

# Newsletter No.2 - December 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

The project „**Building an Excellency Network for Heightening Agricultural economic research and Education in Romania**“ (ENHANCE) continued developing its activities, having achieved very important results in the last six months of the year 2016.

Pursuing to fulfill its major objectives: 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 ENHANCE project has accomplished: the training sessions scheduled for Autumn 2016, the first Summer School at USAMV and four completed and two ongoing staff exchanges, with great importance and results for the beneficiaries.

### **The following results have been achieved:**

- **Training sessions**

Two more training sessions were completed in the analyzed period, contributing to the objective of the project, i.e. improving the qualification of FMIEADR staff and of the PhD students on Statistics and Econometrics and Economic Modelling:

- **Applied statistics and econometrics program - 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** was developed at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest.... [Read more](#)
- **Introduction to agricultural futures markets - 15-18 November 2016**  
The first training session in Economic Modelling, held by lecturers from Germany -**Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies** was hosted at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest... [Read more](#)

Thus, three training sessions have already been carried out from the total of twelve that are scheduled during the project. The schedule and curricula for the next training sessions to be implemented at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest (USAMV) in 2017 are already set.

- **Staff exchanges**



**Mr. Dragoș Smedescu** – Lecturer at USAMV Bucharest, Romania, was the first beneficiary of the staff exchange activities scheduled within the project. The traineeship took place at the **Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO)** – Halle (Salle), in the period 03.07.2016-30.09.2016.

During the training stage, Mr. Dragoș Smedescu developed documentation and information activities, under the mentorship of Mr. Thomas Herzfeld, PhD, University Professor.

The developed activities helped Mr. Dragoș Smedescu to enrich his basic knowledge of statistical programmes such as STATA:

Data Analysis and Statistical Software, Jmulti and E-view and to gain a better perception regarding the agricultural policy.

He focused his analysis on the policy measures to encourage the touristic activities, following the evolutions in Romania's tourism during and after the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development and The National Program for Rural Development 2007-2013.



**Ms. Armenița Arghiroiu** – Lecturer at USAMV Bucharest, Romania, went on a staff exchange at the **Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO)** – Halle (Salle), in the period 01.08.2016- 29.10.2016.

During the project, Ms. Armenita Arghiroiu together with her mentor, Mr. Djuric Ivan, PhD, Associate Researcher, conducted documentation and information activities aiming to study how the Romanian cereals and oilseeds market integrates (analyses of how prices are transmitted from one market to another, i.e. Romania to USA, France, Russia, Serbia, Hungary and Ukraine or vice-versa). In

particular, they have studied the wheat and corn market using as an instrument the prices transmission interpreted with the help of econometrics models - Error Correction Model and Vector Error Correction Model. Also, for the accuracy of the results, the programs JMuLTi and Eviews were used. After this training stage, Ms. Armenița Arghiroiu appropriated statistical and econometric methods to interpret the data and has deepened the documentation in her research area.



**Ms. Debora Altmeyer** – **Federal Research Center for Agriculture (Agroscope)** – Ettenhausen, Switzerland

performed the first Outgoing stage in the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine from Bucharest within the ENHANCE project, in the period 09.10.2016 – 09.12.2016.

During the mobility Ms. Deborah Altmeyer developed a questionnaire on job satisfaction of the researchers/ teachers in the field of agriculture. It will be further applied on the staff from the

four institutions involved in the ENHANCE project. The results of the analysis will be part of the deliverable 1.4. - Report on the success in increasing working motivation and remove stressors for the agricultural economics staff at USAMV, of the Work Package 1.

**Ms. Stelica Cristea**, PhD, Professor at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest and director of the IRMVA Doctoral School benefited of one month stage

during 15.11.2016 – 14.11.2016, at the **University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU)**, Vienna, Austria. The mentorship was assured by Mr. Peter Walder, Research Assistant at BOKU University.

The objective of this short-term stage was to study the management of the PhD academic courses, i.e. the organization and curriculum of the doctoral school, the university requirements to complete a PhD stage and thesis, etc. During the stage, Ms. Stelica Cristea exchanged opinions and had fruitful discussion both with PhD students, and with members and leaders of the doctoral school of BOKU. One important aspect of this stage was the contents of subjects taught to doctoral students as well as the doctoral school library.

- **The summer school**

The first Summer School of this project, **USAMV Bucharest Agricultural Economic and Policy** focused on “Scientific Working” and took place in Bucharest, between 19 and 23 September 2016, with lecturers from the **University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU)**, Vienna, Austria.

The 2016 USAMV Bucharest Agricultural Economics and Policy Summer School promoted 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...

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## Meeting the Stakeholders

- **Meeting with the Farmers’ representatives**

On November 24, 2016 at the headquarters of **The National Federation ProAgro**, the ENHANCE project team met the representatives of the National Federation ProAgro, Romanian Meat Association, Romanian Association of Pork Meat Producers and Pro Romanian Food Association. The discussions focused on the presentation of the main objectives of the ENHANCE project and on identifying ways to strengthen the cooperation between the University of Agronomic Sciences and the farmers, during the existence of the ENHANCE project and afterwards.

The participants welcomed the idea of a long-term relationship and established a bivalent connection from which both sides will benefit with the objective to raise the standards of research and development of agriculture in Romania...[Read more](#)



- **Meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development representatives**



On 25 November 2016, at **The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development**, the ENHANCE Project team met several Ministry representatives in order to present the main objectives of the project. Within the discussions, the interest of the MARD representatives to participate in project activities emerged (Summer School) but also to contribute with proposals for research topics/ subjects of reflection to be approached within the activities (staff exchange and training courses)...[Read more](#)

## **Dissemination activities**

### **Presentation of the ENHANCE Project to WISO Department - University for Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna**

The presentation of the ENHANCE project, besides the information related to the project consortium and objectives, focused on the main objective of the project: enhancing the quality of agricultural economic research within the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest... [Read more](#)

### **Presentation of the ENHANCE Project at CASEE - Central and South Eastern Europe Conference, Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Timișoara**

A brief presentation of the steps undertaken in the project took place, along with the planned steps, main objectives and information about the project consortium. Another objective met was the dissemination of information about the first Summer School from project ENHANCE...[Read more](#)

### **Presentation of the ENHANCE Project at European Researchers' Night, Bucharest, Romania**

The representatives of the ENHANCE Project team were present at the European Researchers' Nights on September 30th, 2016 in order to exhibit the aim of the project and to promote the second ENHANCE Summer School to be held at USAMV Bucharest from 18-22 September 2017 and that will focus on "Policy Evaluation" ...[Read more](#)

### **Presenting the ENHANCE Project at INDAGRA - International Trade Fair of Equipment and Products in Agriculture, Horticulture, Viticulture and Animal Husbandry, Bucharest, Romania**

The ENHANCE project was presented at the INDAGRA trade fair (exclusive crossroad for all economic and agronomic students, researchers, investors and visitors interested in the agricultural field), in order to promote the efforts made to enhance the quality of agricultural economic research within the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest....[Read more](#)

## **Collateral actions**

Among all the activities with great results for the beneficiaries, the collaboration between the ENHANCE project partners has already a strong synergistic effect. A few other applications for financing some common actions were realized by the ENHANCE project partners:

- USAMV was partner in an application achieved by IAMO, selected for financing within "ERA Fellowships" programme. The programme aims to build up capacities in key actors in the field of science management from EU13 science organizations.



Thus, Ms. Suzana Cismaș, PhD, Associate Professor at USAMV Bucharest, benefited from a 6-week stay at three German science organizations: Leibniz, Bonn and Berlin in order to gather practical experience in science management. She got in-depth insights and exchanged views on scientific management procedures and processes and contributed to strengthen networking and cooperation between the research organizations.

- A second successful application made by IAMO in partnership with USAMV was “LaScala – International Competence Center on Large Scale Agriculture”, financed by Leibniz Association (Leibniz Competition), Germany. A number of 11 partners will work together during 2017-2020 to accomplish the project objectives, especially to fill existing research gaps in understanding the effects of large scale agricultural businesses on the economic and social performance of the sector, welfare and distributive justice in rural areas, competition in factor and output markets.
- A workshop coordinated by Mr. Axel Wolz, with participants from USAMV’s representatives is working at present on other applications within the Horizon 2020 programme. We wish them great success!

## Forthcoming events

### 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).

### Training Sessions

The first training session held by Mr. **Friedrich Leitgeb, PhD**, from **The University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU)**, will take place between **20 February 2017 and 24 February 2017** on “**Qualitative research methods in agricultural sciences**”.

**The Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO)**, Germany, represented by the **Prof. Thomas Herzfeld, PhD** will conduct the second training session on “**Economic models in policy evaluation**” between **27 March 2017 and 31 March 2017**.

Further, in June 2017, between **12 and 17 June**, the lecturers **Mr. Andreas Kohler and Ms. Anne Wunderlich** from **The Federal Department of Economics, Education and Research (AGROSCOPE)**, Switzerland will continue preparing the participants in the field of “**Econometrics Analysis**”.

All the training sessions will be hosted at **The University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest**.

### Second Summer School “Policy Evaluation in Agriculture” (September 18-22, 2017)

The second ENHANCE Summer School will take place at USAMV Bucharest from 18-22 September 2017. The five-day event will focus on “Policy Evaluation in Agriculture” and the subjects will range from the normative foundations of policy evaluation over methodological tasks to public policy as the object of evaluation. The course Lecturers will be Dr. Stefan Mann from **The Federal Department of Economics, Education and Research (AGROSCOPE)** and Dr. Matthias Stolze from **The Research Institute for Organic Agriculture (FiBL)**, both Switzerland. Both have extensive experience in teaching and applying policy evaluation. The detailed program will be available at the beginning of 2017.

## Project information

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

**Funding:** European Union 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

**Project Coordinator - The University of Agronomic Science and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest (USAMV)**

**Contact:** Gina Fintineru

### Project Partners

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

**Contact:** Stefan Mann

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