia using DEA technique

As stated above, the objective of this research is ranking of districts in Serbia by observing the level of development of SMEs in the agriculture and comparison of ranks obtained for districts by applying the DEA method. Data analysis in this study assumes that revenue and profit are the most important for the ranking (which are considered as DEA outputs), and working capital, fixed assets, number of employees, number of firms and loss are viewed as inputs. Each DMU (*Decision Making Unit*), in this case the district, will assign different weights to each factor in order to approach the efficiency limit. Therefore, if you need to make an objective ranking, where the DMUs are compared to the limits of efficiency and model units, it is recommended to apply the DEA method.

Based on the results of the model, scores of super-efficiency of SME business are obtained, by districts in Serbia, as shown in Table 2, and on the basis of these scores the results were ranked and illustrated in Table 3.

Based on the obtained results, it is obvious that among the evaluated DMUs (in our study districts) there are *outlayers* or units whose value is so large that it cannot be considered a relevant result. This unit is Sumadija district, because its *score* is 234.43%, which means that the unit can „*spoil*“ its business to 134.43% and still be effective. The reason for this unit to be ranked first is considerably low inputs, and slightly lower outputs compared to the other DMUs. The greatest significance is given to its third input (long-term assets), whose value is slightly higher than the minimum values of the same inputs of other DMU (Toplice district). As for the outputs of Sumadija district, the only significance is given to the last output (profit). This unit is a *benchmark* or exemplary unit for 5 other DMUs (district). However, as its *score* exceeds 200%, it will be exempted from further analysis.

The second highest ranking is the Kolubara District, with a *score* of 146.03 %. This super-efficient unit has low inputs and outputs, with the greatest significance attached to the second input (long-term assets - 59%) and slightly lower significance to the third input (working capital - 41%). The first output (revenue) has significance of 1.46. Kolubara is *benchmark* for two units.

Pomoravlje district found itself ranked third, with super-efficiency of 142.38%. For the analysis the following inputs are essential: number of firms (25% significance), working capital (12% significance), loss (34% significance), and number of employees (28% significance). Number of firms operating in the district is 52, with a total of 630 employees. Obviously, these figures position this district among the best ranked units, because the inputs are low. However, the loss is of utmost importance, and with the value of 94.814 dinars this DMU is among the more successful districts. Both outputs are important for this analysis, namely: income (significance 0.82) and profit (significance 0.6). This unit is the benchmark for 16 DMUs (Table 2).

Table 2: Results of the DEA analysis

DMU	Score (%)	No. of firms {I}{V}	Long term assets {I}{V}	Working capital {I}{V}	Loss {I}{V}	No. of employ-ees {I}{V}	Reve-nue {O}{V}	profit {O}{V}	Benchmarks
City of Belgrade	68.5	0.48	0	0.52	0	0	0	0.68	2 (1.08) 13 (1.94)
North Bačka	141.79	0.99	0	0	0.01	0	1.42	0	7
Central Banat	82.07	0.1	0	0	0	0.9	0.82	0	2 (0.53) 14 (0.59)
North Banat	67.55	0.21	0	0.79	0	0	0.68	0	2 (0.21) 14 (0.71)
South Banat	91.73	0.1	0	0	0.16	0.74	0.92	0	2 (1.01) 7 (0.13) 14 (0.59)
West Backa	89.58	0.25	0	0.13	0	0.62	0.04	0.85	2 (0.73) 7 (0.09) 13 (0.01) 14 (0.18)
South Backa	113.65	0.4	0	0	0.6	0	0	1.14	2
Srem	87.92	0.14	0	0	0	0.86	0.88	0	2 (0.39) 14 (1.22)
Macva	79.2	0.36	0	0	0	0.64	0.79	0	14 (0.20) 15 (1.32)
Kolubaa	146.03	0	0.59	0.41	0	0	1.46	0	2
Podunavlje	96.59	0.05	0	0	0.95	0	0.97	0	14 (0.34) 26 (0.10)
Branicevo	60.22	0.03	0	0.97	0	0	0.6	0	14 (0.19) 26 (0.57)
Sumadija	234.43	0	0	1	0	0	0	2.34	5
Pomoravlje	142.38	0.25	0	0.12	0.34	0.28	0.82	0.6	16
Bor	137.6	0	0	0	0	1	1.38	0	2
Zajecar	39.4	0.03	0	0.97	0	0	0.39	0	14 (0.09) 26 (0.21)
Zlatibor	54.89	0	0	0	0	1	0.17	0.38	13 (0.11) 14 (0.57)
Moravica	92.63	0.17	0	0	0	0.83	0.93	0	2 (0.10) 14 (0.54)
Raska	74.12	0	0.24	0.76	0	0	0.62	0.12	10 (0.21) 13 (0.01) 14 (0.11)
Rasina	108.56	0	0.53	0	0	0.47	0.52	0.57	0
Nisava	67.87	0.01	0.11	0.89	0	0	0.68	0	10 (0.32) 14 (0.15) 26 (0.59)
Toplice	113.49	0	0.61	0	0.39	0	0.4	0.73	0
Pirot	45.2	0.03	0	0.97	0	0	0.39	0.06	13 (0.04) 14 (0.02) 26 (0.16)
Jablanica	33.39	0	0	0.38	0	0.62	0.33	0	14 (0.20) 15 (0.00)
Pcinje	17.48	0.03	0	0.97	0	0	0.17	0	14 (0.05) 26 (0.11)

The continue Table 2.

DMU	No. of firms {I}	long-term assets {I}	Working capital {I}	Loss {I}	No. of employees {I}	Revenue {O}	Profit {O}
City of Belgrade	0	8159500.2	0	522064.5	822.06	1644850	0
North Bačka							
Central Banat	0	5737054.1	2.00E+06	331571.4	0	0	168085
North Banat	0	1041364	0	235124.4	96.01	0	174365
South Banat	0	10897273	1.00E+07	0	0	0.01	69143.4
West Backa	0	1281383.3	0	327310.7	0	2.6	0
South Backa							
Srem	0	6800403.9	730343	141512	0	0	77780.2
Macva	0	1529877	2.00E+06	60339.29	0	0	17270.2
Kolubaa							
Podunavlje	0	141006.54	351078	0	137.33	0	16244.1
Branicevo	0	13780.95	0	32797.45	131.32	0	27340.2
Sumadija							
Pomoravlje							
Bor							
Zajecar	0	478572.51	0	44450.87	35.38	0	22702
Zlatibor	6.7	116123.78	136948	23402.42	0	0	0
Moravica	0	189319.48	571849	325181.8	0	0.01	102594
Raska	8.95	0	0	5042.08	77.87	0	0
Rasina							
Nisava	0	0	0	14762.83	279.41	0	37467.9
Toplice							
Pirot	0	175150.59	0	10084.31	11.62	0	0
Jablanica							54700
Pcinje	0	20630.77	0	5420.73	8.56	0	14441

Table 3: Results of ranking districts by efficiency of small and medium enterprises in agribusinesses (measuring of super-efficiency)

Districts	Score (%)	Rank	Districts	Score (%)	Rank	Districts	Score (%)	Rank
Šumadija	234.43	1	Moravica	92.63	10	North Banat	67.55	19
Kolubara	146.03	2	South Banat	91.73	11	Branicevo	60.22	20
Pomoravlje	142.38	3	West Backa	89.58	12	Zlatiboro	54.89	21
North Backa	141.79	4	Srem	87.92	13	Piroto	45.20	22
Bor	137.60	5	Central Banat	82.07	14	Zajecaro	39.40	23
South Backa	113.65	6	Macva	79.20	15	Jablanica	33.39	24
Toplice	113.49	7	Raska	74.12	16	Pcinje	17.48	25
Rasina	108.56	8	City of Belgrade	68.50	17			
Podunavlje	96.59	9	Nisava	67.87	18			

Another super-efficient unit is North Backa district. The value of its *score* of 141.79% placed this district in the fourth rank. It is the benchmark against 7 units. The greatest importance is given to the first input (the number of firms - 99% significance), and the remaining 1% being the fourth input (loss). Number of firms in this district is very low, 42 companies. The loss is quite low, but as already pointed out, this input is not taken into account in particular. From the outputs, the only importance is given to the first output (revenue), which amounts to RSD 17.541.635, as compared with the remaining DMU is a very desirable value.

The next in the rank is the Bor district, whose *score* was 137.60%. This super-efficient unit of the fifth rank is exemplary unit to the two DMUs. The reason for this is the fifth input (number of employees - the importance of 100%) which is extremely low, in fact it is evident that they have only 122 employees. As the most important output of this unit - revenue is 1.294.817 dinars.

South Backa district is ranked sixth, with super-efficiency of 113.65%. As a exemplary unit to two other DMUs, this unit includes as significant inputs the number of firms (significance 40%) and loss (60% significance). Although the number of firms in the district is the second highest (146, and the most companies are in Belgrade - 180), and the loss shows not so low value, what this unit placed in such a good position is considerable profit amounting to 2.065.921 dinars.

Out of 8 super-efficient units Toplice district is ranked seventh, with the *score* of 113.49%. This unit is not relevant to the analysis because its improvement or deterioration would not affect any one unit, given that it is not the benchmark against any unit. However, the significant inputs considered such as long-term assets (significance 61%) and loss (39% significance), with long-term assets representing a very low value, as well as loss which is why the unit has good positioning. In regard to the outputs, greatest importance is given to the output

profit, although with not so enviable value. Also, the first output (revenue) has a certain significance, although smaller than the other outputs.

The last on the list of super-efficient units is Rasina district, with a value of 108.56%, which immediately places this unit on the eighth rank. This unit, like the previous one, is not an exemplary unit. The greatest importance is given to the second input (long-term assets - 53% significance) and fifth input (number of employees - significance of 47%). In regard to the outputs, revenue has significance of 0.52, and the gain/profit 0.57.

The unit that was ranked the last is Pcinje district, with a value of 17.48%. An obvious reason for the inefficiency of this unit is that the greatest importance is attached to the working capital which is quite small input and in regard to outputs the revenue has low significance of significance 0.17. This unit looks up to Pomoravlje district, which, as already mentioned, is a super-efficient unit.

4. Conclusion

Balanced regional development should encourage better use of natural resources in all and especially in underdeveloped regions, and this primarily is related to the development of agriculture and tourism. The main task of policy and strategy for the rapid development of underdeveloped regions should be based on differential benefits of a specific territory.

In the process of raising and development of certain regions, SMEs have a significant role. Due to their exceptional flexibility they need to be the backbone of economic development and the future, especially in rural areas of Serbia.

The study shows that the level of development of small and medium enterprises is significantly different by districts. Out of the total 25 districts, eight have been observed as super-efficient in terms of operations of their SME agribusiness. The reason for this result is that applied DEA methodology aims to achieve with the smaller investment as high output as possible, and perform weighting or assigns significance to certain inputs and outputs in order for specific unit (district) to be ranked as high as possible. In addition, DEA provides information on how much improvement or worsening of super-efficient unit may affect certain DMUs that look up to (i.e. are benchmarked against) the aforementioned super-efficient unit (district). Analysis of the results presented in Table 2 clearly shows which districts – in regard to the level of development of small and medium enterprises, should look up to (i.e. be benchmarked against) that region, and what is necessary to increase or decrease in terms of input indicators in order for outputs to be as high as possible. So, the clear guidance of what direction we should work to improve performance and increase efficiency of SMEs in each district is given. It can serve

as an important instrument for the promotion and development of entrepreneurship observed in a given environment.

Therefore, the role of the government in the new regional policy amounts to the removal and mitigation of constraints that the affected areas are faced with, and their ability to have rapid growth. This applies particularly to help provided to those regions with special development problems, through investments and encouragement of the inflow of capital, so that these areas could compensate for their structural weaknesses. In order for the support of the state to be efficient, it is necessary to ensure its continuity and keep the intensity of support for a longer period.

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