



16-17 November 2023

HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE CURRENT EU AGRO-FOOD POLICIES. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE PRESENT STATE OF ROMANIAN AGRICULTURE AND WHY ITS BACKWARDNESS MIGHT BE A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

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Abstract: *This paper offers a glimpse into research conducted for a dissertation thesis and links it to forthcoming, more extensive studies. The analyses presented here underpin the proposed hypothesis that the EU's current development directions are a significant opportunity for Romania to narrow the gap between its agricultural system and those of developed European nations. They also highlight the properness of Bihor County to serve as a testbed for innovative development strategies.*

• Introduction

The ultimate ambition of the thesis was to formulate a territorial development plan focused on the potential embedded by the small local farmers. We presented some of the work and findings done so far. The fragments displayed here are considered relevant for the future research we intend to do.

• Material and method

For the historical analysis, we consulted a series of relevant works from the speciality literature, selected the information that interested us directly and pieced them together. For the statistical analysis, we used data provided by the General Agricultural Census 2022 (ANDREI & ET AL., 2022).

• Results and discussions

Short-distance trade networks have long been the backbone of the European economy. Global increasingly decision-makers are cautious about fully liberalizing trade networks. The EU is one of the trendsetters to show commitment to adopting structural changes. In Romania's Bihor County, the high number of agricultural holdings with legal personality (AHLF) and their average size indicate well-established Alternative Food Networks (AFNs).

• Conclusions

Romania's agriculture should not just catch up with highly industrialized nations but explore innovative approaches to propel itself into the next evolutionary phase, by the current EU policies.

Acknowledgement: These studies might shed some light in a still-cloudy realm, they are far from being profound enough. The number of consulted documents must increase and the calculations need to take into consideration more parameters to get more definite results.