

ENHANCING and NETWORKING were the aims of the third “USAMV Bucharest Agricultural Economics and Policy Summer School”

The *University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest* hosted the third Enhance project Summer School “Institutional Economics and Agricultural Development” between 17 and 21 September 2018.

Similar to the other Summer School editions, the event gathered participants with various nationalities (12 nationalities - Chilean, German, Nigerian, Polish, Ukrainian, Canadian, Albanian, Austrian, Norwegian, Chinese, Romanian and Russian), gender-balanced, 12 ladies and 7 gentlemen, with ages between 23 and 39 years ([See photos from the opening ceremony](#)).

The three lecturers have wide experience in teaching and a solid background in research with impressive results in Institutional Economics and Agricultural Development. **Prof. Thomas Herzfeld, PhD** is an expert in applied analysis of rural household behaviour as well as analysis of agricultural policies and institutions from *Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies*, (IAMO), Halle, Germany.

Dr. Axel Wolz is a Senior Researcher at *Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies*, (IAMO), Halle, Germany. His major research activities focus on the transformation of agricultural production cooperatives in the post-socialist economies.

Dr. Vaszi Kvartiukis is a Senior Researcher and an expert in the analysis of local governance and economic development. He is also affiliated to *Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies*, (IAMO), Halle, Germany.

This summer school introduced various concepts of defining and conceptualising economic institutions focusing especially on institutions of natural resource use, agricultural production and agricultural markets. Theoretical and empirical analyses of institutions’ role in land use decisions, access to agricultural inputs, transactions, and cooperation were presented and jointly critically discussed. The lecturers introduced various conceptual approaches to the theory of institutional change exploring possible links with other theoretical approaches like game theory, political economy and behavioural economics. They mainly derived examples from European and Central Asian countries where the experience of the transformation process of the last decades provides striking evidence of the varying success of economic reforms. The participants brought up case studies from their own past or recent research, working on them and discussing them with their colleagues.

The lecturers organized their courses in a fun and interactive way, so that the participants had the chance to assimilate all the information. The programme was intensive, with theoretical and practical sessions, group work, presentations and instant feedback from the lecturers. We are confident that this Summer School will have a positive impact on the participants' future scientific development! ([See photos from the courses](#))

The five days were very interesting as the organizing team surprised the participants with leisure and official visits to arouse their curiosity and to broaden their knowledge:

- On the welcome day, the participants were guided through **the USAMV campus**, which can be described as a vast, green and quiet place in the heart of Bucharest, revealing its history at every corner ([See photos](#)). The group was very impressed by the greenhouse, the Hortinvest Center and the Protectorate imposing lecture rooms of the USAMV.
- The second day the participants visited **the Village Museum**, offering them memories of a very entertaining moment, of a place where Romanians' traditional history unfolds in front of the visitors' eyes through monuments, costumes, documents, and old houses. ([See photos](#)).
- On the third day, the participants got the chance to meet the representatives of **the State Domains Agency (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development)** in an official meeting, where issues related to Institutional Economics and Agricultural Development were discussed and clarified. ([See photos](#))
- Last but not least, during the **Bucharest tour**, the participants joyfully discovered architectural monuments and the history of Bucharest, the Romanian spirit and the city life, this brief teaser leaving all of them with the desire to come back in the future. ([See photos](#))

After five intensive days, drawing conclusions and making plans for the future, everyone received a well-deserved Program Completion Certificate during the Closing Ceremony. ([See photos from the Closing Ceremony](#)).

As part of the cultural awareness aspect that such a multinational event implies, the host team organized a cultural night that all the participants attended and where they enjoyed music, food, dances and folk costumes from all the participating countries. ([See photos from the Cultural Night](#)).

As a beautiful ending of this special week, all the participants (students and lecturers) expressed their contentment for this learning week, sharing written and video testimonials that certify that the third Summer School at USAMVB was even more about enhancing and networking ([See testimonials here](#)).

