

Newsletter No.4 - December 2017

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**
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TWO YEARS OF ENHANCE PROJECT!

The project “**Building an Excellency Network for Heightening Agricultural ecoNomic researCh and Education in Romania**” (ENHANCE) completed two years of intensive and successful activities, with very important results: two summer schools, eight training sessions, a number of seven staff exchanges of three months and four of two months from Romania to the partners' centers and three staff exchanges of two months from AGROSCOPE to Romania. Besides all these, other fourteen events were checked, i.e. conferences, workshops, trade fairs, meetings, etc.

The following results have been achieved:

- **Training sessions**

Two more training sessions were completed during the analysed period, contributing to the objective of the project, improving the qualification of FMIEADR staff and its PhD students:

- The courses on “*Introduction to R and Productivity and Efficiency Analysis in Agricultural Economics*” were held between **25-28 September 2017**, teaching the participants the latest calculation and interpretative methods: R programme, Efficiency analysis, Data Envelopment Analysis and Stochastic Frontier Analysis. The lectures were given by Prof. Dr. Jochen Kantelhardt, Dr. Sebastian Lakner, Dr. Katharina Schodl and DI. Peter Walder. Dr. Lakner was invited to join the BOKU team for this Training Session. The courses were fun and interactive with great feedback from all participants....[Read more](#)
- The last training session of 2017 was held between **20-24 November**, the third course of the module “*Economic Modelling*”, entitled “*Agent-based Modelling in Agricultural and Resource Economics*”. The courses were structured differently from the previous ones, in 5 days and were delivered by the partners from Germany (IAMO)- Dr. Zhanli Sun, Dr. Marten Graubner, Prof. Dr. Alfons Balmann and Franziska Appel.... [Read more](#)

Considering these two courses, a total of eight training sessions have already been accomplished out of the twelve that are scheduled during the project.

For the next training sessions that will be implemented at the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest (USAMV) in 2018, the schedule and curricula are already set and available at: <http://course.enhance-project.ro/course>

- **Staff exchanges**

The last six months were very productive, as a lot of activities took place during the staff exchanges, five persons from FMIEADR being involved in the research stays held at all the three centers: BOKU, IAMO, and AGROSCOPE.

- **Ms. Vlad Ionela Mituko**, Lecturer, Ph.D., had a three month stay at IAMO (Germany), from June 11 until September 08, under the guidance of Dr. Ilkay Unay and Prof. Dr. Alfons Balmann. The research area analysed by Ms. Vlad was mainly oriented to young mobility and the labour force use in the rural areas in Romania. Additionally, this was jointly completed by the focus on the rural area through the lenses of young population and migration, as drivers for the farming performance and the typology of farms, the farming system and farm structure in Romania and the impact on labour use (through the FADN, Eurostat and NIS data sets).
- **Ms. Aurelia Bălan**, Lecturer, Ph.D., had a three month stay at BOKU (Austria), from August 1 until October 29. Her research theme focused on “Sharing Economy and Agriculture”, being tutored by DI. Peter Walder and Prof. Dr. Jochen Kantelhardt. Their joint work focused on a comprehensive literature research and structuring of Sharing Economy and Agriculture.
- **Ms. Denisa Burcea**, Teaching Assistant, Ph.D., studied “Innovation in Agriculture” during a two month stay at BOKU (Austria), from July 3 until August 31. DI. Peter Walder and Prof. Dr. Jochen Kantelhardt helped her substantiate her research theme and guided her in the understanding of the methods’ application. The main focus was on conceptualising the computation of an Innovation Score at Farm level, based on empirical data collected in Austria.
- **Ms. Iulia Zaharia**, Lecturer, Ph.D., benefited from a two month stay at AGROSCOPE (Switzerland), from July 10 until September 10. Together with Ms. Linda Reissig, researcher at the Socioeconomics department, she studied a very interesting topic. i.e. “Burnout Rate among Romanian Farmers”.
- The last staff exchange from 2017 was completed by the project’s coordinator, **Ms. Gina Fintineru**, Professor, Ph.D., who collaborated during a month and a half (June 19- August 6) with Dr. Gabriele Mack (AGROSCOPE, Switzerland) on “The Impact of Direct Payments on the Attractiveness and Vitality of Rural Areas”. The visit was a completion of Ms. Gabriele Mack’s stay in Romania, their collaboration being highly productive.

- **The 2017 Summer School**

The second **USAMV Bucharest Agricultural Economics and Policy Summer School** focused on enhancing knowledge and building relationships. The edition on “Policy Evaluation in Agriculture”, which took place between 18 and 22 September was hosted by the *University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest* and the course were jointly organized by FiBL (The Research Institute of Organic Agriculture), Frick, Switzerland and AGROSCOPE, Tänikon, Switzerland.

The highly scientific and topical aspects of the 2017 edition were enriched by the multicultural background of the guests. On the one hand, two esteemed lecturers from Switzerland: Dr. Dr. habil. Stefan Mann and Dr. Matthias Stolze, on the other hand, 23 participants (Master or PhD students and researchers from agro-economics disciplines) of 15 nationalities: Chilean, Croatian, Dutch, German, Indian, Iranian, Italian, Lithuanian, Nepalese, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Swiss, Turkish and Vietnamese.

The five days of scientific activities (theoretical and practical), of visits (USAMVB campus, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Village Museum) and the Cultural Night proved insufficient to the knowledge and friendship that were to be shared... [Read more](#)

Dissemination activities

➤ Conferences & Congresses

The ENHANCE team attended the following events in order to present the project results, exchange knowledge and create connections:

- The XV Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE) in Parma, 28 August – 1 September 2017 (<http://www.eaae2017.it>)
- The 57th Annual Conference of the German Society of Economic and Social Sciences in Agriculture (GEWISOLA) 2017 and the 27th Annual Conference of the Austrian Society of Agricultural Economics (ÖGA) 2017 (<http://www.gewisola2017.tum.de/>) jointly organised in Weihenstephan, Germany (13-15 September 2017)

➤ Events

Participation in events is very important for increasing the visibility of the project and the dissemination of its results. During this period of six months, the ENHANCE project was present at a few of the most important events in the field of education and agricultural economics:

- **European Researchers' Nights**, Bucharest, Romania, **September 29, 2017**-presenting the main results of the project, exhibiting the general aim and promoting the next Summer School (the third ENHANCE Summer School that will take place at USAMV Bucharest in September 2018) organized at the Faculty of Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development, with the support of the ENHANCE project....[Read More](#)
- **International Trade Fair of Equipment and Products in Agriculture, Horticulture, Viticulture and Animal Husbandry (INDAGRA)**, Bucharest, Romania, **25-29 October 2017**, Bucharest. The team's participation had as main purpose coming into contact with visitors interested in agriculture, explaining the role of education in improving the agricultural activity and the efforts that are being made in this project to improve the quality of agricultural economic research within the University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest....[Read More](#)
- **Salonul Cercetării Românești "Conceput în România"/ Romanian Research Salon "Made in Romania"**, Bucharest, **26-27 October 2017**. For this participation, the ENHANCE project was awarded a Diploma of Excellence....[Read More](#)
- At **Gala EduManager**, Bucharest, **22 November 2017**, the ENHANCE project was present as a competitor with a presentation that highlighted the projects' results in improving the quality of education of USAMV, being included in the category: "Running projects funded by European funds"....[Read More](#)
- The last event of 2017 was the **TopAgribusiness Gala**, on **December 8, 2017**, Bucharest, an important event for the Romanian agriculture. The audience consisted of representatives of The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, farmers, representatives of the Romanian Agribusiness sector, researchers, professors and students....[Read More](#)

➤ Workshops

- Five internal workshops were organized after each staff exchange, where the research stay beneficiaries made presentations on the objectives they achieved, the lessons they learned and the results they obtained. A high number of the FMIEADR staff joined these workshops, the main purpose being to promote the project and its results and to encourage the staff to apply for future staff exchanges.
- On **November 30**, a workshop on ENHANCE was held at BOKU. The participants were staff members who had been at USAMV for either a Training Session or the first ENHANCE Summer School in 2016 and also those colleagues who will participate in the project in 2018 (Training Sessions and Staff Exchanges). After some administrative briefing, the participants used the opportunity to exchange their experiences and get into contact with each other. This is especially relevant, since ENHANCE links several other Departments at BOKU beyond the “core” Department of Economics and Social Sciences.

➤ Publications

- **Necula, R., Mann S.**, “Democratisation or individualisation? On the Distribution of Food Consumption” accepted by *British Food Journal*.
- **Necula, R., Mann S.**, Poster presentation- “Democratisation or Individualisation? On the Distribution of Food Consumption”, the XV Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE) in Parma, 28 August – 1 September 2017.
- **Walder, P., Fîntîneru, G., Mann, S., Herzfeld, T., Wolz, A., Kantelhardt, J.**, Poster presentation- “Building an Excellency Network for Heightening Agricultural Economic Research and Education in Romania”, the XV Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE) in Parma, 28 August -1 September 2017.
- **Walder, P., Fîntîneru, G., Mann, S., Herzfeld, T., Wolz, A., Kantelhardt, J.**, Poster presentation- “Building an Excellency Network for Heightening Agricultural Economic Research and Education in Romania”, the joint 57th GEWISOLA Annual Conference and 27th ÖGA Annual Conference in Freising-Weihenstephan, 13-15 September 2017.
- **Schmidt A., Smedescu D., Mack G., Fîntîneru G.**, “Is There a Nitrogen Deficit in Romanian Agriculture?”, *Agrolife Scientific Journal*, Vol. 6, Number 1, 2017, ISSN 2285-5718, pg. 243-248.
- **Ştefan P., Mann, S., Fîntîneru G., Creţu R.C.**, “Study Regarding the Situation of Wine Producers in Romania”, *Scientific Papers. Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development*, Vol. 17, Issue 3, 2017, ISSN 2284-7995, pg. 391-396.
- **Ştefan P., Mann S., Fîntîneru Gina**, “Studies Concerning the Situation of Wine Producers in Switzerland”. *Scientific Papers. Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development*, Vol. 17, Issue 4, 2017, ISSN 2284-7995, pg. 333-338.
- **Mack G., Fîntîneru G.**, “Do Rural Development Payments Contribute to Vitality in Rural Areas in Romania?”, Submitted to International Conference of Agricultural Economists (ICAE) 2018.
- **Walder, P., Balan, A. and Kantelhardt, J.**, Abstract submission- “The Infancy of Sharing Economy and Possible Learnings from Agriculture”, for the Conference Agriculture for Life, Life for Agriculture 2018.
- **Wolz, A., Möllers J., Micu M.**, Paper submission- “*Cooperation among Individual Farmers in Romania: Constraints and Options*” for the Conference Agriculture for Life, Life for Agriculture 2018.
- **Wolz, A., Möllers J., Micu M.**, Abstract submission- “*Options and Constraints of Cooperation among Farmers in a Post-socialist Setting: First Findings from Romania*” for the annual European Research Conference of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) to be held in Wageningen/Netherlands (4-6 July 2018).

Forthcoming events

➤ **Project transnational meeting**

The next ENHANCE transnational meeting will be organized in Halle, Germany, between **12-13 April 2018**. Further information regarding the agenda of the meeting will soon be available at: www.enhance-project.ro.

➤ **Training Sessions**

Between **February 13 and 16, 2018**, the *University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest* will host the third training session presented by researchers from BOKU, focusing on “**Introduction to Applied Panel Data and Instrumental Variable Regression Methods**”. The lecturer is Dr. Ulrich Morawetz, Senior Scientist, a specialist in econometrics and valuation methods for natural resources.

The fourth training session on “**Applied Statistics and Econometrics**” presented by AGROSCOPE researchers will take place in **June, between 25 and 29**, being the last training session given by this partner to the MIEADR staff.

The fourth and final training session “**Agricultural Sector Models**” will be presented by staff members of IAMO. The lecturer will be Dr. Nodir Djanibekov, Senior Scientist. It will take place between **16 and 20 July 2018**.

The fifth and final training session from BOKU will be held by DI. Andreas Niedermayr, from **September 24 to 27**. Andreas will introduce to “Spatial Econometrics in Agriculture”.

➤ **Third Summer School “Institutional Economics and Agricultural Development” (September 17-21, 2018)**

Preparations for the next USAMV Bucharest Agricultural Economics and Policy Summer School have already started. The third ENHANCE summer school held by lecturers from IAMO focuses on “Institutional Economics and Agricultural Development” and will take place at USAMV Bucharest from 17-21 September 2018... [Read More](#)

➤ **Staff Exchanges**

Most of the staff exchanges to the Western Partners have already taken place. Nevertheless, the final staff exchanges for 2018 in both directions are currently under preparation and will be decided within the first weeks of 2018.

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

Consortium

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

Contact: Gina Fîntîneru

Project Partners

WBF - Federal Research Centre for Agriculture (Switzerland)

Contact: Stefan Mann

IAMO - Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (Germany)

Contact: Thomas Herzfeld

BOKU - University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (Austria)

Contact: Peter Walder

For further information check our website starting January 2018.



University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest



Faculty of Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development of Bucharest



Federal Department of Economics, Education and Research



University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna



Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies

