

# Newsletter August 2016

## Project ENHANCE - Excellency Network for Agricultural economic research and Education



Project: **Building an Excellency Network for Heightening Agricultural economic research and Education in Romania - ENHANCE**  
This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 691681

In January 2016 the project „**Building an Excellency Network for Heightening Agricultural economic research and Education in Romania**“ (ENHANCE) was launched, having already achieved its first results.

ENHANCE is a twinning project, that is a knowledge transfer program within the EU Framework of Horizon 2020 which aims at significantly strengthening a defined field of research in a particular knowledge institution by creating a link between this institution and at least two internationally leading research institutions in other Member States.



The ENHANCE Project brings together four European research institutions: **University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest (USAMV), Romania; Federal Research Centre for Agriculture from Switzerland ( WBF); Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies from Germany (IAMO); University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences from Austria (BOKU).** The project extends from January 2016 until December 2018 (36

months).

The major objectives of the project are to enhance the quality of agricultural economic research, the international acknowledgement and visibility of the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest as well as to strengthen the sustainable agricultural and rural development in Romania through the education of highly skilled and methodologically versed agricultural economists.

**The following results have been achieved:**

**1. A mentorship program concept** was created in order to pair authors from the Faculty of Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development from Bucharest with peers from the partnering research groups. Researchers are invited to apply for a database of mentors which will be hosted by the Faculty of Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development (FMIEADR). Authors from FMIEADR have the possibility to look for suitable mentors in this database and send manuscripts. Mentors will work together on revisions and accompany the submission process.

**2. The first training session on statistics and econometrics** pursuing the establishment of competencies in biometric and econometric techniques and the promotion of best practices in the application of advanced methods in agricultural economics. The courses were assisted by 22 participants, mostly PhD students, Postdocs and staff from the Faculty of Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development.

**3. The schedule and curricula** for the other training sessions were also established, every training session lasting four days and being given once in a quarter at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest (USAMV). The purpose of these courses is to considerably improve the qualification of FMIEADR staff and of the PhD students on the treated subjects.



**4. The matching procedure for the staff exchange** aiming to define the requirements and the activity flows for the implementation of the participants exchange activities in the framework of the project was accomplished. A pilot group consisting of the first five

departures from USAMV to the partners' centers have been set.

#### **5. The first six months brought considerable progress in terms of the summer school.**

The general structure has been developed, including duration, amount and structure of lessons and the definition of the target group. The first Summer School of this project, entitled "Scientific Working in Social and (Agricultural) Economic Science" will take place in Bucharest, between 19 and 23 September 2016. The 2016 USAMV Bucharest Agricultural Economics and Policy Summer School aims to promote the development of the participants' competences related to scientific working in agricultural economics and policy, i.e. fundamental needs and requirements for Master or PhD Students and young researchers. This comprises courses on literature search, including literature management and publishing, scientific writing/ writing journal articles with a focus on economic and social science as well as inter- and trans-disciplinary research, presentations (e.g. PowerPoint, Prezi, graphics programmes), aspects related to manuscript submissions to a journal (e.g. choosing the right journal, special issues, templates, editing), science communication to stakeholders (e.g. different channels, social media, blogs). In addition, it is planned to put a specific focus on freeware (e.g. Gimp, Prezi, LaTeX, R, Open Office, Zotero).

For more details please visit the Summer School webpage available at: <http://course.enhance-project.ro/>

**6. The official ENHANCE website** was created in February 2016 in order to collect all information related to the project and it became fully operational in March 2016. It was later added the educational platform for courses developed in the project, a distinct summer school subpage and an online forum.

**7.** As part of the project strategy to extend the cooperation and to set new projects jointly developed, **a successful application was made for the „ERA Fellowships“ program**, funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Germany). The program aims to build up capacities in key actors in the field of science management, and a participant from FMIEADR will spend 6 weeks, starting 1 September 2016, in Bonn, Berlin and Halle campuses in order to gather practical experience and exchange views in scientific management procedures and processes.

### **Previous event**



### **Project's Kick-off Meeting**

On January 26, 2016, the Kick-off Meeting of the ENHANCE Project took place in Bucharest, held by the **University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine**. The Project Coordinator USAMV, represented by the MIEADR Faculty, reunited all the project members and together with the Partners' Representatives discussed the urgent issues and established their resolution. The first encounter with all the team was a technical encounter that clarified issues of high importance.

### **„Twinning Coordinators Day“ meeting in Brussels**

On 14 March 2016 an event organized by the Research Executive Agency took place in Brussels for twinning Project Coordinators. It was a great opportunity to clarify issues regarding the technical, legal and financial aspects of the Twinning projects implementation and to meet with the Project Officer.

## **Forthcoming events**

### **Training session at USAMV (17-21 October 2016)**

The second training session of the module „Statistics and Econometrics“ held by lecturers from Switzerland - the **Federal Department of Economics, Education and Research** will be developed at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest.

### **Training session at USAMV (14-18 November 2016)**

The first training session in Economic Modelling, held by lecturers from Germany -**Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies** will be hosted at the

University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest.

### Project transnational meeting in Switzerland (March 2017)

The next ENHANCE transnational meeting will be organized in Switzerland. Members of the International Scientific Advisory Board (ISIB) will be also invited to attend. Further information regarding the agenda of the meeting will soon be available at: [www.enhance-project.ro](http://www.enhance-project.ro).

## Project information

**Title:** Building an Excellency Network for Heightening Agricultural economic research and Education in Romania (ENHANCE)

**Funding:** European Unions Horizon and innovation programme under grant agreement No 691681, 1097020 Euro.

**Duration:** 01/01/2016-31/12/2018 (36 months)

**Objective:** The general objective of the project ENHANCE is to fully realize and to further develop the currently existing scientific potential of the agricultural economists of the USAMV, particularly with respect to quantitative methods like modelling, simulation, econometrics as well as mixed methods research such as institutional economics.

**Project website:** [www.enhance-project.ro](http://www.enhance-project.ro)

### Consortium

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### Project Partners

**WBF - Federal Research Centre for Agriculture (Switzerland)**

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