

MANAGEMENT OF EUROPEAN FUNDS. CASE STUDY: NEAMŢ AND CONSTANŢA COUNTIES, ROMANIA

Cristina COPĂCEANU*¹
Silvia MAZĂRE *²

Abstract: *The present research aims to investigate and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the management of European funds in two distinct counties of Romania: Neamţ County and Constanţa County. European funds represent a significant resource for the economic, social and infrastructural development of the country, and the way in which they are administered and used has a significant impact on regional progress. Our comparative analysis focuses on identifying the significant differences between the two counties regarding the attraction, management and use of European money. The obtained results reveal significant differences in the approach and performance of European funds management between the two counties, highlighting the key factors that influence this process. Our research not only contributes to the understanding of how European funds are managed at the regional level in Romania, but also provides practical recommendations for improving the management of these resources in both counties. The positive impact of European funds on agricultural businesses in the two counties is obvious, contributing to the improvement and modernization of the agricultural sector.*

Keywords: *European funds, programs, projects, agriculture, economic development.*

UDC: [339.96:005.56]:338.43(498)

JEL Code: O00, O10, O13, Q14.

Introduction

European funds have been and continue to represent a significant source of financing for the member states of the European Union, with the main objective of stimulating economic, social and regional development. The main goal of the European Union is to achieve the convergence of economic performance and economic and social cohesion between member states, according to the provisions included in the second article of the Treaty establishing the European Community (Monfort, 2008). For Romania, these funds have become an essential factor in modernization efforts and convergence with European standards, offering significant opportunities for infrastructure projects, economic development and improving the quality of life. The process of joining the European Union led to significant changes regarding the way of financing the agricultural sector. From periods characterized by instability in agricultural policy and fluctuations in funding

*¹ Cristina Copăceanu, PhD in economics, USPEE „Constantin Stere”, Chişinău, email: copaceanu_c@yahoo.com, ORCID: 0000-0003-3944-5982

*² Silvia Mazăre, PhD student, USPEE „Constantin Stere”, Chişinău, email: sylviamazare@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0001-6743-5031

sources, influenced by electoral cycles (Alexandri & Luca, 2008), we evolved towards the need to implement concrete measures to facilitate integration in 2007 (Giurcă, 2005) and to increasing support to farmers (Hubbard et al., 2014). The concept of developing regional strategies was formulated by Jasińska -Biliszak and Malik (2020). They argue that the evaluation of the effectiveness of regional development management is justified by the application of a set of specific measures, which must be adapted according to the goals of the mission and implemented with maximum efficiency. However, the way these European funds are attracted, managed and used can vary significantly between different regions of the country. This aspect is all the more important as Romania faces complex challenges related to uneven regional development, economic development and public administration. While analyzing the effectiveness of regional development management in Poland and Romania, Ionescu (2018) emphasized a specific aspect, namely that the factor that drives development is the tangible financial support offered by the European Union through operational programs and the EU Strategy. In this context, the analysis and comparative evaluation of the management of European funds at the regional level becomes very important to understand how these resources can be used more effectively for the benefit of local and national communities.

The purpose of this research is to analyze and compare the way European funds are managed in two distinct counties of Romania: Neamț County and Constanța County. This choice of counties is not random, but is due to significant differences in natural resources, economic structure, population size and development needs. The main economic similarity between the counties of Neamț and Constanța is the fact that both counties have a significant potential in terms of the tourism sector. Although there are differences in the types of tourism and the attractions they offer, both counties are known for their tourism resources. Through the comparative analysis of these two counties, we aim to identify successful practices, common challenges and key factors that influence the management of European funds at the regional level.

This research is based on a multidisciplinary approach, combining the analysis of official documents, interviews, statistical analysis and data interpretation to provide a complete picture of the situation. The results of this research should provide significant insights both for local and regional authorities in the two counties, as well as for decision-makers at the national level, with the aim of improving the management and use of European funds throughout Romania.

The differences and similarities between farmers in Romania and those in other European countries in terms of economic aspects and access to European funds reveal a complex picture of the agricultural reality in Eastern and Western Europe. First of all, the agricultural structure in Romania is defined by a significant proportion of small farmers, who carry out activities in subsistence farming and family farming. This structure differs significantly from that of other European countries, where commercial agriculture predominates and where there is

greater diversity in terms of farm size. In many European countries, large farms are more common and private ownership of agricultural land is widespread.

Table 1. Comparison of Romania and other European countries

Aspect	Romania	The other European countries
Agricultural structure	- A significant proportion of small farmers.	- They have a more diversified agricultural structure, with a mix of small and large farmers.
	- Subsistence and family farming are still common.	- Commercial agriculture is predominant.
	- Large areas of agricultural land are often leased or co-farmed.	- Large farms are more common and private ownership of agricultural land is widespread.
Access to EU funds	- They had difficulties in fully accessing European funds due to bureaucracy and lack of experience in project management.	- Many European countries have longer experience in accessing and managing European funds.
	- It faces some difficulties in meeting the complex requirements of EU-funded projects.	- They have easier access to technical assistance and consultancy in this regard.
	- Improvements in access to European funds have been observed in recent years.	- Access to European funds is more consolidated and easier to obtain.
Economic performance	- Profitability in Romanian agriculture is sometimes low due to limited investments and low productivity.	- They often have higher productivity and increased profitability.
	- Modernization of agricultural infrastructure and technology is ongoing, but with slower progress.	- Modernization and agricultural technology are more advanced.

Source: developed by the authors

Another significant aspect is access to European funds, meaning that Romania had difficulties in fully accessing these funds, mainly due to bureaucracy and lack of experience in managing projects financed by the European Union. These difficulties are not encountered to the same extent in the other European countries, which have a longer experience in accessing and managing European funds. Romanian farmers face challenges in meeting the complex requirements of EU-funded projects, while farmers in other European countries often benefit from more accessible technical assistance and advice. The economic performance in Romanian agriculture is negatively influenced by limited investment and low productivity. In contrast, farmers in other European countries enjoy higher productivity and increased profitability due to faster adoption of advanced agricultural technologies. The modernization of agricultural infrastructure and agricultural technology remains an important focus point for improving the economic performance of Romanian farmers.

Analyzing the data in table 2, we can draw some conclusions:

- Constanța County has a significantly larger population than Neamț County, with approximately 753,331 inhabitants compared to 452,038. However, Neamț County has a smaller territorial area than Constanța County (5,897 km² compared to 7,104 km²). This suggests that Constanța has a higher population density, with implications for the development of infrastructure and public services.
- Neamț County seems to be more oriented towards the chemical industry, construction materials and metal processing, while Constanța County has a more

significant presence in the construction materials, textile and chemical industry. This difference in industrial structure reflects distinct economic specializations and opportunities for economic development in each county.

- Regarding agriculture, Neamț County has a larger agricultural area than Constanța County, 121,588 hectares compared to 46,675 hectares. However, the types of crops differentiate in the two counties.

Table 2. Comparison between Neamț and Constanța counties, year 2022

Aspect	Neamț County	Constanța County
Population, number of people	452038	753331
Area, km ²	5897	7104
Residence	Piatra Neamț	Constanta
Number of cities	5	9
Tourism	Mountain developed / religious	Marine developed
Industry	Chemicals/ Building materials/ Metalworking	Building materials/ Textiles/ Chemicals
Agriculture	121588 ha agricultural area Maize/cereal grains/sugar beet	46675 ha of agricultural area Wheat/maize/potatoes

Source: developed by the authors based on the data of INS Neamț and INS Constanța, 2023

As we delve into the multifaceted landscape of European funds and their impact on Romania, it's imperative to focus on the present and future dynamics, building upon the foundations laid in the past. The allure of European funding opportunities persists, with the present moment offering a renewed sense of hope and potential. In the contemporary context, Romania finds itself poised to harness the full potential of European funds. The European Union, recognizing the nation's commitment to convergence and growth, has earmarked substantial resources to empower Romania's progress. These funds, aligned with ambitious development objectives, aim to fuel economic growth, nurture innovation, and enhance the well-being of Romania's citizens. With the benefit of hindsight, we have learned valuable lessons from past challenges and successes in managing European funds. Romania's increasing expertise in navigating bureaucratic complexities and mastering the intricacies of EU-funded projects positions it favorably for the future. The evolution from unstable policy periods to a commitment to concrete measures speaks to Romania's determination to optimize European funds.

As we peer into the future, we anticipate a transformative landscape. European funds will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping Romania's economic and social fabric. Initiatives designed to foster regional development, bolster agriculture, and enhance public administration will pave the way for a more cohesive and prosperous Romania. The comparative analysis of Neamț County and Constanța County is not just a reflection of their present status but a glimpse into the potential they hold for the future. By identifying

successful practices and understanding common challenges, we equip ourselves with the knowledge to maximize the impact of European funds.

This research, driven by a multidisciplinary approach, will offer fresh insights into the current utilization of European funds while shedding light on the future prospects. The results will serve as a compass, guiding local and regional authorities in the two counties, as well as decision-makers at the national level, towards an enhanced management and utilization of European funds. With these insights, Romania is poised to navigate the evolving European funding landscape and embark on a path of sustained growth, regional development, and an improved quality of life for its citizens.

1. Data and Methodology

This study employed a comprehensive research methodology that encompassed various data collection and analysis techniques. The methodology involved the following key methods:

1. **Analysis of Official Documents:** Extensive analysis of a diverse range of official documents was conducted. This included government reports, public policy documents, and regional development strategies related to the management of European funds. These documents provided essential insights into the overarching framework and objectives of European fund management in Romania.
2. **Review of Specific Literature:** A thorough review of existing literature related to European funds and regional development in Romania was undertaken. This step involved examining scholarly articles, research publications, and relevant academic sources to build a strong theoretical foundation for the research.
3. **Interviews with Beneficiaries:** In-depth interviews were conducted with beneficiaries of European funds in Neamț and Constanța counties. These interviews provided a valuable qualitative perspective, offering firsthand accounts of experiences, challenges, and successes in managing and utilizing European funds.
4. **Statistical Analysis:** Quantitative data analysis was performed, focusing on a wide array of statistical data relevant to Neamț and Constanța counties. Economic, social, and development indicators were scrutinized to gain insights into the impact of European funds on these regions.
5. **SWOT Analysis:** A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis was carried out to assess the management of European funds in both counties. This analytical framework allowed for a systematic evaluation of internal and external factors that influence the effectiveness of fund management.

This multifaceted approach to data collection and analysis enabled us to construct a comprehensive and well-rounded assessment of European fund management in Neamț and

Constanța counties. It ensured a holistic understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and key factors that shape the utilization of European funds at the regional level.

2. The Model and Findings

Neamț County is in a unique position and has the potential to diversify its economy and become more resilient in the face of challenges. The county's main strengths include rich natural resources and the development of the IT industry, which can serve as an engine for growth and innovation. However, limited access to maritime resources and underdeveloped infrastructure are weaknesses that need to be addressed. The opportunities for Neamț County include access to European funds for development and the potential to diversify the economy, and by using these funds effectively and promoting an environment conducive to business development, the county can increase its competitiveness and create jobs. But climate change and regional competition remain significant threats.

Table 3: SWOT analysis for Neamț County.

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Economy	Rich natural resources, IT industry development	Limited access to maritime resources, underdeveloped infrastructure	European funds for development, economic diversification	Climate change, regional competition
Tourism	Tourist potential, rural traditions		Diversification and promotion of rural tourism	Climate change
Agriculture	Agricultural potential, fertile soils		The use of European funds for agriculture	Climate change
Industry	Development of the IT industry		Investment in industry, infrastructure development	Regional competition

Source: developed by the authors

Table 4: SWOT analysis for Constanța County

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Economy	Access to the Black Sea, developed tourism sector, economic diversity	Dependence on naval industry, underdeveloped infrastructure	European funds for development, economic diversification	Environmental pollution and degradation, regional competition
Tourism	Black Sea tourist resorts		Modernizing the tourist infrastructure, attracting tourists	Ecological concerns, climate change
Agriculture	Agricultural potential		The use of European funds for agriculture	Climate change
Industry	Economic diversity		Diversification and innovation in other sectors	Regional competition, environmental pollution

Source: developed by the authors

Constanța County is in a distinct position, benefiting from valuable access to the Black Sea and having a developed tourism sector, alongside a significant economic diversity. However, the county faces challenges such as dependence on the shipping industry and underdeveloped infrastructure. The main opportunities for Constanța County include access to European funds for development and the potential to diversify the economy. Modernizing tourism infrastructure and attracting tourists can further boost the tourism sector. However, there are significant threats such as pollution and environmental degradation as well as regional competition.

In the period 2007-2022, both counties had access to the following European funds:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF): This fund aims to promote economic and social development in European regions.
- European Social Fund (ESF): The ESF supports projects that focus on developing human resources, improving employment, and can finance training, education, social inclusion, and the creation of job-related infrastructure or programs.
- Regional Operational Program (ROP): This program aims at regional development in Romania and can finance projects such as the modernization of infrastructure.
- Program for National Rural Development (PNDR): This focuses on rural development and can finance projects related to agriculture, rural development and rural infrastructure.
- Operational Program for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs (OPFMA): Helps the sector and can finance projects related to the development of fisheries and aquaculture.
- Operational Competitiveness Program (OCP): It focuses on helping the research and development projects.
- Technical Assistance Operational Program (TAOP): Provides technical assistance for the implementation of other operational programs and can be used to improve administrative and project management capacity (MFE, 2023).

According to the official data, published by the Ministry of European Funds, at national level, until 21.09.2023, a number of 18327 projects were contracted, with budgets totaling EUR 57.13 billion and total eligible expenses of 53.36 billion euro. The European Commission's co-financing is 43.57 billion euros, with a national contribution of 4.36 billion euros (MFE, 2019).

Table 5. Approved projects and budget Neamț County and Constanța County 21.09.2023, million euros

County	Approved projects	Total budget
Neamț	322	333.33
Constanța	576	1809.73

Source: developed by the authors based on Ministry of European Funds data, 2023

According to the data in table 5, regarding the approved projects and the budget allocated in September 2023, Constanța County stands out with the larger number of projects and the significantly higher total budget compared to Neamț County. This discrepancy in financial resources and ongoing projects reflects the higher level of economic development and the specific needs of Constanța County, especially in terms of infrastructure and regional development.

Table 6. Unemployment rate 2022, %

County	Unemployment rate
Neamț	4
Constanța	2,3

Source: developed by the authors based on the data of National Institute of Statistics (INS) Neamț and Constanța, 2023

The low unemployment rate in Constanța County compared to Neamț County in 2022, according to table 6, is a sign of a more active labor market in the coastal area. This may be influenced by the presence of a strong tourism sector in Constanța, which provides seasonal and permanent employment opportunities for residents. On the other hand, Neamț County, with a slightly higher unemployment rate, would need more efforts to stimulate economic development and job creation. This difference underlines the importance of economic policy and investment in education, entrepreneurship and regional development to reduce unemployment and improve the quality of life in this area. Overall, the analysis of the unemployment rate shows us the significant differences in the economic dynamics and specific needs of these two counties, underlining the importance of adapting public policy to the local context to support employment and economic development.

Table 7. Production of the agricultural branch, Neamț County

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total	1779220	1651806	1512963	1536473	1749524	1776672	1836063	1733165
Vegetable	1167254	1044550	872285	916090	1072773	1155354	1204722	1019091
Animals	597347	589107	621834	603141	651158	600216	612098	691251
Agricultural services	14619	18149	18844	17242	25593	21102	19243	22823

Source: developed by the authors based on National Institute of Statistics (INS) Neamț data, 2023

Table 7, which presents the evolution of production in the agricultural branch in Neamț County during 2013-2020, reflects an interesting dynamic and relevance for the local economy. We note several important aspects about this data:

- From 2013 to 2015, the total agricultural production in Neamț County decreased significantly. This phenomenon can be influenced by factors such as weather conditions, changes in agricultural practices and market changes. However, after 2015, we observe a progressive increase, suggesting an adaptation and recovery of the local agricultural sector.

- Plant production recorded a significant decline in the early years of the mentioned period, followed by a moderate increase in the later years. In contrast, livestock production had a more stable evolution, with relatively small fluctuations and even a significant increase in 2020. These differences may indicate changes in production preferences or farming strategies.
- There is a fluctuation in the production of agricultural services, with a general upward trend in recent years and this means an increase in demand for agricultural services or a diversification of agricultural activities.

Table 8. Production of the agricultural branch, Constanța County

	2013	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total	2162615	2120267	2050416	2781574	2929186	2716680	1820317
Vegetable	1616659	1598532	1529311	2241730	2377863	2147147	1170631
Animals	515125	498708	505174	527888	538082	555467	607142
Agricultural services	30831	23027	15931	11956	13241	14066	42544

Source: developed by the authors based on the INS Constanța data, 2023

Table 8, which presents the evolution of production in the agricultural branch of Constanța County in the period 2013-2020, provides a complex picture of the dynamics of the local agricultural economy. Several remarkable aspects can be observed about these data:

- The total agricultural production in Constanța County registered significant fluctuations from one year to the next and these variations can be influenced by factors such as weather conditions, changes in market demand and local farming practices.
- We observed that plant production dominates in Constanța County, with much higher figures compared to animal production and this can be explained by the favorable climate for vegetation and the agricultural potential of the area for various crops.
- The production of agricultural services also experienced significant fluctuations, but with a general upward trend and this increase reflects an increased demand for agricultural services or a development of this sector in the county.
- A significant decrease in total agricultural production in 2020 compared to previous years is notable and this decline can be attributed to factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which has impacted food production and distribution around the world.

It is important for local authorities and farmers in the area to monitor these trends and develop strategies to support and promote the sustainable development of the agricultural sector in the future, despite the challenges and fluctuations highlighted.

Next, we designed a questionnaire with 10 questions related to European funds and economic development and conducted interviews with 100 farmers from Neamț County and 100 farmers from Constanța County. The questions can be found in table 9 and the centralized answers can be found in table 10.

Table 9. Questionnaire addressed to farmers from Neamț and Constanța counties

No.	Question	YES	NOT
1	Have you accessed European funds for the development or modernization of agricultural activities?		
2	If you have accessed European funds, have you been able to obtain funding to an extent that meets your needs?		
3	Have European funds contributed to the improvement or expansion of your agricultural business?		
4	Have you invested in modern technologies or equipment thanks to European funds?		
5	Have European funds had a positive impact on the yield and quality of your products?		
6	Have you created new jobs in the agricultural sector thanks to European funds?		
7	Have European funds contributed to increasing the competitiveness of your agricultural business on the domestic and international market?		
8	Have you encountered significant difficulties in accessing European funds?		
9	Do you think that the administrative procedures for obtaining European funds are too complicated?		
10	Have you received support or advice from the authorities or other organizations to help you access European funds?		

Source: developed by the authors

Table 10. The results obtained after conducting the interviews

Question	Neamț County (YES)	Neamț County (NO)	Constanta County (YES)	Constanta County (NO)
1	80	20	90	10
2	72	28	80	20
3	60	40	75	25
4	65	35	71	29
5	64	36	75	25
6	64	36	75	25
7	58	42	63	37
8	62	38	68	32
9	92	8	45	55
10	75	25	82	18

Source: developed by the authors

After analyzing tables 9 and 10, we found the following:

- Farmers from Neamț County benefit from a higher level of access to European funds compared to those from Constanța County. This fact is based on the obvious differences in the proportions of "YES" and "NO" answers in the two counties, found in most of the questions in table 9.
- It can be noted that the majority of farmers in both counties sought to access European funds to develop or modernize agricultural activities, which suggests a pronounced interest and increased willingness on their part to benefit from European financial support in order to improve their agricultural businesses.
- It can also be observed that Constanța County registers a higher percentage of farmers who obtained satisfactory financing, which indicates a better efficiency in the management and distribution of European funds in this region or, possibly, an increased need for financing in the county Constanta.
- The positive impact of European funds on agricultural businesses in the two counties is obvious, contributing to the improvement and modernization of the agricultural sector.

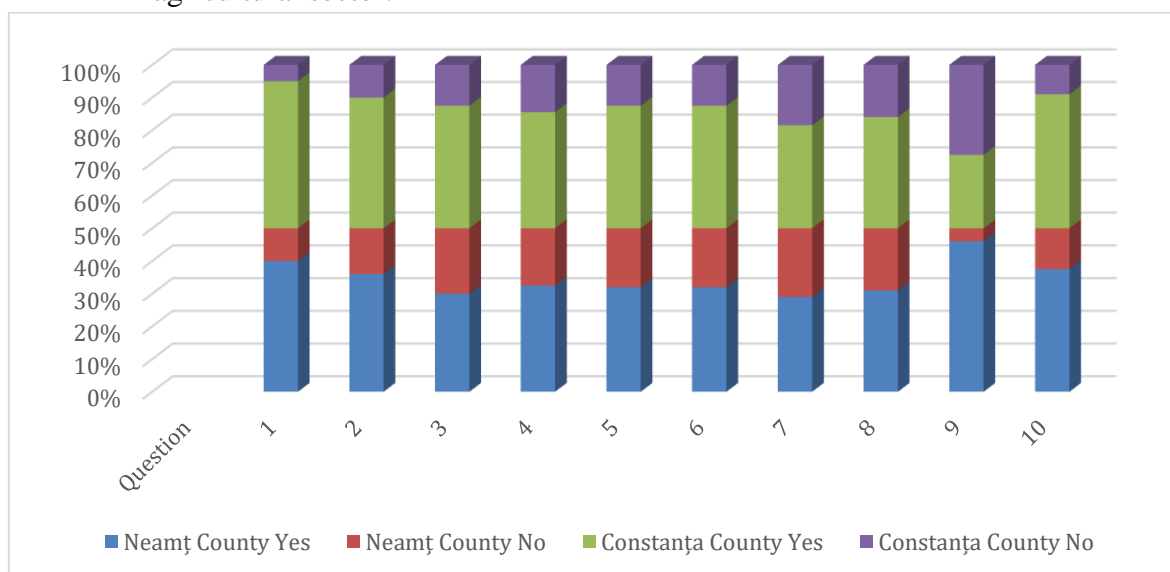


Figure 1. Graphic representation of centralized responses in table 10

Source: developed by the authors

- It is noted that more jobs were created in Neamț County thanks to European funds compared to Constanța County, reflecting the need for economic development and employment growth in Neamț County, while Constanța County may have other economic priorities.
- The fact that farmers encounter significant difficulties in accessing European funds is more common among those who have not benefited from these funds, indicating the need to simplify and facilitate the process of accessing them in order to

stimulate farmers' participation. It is worth mentioning that the perception regarding the complexity of the administrative procedures for obtaining European funds varies significantly between Neamț and Constanța counties.

- The support and advice provided by the authorities or organizations had a positive impact on accessing European funds in both counties, thus highlighting the importance of the support and resources available to farmers in their process of accessing European funding.

In terms of impact, European funds had a positive effect on farmers in both counties. These funds have contributed significantly to the improvement of agricultural business performance, job creation and the overall development of the agricultural sector. This suggests that funding programs are effective in both regions. Related to economic diversification, Constanța County seems to have a more varied economy, with an emphasis on tourism and plant production, while Neamț County stands out for the development of the IT industry and the agricultural sector. Economic diversification is an important element in maintaining long-term stability. There are also considerable opportunities for both counties to capitalize on European funds in support of the development of distinctive economic sectors. Neamț County can focus more on the development of the IT industry, while Constanta County can promote tourism and vegetable production.

Regarding the recommendations, it is essential to establish monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure the efficiency of the use of European funds. Simplifying administrative procedures and providing clear guidelines can boost farmer participation. Also, promoting cooperation, investing in human resource development, promoting tourism and supporting innovation are important directions for strengthening regional development. In addition, projects financed from European funds must take into account sustainability and the impact on the environment, in the light of climate change.

Conclusions

The management of European funds in Neamț and Constanța counties, reveals distinct regional dynamics and opportunities for development. European funds have played an important role in enhancing economic growth, agricultural modernization, and job creation in both counties. Neamț County, with its diverse economic potential, benefits from a higher level of access to European funds. However, Constanța County, with its larger population and tourism sector, demonstrates a significant need for funding and opportunities for economic diversification. Both counties have experienced positive impacts on their agricultural sectors, although they face challenges in accessing these funds.

As Romania looks toward the future, it is poised to harness the full potential of European funds to foster regional development, innovation, and an improved quality of life. Recommendations include establishing robust monitoring systems, simplifying administrative procedures, and promoting cooperation and innovation. Moreover, focusing

on sustainability and climate resilience is essential for long-term economic growth. This research provides valuable insights for local and national authorities, guiding them in improving the management and utilization of European funds and by understanding and addressing the specific needs of each region, Romania can navigate the evolving European funding landscape and pave the way for sustained growth and regional development.

References

- Alexandri, C., & Luca, L. (2008). Romania and CAP Reform. *Institute of Agricultural Economics, Romanian Academy*.
http://www.eadr.ro/RePEc/iag/iag_pdf/AERD0804_161-180.pdf
- Birovljev, J., Matkovski, B., Kleut, Ž., & Đokić, D. (2017). Economic performances of agriculture of CEFTA and former CEFTA countries. *Economics of Agriculture 4*
<https://scindeks-clanci.ceon.rs/data/pdf/0352-3462/2017/0352-34621704413B.pdf>
- Giurca, D. (2005). Pre- and post-accession impact elements - evaluations for the agri-food and rural sector in Romania. *Revista Oeconomica*. Romanian Society for Economic Science, 01, 561-594. <https://oeconomica.org.ro/files/pdf/105.pdf>
- Hubbard, C., Luca, L., Luca, M., & Alexandri, C. (2014). Romanian Agriculture since EU Accession: Has membership made a difference? *142nd Seminar, May 29-30, 2014, Budapest, Hungary 169794, European Association of Agricultural Economists*.
https://ageconsearch.umn.edu/record/169794/files/paper_Hubbard_Luca_Luca_Alexandri.pdf
- INS - National Institute of Statistics Constanța County Directorate of Statistics (2023).
<https://constanta.insse.ro/>
- INS - National Institute of Statistics Neamț County Statistics Directorate (2023).
<https://neamt.insse.ro/>
- INS - National Institute of Statistics Neamț County Statistics Directorate (2023). County statistics. <https://neamt.insse.ro/produse-si-servicii/statistici-judetene/>
- INS - National Institute of Statistics Constanța County Directorate of Statistics (2023).
<https://constanta.insse.ro/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Productia-agricola-de-bunuri-si-servicii-agricole-2020.pdf3>.
- Ionescu, C. (2018). *Effectiveness in Development management of the Region*. SemanticScholar.
<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Effectiveness-in-development-management-of-the-Ionescu/258347c43cf4ee2fd884af2e96ab013a4bd1e757>.
- Jasinska-Bilizak, A., & Malik, K. (2020). Measuring the Integrated Effectiveness of Regional Development: Directions for Regional Government. *European Research Studies Journal*, XXIII, 1, 389 – 403.
<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstream/123456789/56575/1/Measuring%20the%20Integrated%20Effectiveness%20of%20Regional%20Development%20Directions%20for%20Regional%20Government.pdf>

- Jean, A., Cvijanović, D., & Jonel, S. (2014). Sustainable agriculture and rural development in terms of the republic of Serbia strategic goals realization within the Danube region. Rural development and (un)limited resources; *MPRA Paper 58558*, University Library of Munich, Germany, revised 15 May.
<https://ideas.repec.org/p/pra/mprapa/58558.html>
- Kulikov, M. M. Afanasiev, M. M. Komissarova, M. A., & Guzenko, N. V. (2020). The Foresight Methodology in Strategic Planning at Regional Level. *International Journal of Economics and Business Administration*, 8, 1, 77-83.
<https://ijebe.com/journal/506>
- Ministry of European Funds. (2019). *About European funds, for everyone to understand*.
<https://mfe.gov.ro/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/0df2e027d8e772fdfaec9282cc2f8a76.pdf>
- Ministry of European Funds. (2023). *Contracted project data*
<https://www.fonduri-ue.ro/statistici>
- Monfort, P. (2008). Convergence of EU regions. Measures and evolution, European Union Regional Policy. *Working Paper European Union*, 01.
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/work/200801_convergence.pdf