

## SUMMARY

### RESEARCH ON MODERNIZATION MEASURES OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS IN ROMANIA THROUGH RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. CASE STUDY

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In Europe, agriculture has always been an important driver for the development of values and a common direction, whether it was combating food shortages following the Second World War, managing food surpluses, directly supporting farmers' incomes, increasing the competitiveness of their farms, promoting and supporting rural development to create sustainable rural areas and participating in joint efforts to combat climate effects. All these actions represent priorities of the European agricultural spectrum, brought to the fore over time and respectively the reforms that gave birth to the current European agricultural legislative framework (common agricultural policy post 2023). Thus, the CAP continues to be one of the most important European policy, despite all the geopolitical challenges and pressures currently taking place, its ultimate goal being to ensure food security for all European citizens and beyond.

The aim of the paper and the approach to this topic came from the desire to continue an academic path dedicated to specialization on different levels of the common agricultural policy.

This thesis is structured with the help of four chapters, each written at a different stage of professional and personal development so that each chapter will represent particular ideas and methods, which consistently and coherently represent a logical development of the ideas analyzed in this thesis.

The period of writing the first chapter entitled "The current state of the main research on farm modernization measures in the European Union" was one strewn with both challenges and opportunities. These consisted of the fact that it was written

during the first wave of quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic. It includes an exhaustive bibliographic study, carried out with the support of a scientific platform that provides access to several databases containing references to international scientific works and various other documents. In this sense, the identification of the most relevant works existing at that time was carried out, taking into account the modernization of farms as the main criterion. All these papers were interpreted using a program called CiteSpace. The papers were analyzed according to the number of citations, journals, and authors taking into account different aspects such as the country of origin or the year of publication. A qualitative analysis of the identified works was also carried out.

These papers were very helpful in providing practical information regarding the approaches in subsequent chapters and information regarding the level at which different countries of the European Union relate to investments in agricultural holdings and their modernization respectively. The main period analyzed at the level of this chapter was 2007-2020, because, throughout the two multi-annual financial frameworks, 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 respectively, the actions to modernize the farms were very well defined and very specifically outlined by the measures regulated by the CAP legal framework, including at the level of Romania. The analysis of these works allowed the outline of an overview of the main topics addressed in the works whose main theme is farm modernization. Thus, we could easily observe the different research trends, as well as the advantages in the implementation of investments for modernization of the member states that have been members of the European Union for a longer period of time and have had more support time for their agricultural system.

The second chapter, entitled "The evolution and dynamics of the agricultural holdings support in Romania and the EU" presented how the funds that support the modernization of agricultural holdings were absorbed by each territory in Romania. Throughout the last three programming periods, the CAP supported the modernization of farms EU through three financing mechanisms, namely measure 3.1 Investments in agricultural holdings, measure 121 Modernization of agricultural holdings and sub-measure 4.1 Investments in agricultural holdings. Thus, it was possible to observe which development regions are more successful in attracting such funds, how many projects, the amounts spent and what are the gaps between different regions according to these parameters.

In the third chapter, "Study on the dynamics of the effects of measures to modernize agricultural holdings at the level of development regions" an analysis of the effects produced on some indicators was carried out, from the point of view of accessing projects that finance the modernization of agricultural holdings at the level of the eight development regions from Romania. Thus, structural and economic indicators were analyzed to trace their possible correlation in relation to the funds

attracted, available through the PAC measures. In order to carry out this analysis and obtain a comprehensive perspective of the impact of investments and subsidies accessible through the EU agricultural policy on the economic situation of farms, the following relevant indicators were evaluated: number of farms, size of holdings, average size of holdings, net value added, farm income, as well as total current and fixed assets.

Chapter four, entitled "Case study on the analysis of modernization measures of agricultural holdings in Romania" presents an in-depth analysis of the impact of these measures in which it was investigated whether the theoretical results from the previous chapters can be validated and supported with data obtained directly from the beneficiaries of these support measures. In this sense, by applying a questionnaire, the views of a group of 106 farmers (of which only 88 beneficiaries as explained later in this chapter) were collected regarding the effects that the funds had accessed on their farms. To validate the content of this questionnaire, it was analyzed together with experts who work directly with the CAP within the European Commission. These experts work for DG AGRI within the EU Commission and are in charge of designing and managing the regulation of instruments that support the European Union's rural development policy, namely financial instruments and investments in agricultural holdings. Thus, all the comments and suggestions received were taken into account, and the initial questionnaire was modified to reflect their opinions. In order to exploit the data obtained from the respondents, an in-depth analysis of the answers was followed, but also an analysis of the statistical correlation between the categories of variables.

The final chapter of the paper, chapter five, "Conclusions and Recommendations" briefly presents the main interesting aspects and lessons that can be considered from the results of this analysis. Thus, they allow us to understand a little of the impact of European funds on the modernization of the agricultural holdings questioned in the survey.

The bibliography used consists of works from the specialized literature, mostly belonging to authors from the European Union, both local and foreign. It also includes reports and studies carried out by and for the benefit of national and European institutions.