

SUMMARY

of the doctoral thesis entitled:

RESEARCH ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS IN THE SOUTH-WEST OLTENIA REGION

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An agricultural holding is an economic and technical unit in which agricultural activities are carried out with the aim of producing agricultural goods for own consumption or for marketing. The definitions of agricultural holding may vary according to the perspective adopted - economic, legal or social. In general, an agricultural holding implies the coordination of natural resources (land, water), labor and capital, all managed by a farmer or a responsible entity.

The main aim of this thesis is to analyze and evaluate the economic development of agricultural holdings in the South-West Oltenia region, with a focus on identifying the factors influencing their performance and on identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of agricultural holdings in the South-West Oltenia region. This research aims to contribute to the understanding of how internal and external factors influence the economic development of agricultural holdings and to provide recommendations in this respect.

We are also pursuing other specific aims with this thesis, as follows:

- To assess the current state of research on the agricultural sector in Romania, with a special focus on agricultural holdings in the South-West Oltenia region;
- Determining the impact of economic, social and environmental factors on the performance of agricultural holdings in the South-West Oltenia region;
- To identify funding opportunities and challenges faced by farms in the South-West Oltenia region;
- Elaboration of a SWOT analysis and a synthesis based on a focus-group with representatives of agricultural holdings in the South-West Oltenia region, in order to get a clear picture of the current situation and development prospects in this sector;

- Evaluation of the economic performance of agricultural holdings in the South-West Oltenia region, by analyzing the evolution of income and expenditure in the recent period.

The thesis is structured in six chapters, including conclusions and recommendations, focusing in particular on the South-West Oltenia development region, so that the first chapter entitled "Theoretical and conceptual approaches to the agricultural sector in the EU and Romania" defines the concept of agricultural holdings and highlights their typology, how they are organized, the economic theories that apply, and the factors that determine the economic performance of agricultural holdings. This chapter also includes a bibliometric analysis of the current state of research at national level.

Next, Chapter II highlighted the research aim, research objectives and research methods used. These include literature review, descriptive analysis, econometric analysis, econometric analysis and comparison between two groups, which are considered as quantitative research methods. In addition to these, qualitative methods such as focus group and S.W.O.T analysis were also used.

Then, the next chapter described the economic and social context of the South-West Oltenia region, with a brief presentation of the region, the agricultural sector in the region was analyzed and the main agricultural development support policies and programs for agricultural development for farms were highlighted.

Chapter IV, entitled "Analysis of agricultural holdings in Romania", analyzed the trends and developments recorded by agricultural holdings at European and national level, with a focus on the South-West Oltenia region, in the second programming period, as well as the situation of agricultural areas under management and the evolution of the number of agricultural holdings in terms of economic and physical size.

Chapter V, "Analysis of the economic development of agricultural holdings (case study)", consisted in identifying the aspects that can contribute to the development of agricultural holdings in Romania, as well as the challenges they face in their activity. Therefore, the main purpose of the focus group with representatives of agricultural holdings was to collect qualitative data through structured and semi-structured discussions. The focus-group was attended by 9 representatives of agricultural holdings, whose economic activity is carried out in the South-West Oltenia region. By interviewing the participants, it was possible to elaborate the S.W.O.T.S. analysis of agricultural holdings in the South-West Oltenia region. The table below presents the characteristics of the farms whose representatives were interviewed.

Finally, chapter VI concludes all the aspects analyzed in this PhD thesis, and 9 recommendations aimed at improving the activity of agricultural holdings in the South-West Oltenia region are also elaborated.