

## **SUMMARY**

The undersigned, Toma L. Elena, began the research career immediately after graduating from the Academy of Economic Studies (the Faculty of Finance, Banking and Stock Exchange) in November 2001, at which point I joined the Institute of Agricultural Economics within the Academy of Agricultural Sciences Gheorghe Ionescu Șișești (now called the Research Institute for Agricultural Economics and Rural Development Bucharest - ICEADR). Within ICEADR, where I worked until 2010, I held several positions successively: economist (2001-2002), scientific researcher (2002-2003), III level scientific researcher (2003-2006), and II level scientific researcher (2006-2010).

In the interval 2002-2006 I attended the Doctoral Studies School of the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest, and in May 2006 I defended my doctoral thesis entitled "Research on Technical and Economic Improvement of the Agro Milk Chain", thus obtaining the PhD in Agronomy in 2007. In parallel, since 2004, I have been working in my academic career with the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest, first as associated assistant professor; in 2007, as a result of a contest, I became lecturer, and, since 2014, I have served as associate professor in the Department of Economics, Accounting and Agri-tourism within the Faculty of Management, Economics Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development.

This habilitation thesis reflects the scientific and didactic activity I carried out in the period 2007-2015, and it focuses on highlighting my professional achievements, as well as my contributions to the scientific and academic activities. The paper presents the scientific results obtained after completing the doctoral studies (2002-2006), outlining the main areas of research I addressed in this period, namely: Agricultural Economics, Rural Development, Agricultural Policies.

### **DIDACTIC ACTIVITY**

Obtaining the PhD allowed me to get tenure by contest in the subjects of General Economics and Economic Doctrines (now incorporated into the wider subject called Fundamentals of Economy). In recent years in USAMV Bucharest, I have been teaching the seminars for Rural Economy, Rural Development Concepts, EU Agricultural Policies, etc. In addition to the didactic activities, my work at university involved supervision of undergraduate

and dissertation projects for over 20 students, their work falling under topics such as: economic and financial management of the firm; quantitative analyses of the rural environment; questionnaire-based qualitative analyses on agri-food, processed by statistical software (SPSS), etc.

### **RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

In the interval 2007 - 2015 I participated in 14 research projects of which I coordinated 4 national ones (in 3 of these I was project manager and in the remaining one I was director; CEEX, Sectoral Project, PNCDI-II); one international project (as director; Culture 2007); 1 training project (as director HRD). The research conducted in these projects had as core finality fundamental studies, as well as experimental and applied models.

My involvement in research projects relied on my basic training theme (economics), on the doctoral training (agronomy) and on my teacher training (general economics, rural economics, rural development, the EU Agricultural policy, etc.). The objectives of these projects had deep rural, agricultural and economic essence, covering topics such as: the economic performance of farms, the impact of the Common Agricultural Policy, clusters in agribusiness, agricultural landscapes, sustainable conservation of bio-resources, farm management, strategies for sustainable rural development, developing information systems for analyzing the production activity in farms, etc.

Since 2011 my individual research has further focused on the three areas mentioned above: agricultural economics, rural development and agricultural policies. The main goal I pursued was my professional development through the use of statistical and specific business methods, together with promoting ideas and personal research at national and international levels by publishing in BDI and ISI journals, and by personal integration into the editorial and reviewing staff, etc.

My portfolio includes 15 books published with national publishing houses (of which 7 as the main author) and one book published with an international publishing house (co-authored, personal contribution three chapters), 7 ISI papers, 23 BDI works, and 9 non-indexed papers. I am a member of the editorial board of one Romanian BDI indexed journal. I am a referent in a BDI indexed journal and one ISI indexed publication.

### **FURTHER CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

For the near future I have in my plans a university textbook, a practical applications guidebook (in the subject Fundamentals of Economy), and two books with an international group of authors (Agricultural Policies and Rural Development).

Regarding the teaching process, I plan to develop the didactic material basis in the field of economics, including video presentations that highlight various economic concepts and their application. I also plan the establishment of a science club for students in agricultural economics and agri-food. Teamwork within this club represents a real opportunity to deepen economic and agronomic knowledge by thematic applications including scientific research methods and statistical informatics applications on socio-economic development. Another objective I pursue is attracting and involving in research as many students as possible, so as to grant them real support in drafting the bachelor or master graduation projects of high quality in areas such as agricultural and rural economics. I plan to establish contacts and create collaborations with people from the business environment in order to ensure visits and exchanges which may result in case studies for students.

In view of my own experience so far, both in the international project and the participation in various international events, I believe that access to the educational and research institutions abroad is a real opportunity for students. Thus, in the future, I intend to organize international projects involving students of our faculty, in addition to establishing international contacts for Erasmus projects.

Given my professional background and, especially, the importance of interactions between research and the quality of education, I am sure that research will remain a constant of my professional career. In this respect, I plan to continue participating in competitions, especially in Horizon 2020, so as to ensure international visibility of Romanian research and particularly of the one in USAMV Bucharest, in the field of agricultural economics. Conducting research and, especially, drafting research projects require partnerships with public and private institutions in the field. In this regard, an important goal for the future is to establish partnerships and cooperation agreements with institutions in the country and abroad.

I will provide increased visibility by publishing scientific research results in publications indexed in ISI or in other international databases, as first author or co-author, and by participating in scientific reunions in the field. As well as this, I want to continue publishing specialized books not only with acknowledged national publishers, but also, and mainly, with publishing houses abroad, to ensure international visibility for the economic performance of Romanian agriculture and its rural areas.