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HOW TO ILLUSTRATE THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE IN THE ROMANIAN ECONOMY

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Abstract

In the context of the scarcity of conventional resources and an irrational use of resources which, combined with the arbitrariness of agricultural policies in Romania, have generated waste and impoverishment, it becomes necessary to develop mechanisms through which the economy aligns itself with the laws of nature that govern it, to sustainably use natural resources, to devise strategies through which the use of free goods confers balance and limits in the production process, generated in particular by the natural, sustainable degree of absorption of products in the environment. This natural approach to economic processes is closely associated with the concept of eco-economy. The paper essentially aims to apply the principles of sustainability and sustainable development at the group level and to transpose them into the community, thereby reinforcing the perception of the indissoluble link between the natural environment and the rational use of natural resources. At the same time, the paper aims to raise awareness among young people about the importance of preserving and protecting the natural environment. Environmental education exerts a significant influence on the outcomes achieved, with cascading effects on the overall performance of the economy. Through a questionnaire addressed to a representative sample of rural areas, we sought to identify the relationship between agricultural policy instruments applicable to rural areas and their concrete results, measured in terms of the well-being of the farming population.

Key words**:** *sustainability, agriculture policy, economy*

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture in Romania is a priority sector of the economy currently undergoing extensive restructuring, driven by the evolution of the agricultural market and the changing requirements of both domestic and international consumers. At the same time, given the existence of competitive segments, both within the regional agricultural market and as a result of the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Romania's agriculture must strengthen its competitiveness in terms of quality–price ratios, while upholding high quality standards, particularly environmental standards.

The Common Agricultural Policy represents the primary instrument through which European Union member states support sustainable agriculture and rural development. In Romania, the evolution of agriculture has followed the transition from a planned economy to a market economy, with the CAP exerting a significant impact on regional convergence and sectoral competitiveness [11]. Recent studies indicate moderate convergence in agricultural efficiency across regions, although substantial gaps persist between developed and peripheral areas [6]. Moreover, the implementation of LEADER programs and Rural Development Programs (RDP) has had positive effects on infrastructure development and the diversification of rural economic activities [14].

The vulnerability of Romanian agriculture to climate change is underscored by the increasing frequency of droughts and declining crop yields [19]. Remote sensing analyses reveal severe drought impacts on agricultural production in Dobrogea and southern Romania [21]. The risk of drought is becoming increasingly high, especially in agrarian areas that depend on irrigation, generating an urgent need for modernized infrastructure and

investments in water resource management [3]. Agriculture plays a fundamental role in regional development, yet persistent disparities between urban and rural regions continue to hinder economic convergence [10]. The CAP policies have only partially contributed to reducing these disparities, as regions with weak infrastructure and limited capital remain disadvantaged [4]. In addition, analysis of RDP implementation confirms that European funds had a greater impact in regions with high administrative capacity, thereby further accentuating territorial imbalances [15].

The integration of renewable energy into agriculture has become a crucial factor in advancing sustainability. Agrivoltaics — the use of agricultural land for solar energy production — has been widely discussed at the European level as a solution to enhancing resource efficiency and diversifying farmers' incomes. In Romania, recent research has revealed significant changes in agricultural land use between 1990 and 2022, with a decline in arable land in favor of construction and renewable energy projects [2].

The agricultural labor force remains a significant challenge for Romania. Studies indicate an accelerated aging of the rural population and external migration, which adversely affects production capacity [12]. At the same time, the structural transformations of European agriculture demand the adaptation of workforce skills and the integration of young people into modern agricultural practices [1]. Furthermore, the expansion of organic farming is regarded as an opportunity for sustainable development and employment creation in rural areas [17].

In this context, the goal of this research is to apply the principles of sustainability and sustainable development at the group level and to transpose them into the community, emphasizing on the awareness of the indissoluble link between the natural environment and the rational use of natural resources [8].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The development of the economic approach through the lens of sustainability policies contributes to the positive behavioral and attitudinal formation of young people, reinforcing their connection to nature as a counterbalance to urban development. At the same time, it also supports schools' efforts to develop activities that bridge the gap between the populated environment, dynamic from both an economic and social perspective, and a natural environment that ensures the perpetuation of species and life in general. Such perceptions should be translated into practice, through which young people can allocate time to study nature and its benefits, in order to foster activities aimed at conserving non-renewable resources.

To this end, it is necessary to educate young people on responsible consumption and efficient resource management to protect biodiversity, preserve the natural heritage, foster ecological awareness, and strengthen their commitment to environmental protection and conservation actions [20]. There is a need to educate young people in developing creative activities for waste recycling, environmental protection, and conservation to cultivate a responsible attitude toward the natural environment, alongside pro-ecological skills and practices related to its safety and preservation, raise public awareness of the problems caused by irrational resource exploitation and its adverse environmental effects, the most significant of which are high pollution levels and climate change [18].

Thus, we aim to promote a modern form of education that fosters ecological awareness and human responsibility, enabling active participation and cultivating an environmentally conscious stance, thereby encouraging the rational use of natural resources in line with sustainable development and environmental protection [16] [23].

In relation to quantitative variables, geographical, geodesic, and morphological factors indicate that agriculture holds significant potential [7] [13]. However, it does not generate sufficient added value due to the absence of a medium- to long-term strategic

vision that could foster efficient and sustainable development, consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals embedded in the European Union's agricultural policy.

In order to identify the need for agricultural development in order to increase the competitiveness of the Romanian economy, we surveyed 100 respondents, based on their answers to seven questions, who originate from the Bucharest–Ilfov region and southern Muntenia, areas recognized for their agricultural potential and for their contribution to supplying agricultural products to the major cities in these regions, including Romania's capital. The survey was distributed via email to a statistical population identified from the database of the National Institute of Statistics, consisting exclusively of entities engaged in agricultural production within the two macro-regions.

A survey is a collection of questions addressed to a small group of individuals, used to assess the opinions of a broader population. The margin of error is a mathematical calculation that determines the accuracy of the survey results, specifically how well the responses from a small group align with the opinions of the larger group, potentially at the population level. Survey reports often present margins of error together with another statistical concept, namely the "confidence interval." This is a statistical term used to describe the range in a distribution within which the most of data points are expected to fall. To obtain the mean responses and confidence intervals for survey questions, follow these steps:

→ calculate the mean of the responses (commonly for scale-based questions, such as Likert items), by adding up all the numerical responses (from 1 to 5, for example) for a given question and dividing the sum by the total number of participants.

→ calculate the standard error, which measures the average variability of the sample distribution:

standard error = standard deviation / SQRT (number of participants)

→ establish the confidence level by applying a Z value (usually chosen to be approximately 1.96 for a 95% confidence interval) to determine the confidence interval.

→ calculate the confidence interval:

*confidence interval = mean ± (Z value * standard error).*

The questionnaire consisted of seven questions composed of multiple Likert-scale items – a scale that allows for expressing the degree of agreement or disagreement with statements formulated in clear, simple, and concrete terms, which facilitates the collection of quantitative data from subjective perceptions.

Q1. How do you think agriculture influences the local economy?
- A. Increase the number of jobs
- B. Increase local income
- C. Stimulate other economic sectors
- D. It does not have a significant impact

Q2. In your opinion, what are the main challenges for local agriculture in the context of climate change?
- A. Decrease in crop yield
- B. Higher costs for adaptation
- C. Lack of resources necessary for adaptation
- D. Others (please specify)

Q3. To what extent do you think that the diversification of agricultural production can contribute to local economic stability?
- A. Very much
- B. Moderate
- C. A little
- D. Not at all

Q4. What impact do you think technology and innovation have on local agriculture?
- A. Improve efficiency
- B. Reduce costs
- C. Increase sustainability
- D. It does not have a significant impact

Q5. How do you think labour migration in the agricultural sector affects the local economy?
- A. It has a major negative impact
- B. Has a minor negative impact
- C. It does not have a significant impact
- D. It has a positive impact

Q6. How do you assess the influence of government policies on local agriculture?
- A. Very positive
- B. Moderately positive

- C. Neutral
- D. Negative

Q7. Do you believe that sustainable agricultural practices contribute to long-term economic growth in your community?

- A. Yes, significantly
- B. Yes, but only to a small extent
- C. I'm not sure
- D. No, it does not contribute

The validated questionnaires were processed to obtain the data required for statistical analysis. The statistical processing of the data was carried out using specialized software, namely the "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" (SPSS 12 (Statistical Package for The Social Sciences)). This program enables the processing of virtually unlimited datasets, allowing for the calculation of frequency, arithmetic mean (x), standard deviation (s), correlation coefficients, regression parameters, and the generation of diverse graphical representations, depending on the calculated statistical parameters (indicators).

The research findings indicate a clear interest among the population employed in Romanian agriculture for development, training, and specialization, with the aim of achieving higher valorization of resources, in order to access specialized markets through the economic goods produced.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Agrarian and rural areas make significant contributions to the national economy, both in terms of resident population and the economic activities conducted within them. From the perspective of the population residing in rural areas, in 2024, it represented 48.08% of Romania's total population, according to INSSE [24]. By contrast, the registered population living in rural areas accounted for 44.18%, indicating labor migration to urban areas in search of economic opportunities. Thus, in terms of employment level, 19.83% of the total employed population is engaged in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, according to INSSE, in an area that represents over 50% of the country's total area. Romania, with an agricultural area of 14.741 million hectares, has among the largest agricultural resources in Central and Eastern Europe. However, it loses arable land to the benefit of buildings and housing areas, without a corresponding development of Romania's economy in terms of rational and sustainable resource use, particularly agricultural resources.

According to Eurostat, the utilized agricultural area in Romania has decreased significantly between 2011 and 2023, due to market transformations and the economic dynamics of services, construction, and industry. Consequently, the decline in agricultural land contributes significantly to the allocation of land for the restoration of the productive capital structure of the Romanian economy, primarily serving industrial or non-agricultural activities. At the same time, Romania's dependence on imports to meet basic needs, especially those of agri-food goods, for which Romania has a comparative advantage in production, is deepening due to disparities in the availability of production factors.

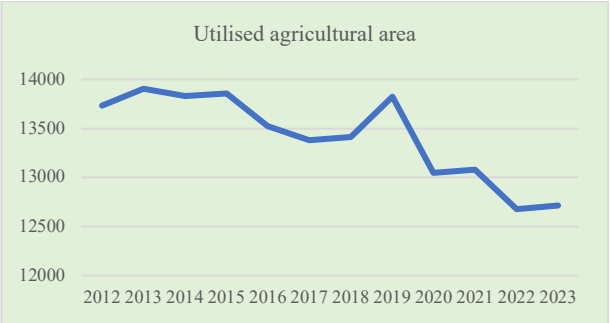

Fig. 1. Evolution of utilized agricultural area in Romania (2012–2023)

Source: Authors' calculations based on national statistics. Utilised agrarian area by categories [25].

In the context of global warming, dependence on irrigation for sustaining agricultural activities is particularly high, which means that many of the lower-fertility lands, located outside urban areas, are used for electricity production through photovoltaic farms [5].

Considering that Romania owns 12.678 million hectares of agricultural land, comprising 8.211 million hectares of arable land, 4.073 million hectares of meadows and pastures, 6.929 million hectares of forest, and 3.410 million hectares of other land categories,

the agricultural area that can be covered with photovoltaic panels, in conditions of economic efficiency, represents only 0.03% of Romania's arable land. This area cannot significantly affect the country's agricultural or overall economy, since the green energy obtained contributes to reducing production costs, provided that the national energy system is able to balance the amount of energy produced from renewable sources with that produced from conventional sources, thereby enabling users to benefit from affordable energy throughout the consumption period [22].
As can be seen from INSSE data, the decrease in agricultural area has led to an increase in Romania's imports. Specifically, regarding agriculture, imports have tripled, primarily consisting of food products and live animals.

Table 1. Evolution of agricultural imports in Romania by product categories (2012–2024)

	Import product categories (thousand euros)			
Year	**Total import**	Food and live animals	Raw materials, inedible, exclusively combustible	Oils, fats, and waxes of vegetable and animal origin
2012	**54,703**	3,666	1,738	226
2013	**55,317**	3,860	1,720	188
2014	**58,522**	4,066	1,671	149
2015	**62,971**	4,798	1,778	162
2016	**67,364**	5,477	1,940	160
2017	**75,604**	5,957	2,240	160
2018	**82,840**	6,070	2,460	152
2019	**86,297**	6,771	2,384	162
2020	**80,570**	7,185	2,178	191
2021	**98,379**	8,089	3,006	246
2022	**126,034**	10,066	3,810	436
2023	**122,046**	10,872	2,879	266
2024	**126,083**	11,449	2,932	304

Source: Authors' calculations based on national trade statistics [24].

Fig. 2. Evolution of total agricultural imports in Romania (2012–2024)
Source: Authors' calculations based on national trade statistics [24].

In this situation, it is necessary to design a development strategy for Romanian agriculture focused on strengthening its productive capacity, commensurate with the generation of economic goods for both domestic and foreign consumption. At the same time, there are opportunities to increase the added value of gross agricultural production within specific industries, such as processing, which would foster job creation and improve overall societal well-being.
The results of the statistical tests for 100 respondents are shown in Table 2. The results regarding the descriptive statistics of the survey responses: mean, confiednce intervals, median, variance and distribution indicators are persented in Table 3.
Agriculture's contribution to Romania's gross value added is 4.3% in the second quarter of 2024, compared with 19.88% for industry, 9.35% for construction, and 22.46% for trade.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of survey responses: Mean, confidence intervals, median, variance, distribution indicators (Q1–Q4)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Mean	21.733	18.400	18.400	20.267
95% Confidence Interval for Mean, Lower Bound	19.360	16.624	16.259	17.967
95% Confidence Interval for Mean, Upper Bound	24.107	20.176	20.541	22.567
5% Trimmed Mean	21.370	18.222	17.667	19.741
Median	20.000	20.000	20.000	20.000
Variance	1.064	0.596	0.866	0.999
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00
Range	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00
Interquartile Range	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
Skewness	0.400	0.286	0.742	0.446
Kurtosis	-0.993	-1.257	-0.552	-1.038
Sum	163.00	138.00	138.00	152.00
Standard deviation	103.157	0.77180	0.93056	0.99964
Valid N (listwise)	75.000	75.000	75.000	75.000

Source: Authors' calculations based on survey data.

Also, Fig. 3 illustrates the average responses and confidence intervals for survey questions (Q1–Q7).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of survey responses: Mean, confidence intervals, median, variance, distribution indicators (Q5–Q7)

	Q5	Q6	Q7
Mean	18.133	28.267	23.733
95% Confidence Interval for Mean, Lower Bound	15.521	25.747	21.092
95% Confidence Interval for Mean, Upper Bound	20.746	30.786	26.375
5% Trimmed Mean	17.370	28.630	23.593
Median	10.000	30.000	20.000
Variance	1.289	1.199	1.318
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	4.00	4.00	4.00
Range	3.00	3.00	3.00
Interquartile Range	2.00	2.00	2.00
Skewness	1.005	-0.343	0.155
Kurtosis	-0.576	-1.246	-1.407
Sum	136.00	212.00	178.00
Standard deviation	113.535	109.512	114.813
Valid N (listwise)	75.000	75.000	75.000

Source: Authors' calculations based on survey data.

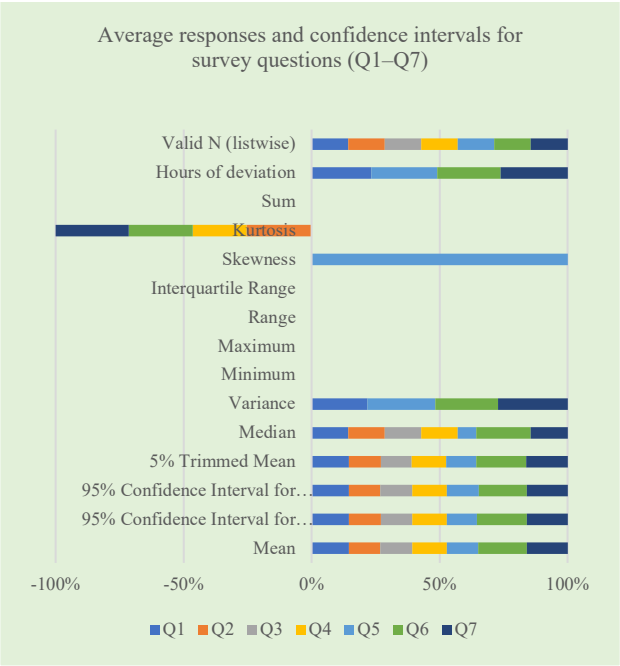

Fig. 3. Average responses and confidence intervals for survey questions (Q1–Q7)
Source: Own calculation.

From Table 3, we may see that the mean values range from 18.133 to 28.267, suggesting that the average responses lean towards the lower end of the scale, which, assuming a 1–4 scale, indicates a moderate level of agreement with the statements in the questions. In particular, Q6 ("How do you assess the influence of

government policies on local agriculture?") has the highest average (28.267), suggesting a stronger agreement with this statement compared to the others. The 95% confidence intervals are relatively narrow, indicating consistency in the responses.

The narrower the interval, the greater the confidence that the population mean is close to the sample mean. The medians are 20.000 for most questions, except Q5, where it is 10.000. The median represents the midpoint of the datase and is less sensitive to extreme values, suggesting that for Q5, most responses fall into the categories of 'disagree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement. Variance and standard deviation indicate the degree of dispersion of responses around the mean. A larger standard deviation indicates a greater dispersion of responses. Q5 has the highest dispersion, suggesting more varied views on the impact of labour migration on the local economy. Skewness measures the degree of skewness in the distribution of responses. A positive value indicates a longer tail to the right of the mean, while a negative value indicates a tail to the left. Most questions exhibit positive skewness, indicating that more answers are concentrated towards the lower end of the scale. Q6 has a negative skewness, suggesting a concentration of responses towards the top of the scale. Kurtosis measures the degree of peakedness or flatness of the distribution tails of the distribution are, compared to a normal distribution [9]. All Kurtosis values are negative, indicating relatively flat distributions, suggesting a lack of extreme outliers. The Range shows the difference between the highest and lowest response, and the IQR shows the range in which the middle 50% of the data falls. The values suggest that most answers are distributed in a reasonably concentrated range, except for question Q2, which has a narrower range.

According to the research data, the population employed in Romanian agriculture is interested in development, training, and specialization to improve resource utilization and access niche markets through the economic goods produced.

In Romania, the fiscal instability transferred to the business environment, as a result of a lack of budgetary foresight and a rigidity of the fiscal policy instruments, including the lack of transparency regarding the process of redistribution of budgetary revenues, corroborated with high credit costs in the economy, reduces the profitability and efficiency of private entrepreneurial activities. This fact reinforces the conviction that Romania has not yet consolidated itself as a fully functional market economy, as the actions and pressures of interest groups create significant dysfunctions in both the mechanisms of resource allocation and the redistribution of benefits.

At the same time, to address the lack of competitiveness in Romania's agriculture and the limited capacity to capitalize on its own resources, a solution would be to intensify production and expand sales markets by actively promoting the country's agricultural economic potential. There are numerous opportunities to attract human capital for productive purposes, especially in agriculture, tourism, artisanal industries, and light industries. However, we believe that the Romanian workforce lacks adequate institutional support through economic policy decisions, particularly in terms of taxation and financial predictability. Perhaps the lingering constraints of the communist period have not yet been fully overcome, or maybe the high level of corruption in the administration leads to a lack of motivation and involvement, but Romania cannot achieve sustainable economic and social development if it continues to import the majority of consumer products, if it exports a significant volume of raw materials and if it performs a limited number of economic operations within a product, leaving resources unexploited and wasting factors of production.

We believe it is opportune to actively engage society by stimulating private interest in rethinking and reconfiguring Romania’s agricultural market system, thereby creating the premises for the conservation and efficient exploitation of the domestic economic potential. Romania must also implement a coherent mix of fiscal, budgetary, and

monetary policies designed to outline an attractive and stimulating business environment, in which the actions of interest groups are aimed solely at increasing added value and intensifying internal and external competitiveness.

We believe that the sustainable development of agriculture contributes not only to job creation for the capitalization of local resources and industries adjacent to the production of agricultural goods (including tourism, dual education, and the wellness industry) and to the development of creative sectors generated by the farming/rural potential and transposed into the production of energy from renewable sources. In this way, long-term prospects for the sustainable development of agriculture are thus ensured.

To assume fundamental convergence criteria, Romania's agricultural development strategy must take into account the following:

- preservation of productive capacity. In this regard, investments managed by public-private partnerships will be allocated for the restoration or construction of irrigation networks, the provision of technical capital to enhance agricultural productivity;
- retention and attraction of the agricultural workforce. The agricultural population in Romania is either aging or lacks access to financial resources to initiate economic activities. The primary deficiencies of the farming population are the reduced opportunities for schooling, low qualifications, and the mismatch of professional skills and competencies to the current specificity of the agricultural products market. In this regard, local authorities should actively support the educational process in rural areas and provide motivation and facilities to attract the farm workforce;
- the development of agricultural product processing networks, particularly through small-scale or artisanal family associations, which should be complementary to medium or large farms;
- clarification of the legal framework for enabling the agricultural population to accumulate production factors and establish medium and large farms;
- the establishment of a functional agricultural land market to form a realistic price for land as a production factor, which would favor accumulation and production;
- ensuring that competitive mechanisms in the agricultural products market operate in ways that facilitate domestic producers' access to market;
- supporting agricultural producers through a system of subsidies aligned with the actual costs of production, meant to encourage production and sales;
- the possibility of accessing loans with preferential interest rates for agricultural producers;
- encouraging large-scale intensive agriculture through mechanization to increase productivity and achieve economies of scale;
- discouraging subsistence practices that foster self-consumption, economic demotivation, and deterioration of the workforce's physical and mental health;
- elevating agriculture to a profitable and efficient sector, to the detriment of the current attitude of marginalization, discrimination, and degradation.

The agricultural policy in Romania's past economy had a pervasive character, with the distribution and consumption process ensured by a large market in which centralized orientation was predominant. The recent period has been marked by institutional, particularly legislative, instability, which has caused the restriction of production capacity for several reasons:

1. the fragmentation of agricultural land, with negative consequences both on production capacity and product quality;
2. the lack of agricultural financing has caused a technological gap and hindered research development in the field of agriculture, with consequences on the productive potential in the medium and long term.
3. the widening of the gaps between rural and urban areas due to the insufficiency of the income of the labor force employed in rural areas caused by the lack of a flow of income

that would ensure the coverage of living needs and the premises of sustainable economic development;

4. limited opportunities for small producers to access markets for agricultural products. The agricultural market in Romania is an oligopolistic market that imposes significant barriers on small producers, both in terms of price and the quality conditions imposed on farm products. This fact is also accentuated by the limited access of small producers to forms of financing that would enable them to increase and develop efficient agricultural holdings.

5. Romania's accession to the European Union has not sufficiently stimulated small producers' interest in attracting material and financial resources to any small extent. In this case, there is a need for programs to inform the rural population about the importance of attracting European funds for the development of agriculture on a basis compatible with that of the European Union, but also to change people's mentality regarding the attitude towards work in agriculture: substituting labor with capital to a greater extent, the use of marketing techniques to streamline the process of distribution of agricultural products, emphasizing the training of the agricultural workforce and attracting as many young people as possible in the agricultural processes;

6. Romania's EU integration subjects its agriculture to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which attracts both advantages and disadvantages. Thus, Romania must improve its production capacity on a competitive, compatible, and convergent basis in consensus with the standard agricultural policy, relying on the exploitation of comparative advantages in relation to other countries in the European Union: a large market for agricultural products, high productive potential, and access to European financing to the extent that they are attracted.

Domestically, Romanian agriculture exhibits low growth rates due to low productivity and insufficient development of human capital, primarily caused by the lack of an adequate rural school infrastructure adapted to the requirements of a competitive agricultural market and aligned with the standard agrarian policy.

The economic development of rural communities largely depends on the same factors as urban development: access to well-paid jobs, critical services (education, health, technology, transport, telecommunications), and a sustainable natural environment. The rural area offers several additional advantages, including abundant and relatively inexpensive labor, significantly lower building costs, a lower cost of living, less congestion, and a quieter lifestyle. Thus, three key aspects are essential for diversifying the rural economy: capital investment for business development in rural areas, the rural population's orientation towards other fields of activity, and the development of basic infrastructure necessary for carrying out other economic activities.

Therefore, in a first phase, the creation and maintenance of adequate infrastructure are essential conditions for the economic and social development of rural areas. Modern infrastructure determines the capacity of rural areas to compete effectively for domestic investment promotion. It also contributes to increasing the attractiveness of rural areas in terms of living and employment opportunities. Transport, telecommunications, electricity, and water infrastructure are essential for business development and attracting investment in rural areas.

Capital, the third factor of agricultural production, plays a vital role because the development capacity and efficiency of agriculture depend on its volume and structure. The increasing role of capital as a substitute for labor is a result of technologically modernized agriculture.

For Romania, it is necessary to ensure, in accordance with the principles of the reformed CAP and the evolution of the European rural area, adequate farmer incomes, preservation of rural specificities, employment opportunities in rural areas, prevention of depopulation, preservation of local traditions, and consolidation of CAP objectives in food security.

As a result of the development of cutting-edge technologies, the intensification of scientific research, and the unprecedented influence of

the mass media on the decision-making behavior of the consumer, the relationship between resources and needs, between availability and demand, is experiencing substantial distortions, which undermines the production of economic goods to meet essential needs. This assault has direct repercussions on the way of combining financial resources, both own and attracted, respectively, requiring convergent implications from the productive sector to size the supply at the level of demand.

The problem is, on the one hand, the efficient management of own and borrowed resources, in the context of the continuous depletion of conventional energy reserves and the adjustment of demand in relation to its purchasing power and, on the other hand, in the management of trade balance imbalances, respectively of the balance of payments at the level of countries, as a result of the discrepancy between exports and imports.

The advantage of globalization lies in the mobility of production factors, enabling them to meet the demand for economic goods. In economies where the endowment of factors of production is insufficient, imports are made. This limits agricultural development, as demand for agricultural goods cannot be sustained by domestic consumption, which depends on the local labor force as a prerequisite for ensuring societal well-being.

CONCLUSIONS

Essentially, the factors driving economic growth can be summarized as those fostering entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship seeks to increase the income of both entrepreneurs and society, thereby contributing to economic growth and development. It is exciting to see how today's society fosters the entrepreneurial spirit and initiative, which are crucial for achieving core economic objectives, such as employment and wealth creation, in the agricultural sector. Through entrepreneurship, individuals empower their creative energies to generate sources of income for themselves and the community to which they belong. This motivates them to improve service quality, create economic goods that meet demand, and use resources efficiently. The need to provide reliable economic goods through the quality-price ratio leads to supporting the image of the products made and marketed by capitalizing on agricultural resources.

Implementing the principles of sustainable agriculture in Romania will lead to eco-efficient utilization of agricultural and environmental resources, paving the way to minimize the adverse effects of environmental and species degradation, with significant implications for human health. At the same time, we will identify opportunities to increase producers' incomes and consumer benefits in the medium and long term, as well as the positive effects of participatory agricultural practices.

According to the study, there is a marked interest in developing agriculture as a driver of local economic support, by attracting and utilizing local economic resources to create welfare for resource holders and to harness the potential for local development. In this respect, the study highlights the need for investment, particularly in crop regeneration, in capitalizing on work flows, and in ensuring the necessary irrigation, under conditions where the need for agricultural diversification is increasingly understood, as a result of a growingly fragmented demand in the agricultural market. Another element emphasized by the study is the necessity of labor force specialization, in alignment with innovative technologies employed in agriculture, to ensure the sustainable use of resources.

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