

Common Agricultural Policy and Agriculture Financing in Romania

Attila TAMAȘ SZORA¹, Daniel Petru VÂRTEIU², Alina Nicoleta SOLOVĂSTRU³

^{1,2} University “1st of December 1918”, Alba Iulia, ³University “Dimitrie Cantemir” Târgu – Mureș

attaconsulting@yahoo.com, daniel.varteiu@uab.ro, alina.solovastru@yahoo.com

Abstract. *Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) originated in the year of 1962 and represents an instrument with the help of which the European Union directly sustains the farmers in the Member States by ensuring a decent living, at the same time ensuring the development of rural environment. CAP is structured in three domains which aim to directly helping the farmers, market proceedings and rural development, and the main financing instruments are the European Agriculture Guarantee Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. Nationally, the European funds which finance Romanian agriculture and rural environment are made available for potential beneficiaries through the Agency for Payments and Intervention for Agriculture and through the Agency for Financing Rural Investments, both agencies being under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.*

Keywords: agriculture, common agricultural policy, agriculture financing, European funds.

JEL Classification: Q14

1. Introduction

The European Union cares for the existence of a sure unique market which is to meet the needs of the European citizens, having products which respect the European standards. For placing certain high quality products within this market, one of the domains of great interests at the moment is agriculture, the Member States baring both the responsibility and public financing up to 38% from the European Union's fund.

The agricultural activities in the European Union's Member States take place in accordance to the stipulations of Common Agricultural Policies which represents an instrument of sustaining the farmers, as well as a way of promoting the European agriculture by increasing the agricultural productivity and providing safe foods to the European citizens.

Common Agricultural Policy is considering both sustaining the farmers in a direct way by granted aid and implementing certain market proceedings which are to help them, as well as sustainable development of rural environment, in the circumstances in which over 77% of the European Union is ranked as being rural.

The European Union encourages a European peculiar agricultural model through the common agricultural policy, and the European Commission has a major part due to its collaboration with the consultative groups before elaborating proposals, proposals which will be subsequently decided by the Council of Agricultural Ministers in the Member States, together with the European Parliament. The Member States bare the entire responsibility for the good functioning of CAP, whilst the good management and utilization of the funds allotted by the EU, is ensured by the European Court of Auditors.

2. Theoretical Background

Agriculture is a branch of material production which has as its object plant culture and livestock for obtaining certain food products and raw materials.¹

The Agency for Payment and Intervention in Agriculture is a public institution subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development which is responsible for conducting and managing the funds concerning the direct payments and market proceedings and for certain financing measurements financed from European funds for agriculture and rural development established through an order of Agriculture Ministry.²

The Agency for Rural Investment Financing is a public institution subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development which ensures the technical and financial implementation of European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.³

European funds are funds which finance the national programs, approved by the European Union for a well delimited period of time.⁴

The European Agricultural Guarantee Fund is a fund created by the European Union for developing the agriculture of its Member States, through shared management between the Union and the Member States.⁵

The direct payments schemes are mechanisms of sustaining the agricultural producers, who get involved in agriculture, on clearly delimited period of time.⁶

The measurements for sustaining the market consist in interventions on the agricultural markets under the form of stock and export refund.⁷

The measurements of rural developments are measurements which help rural areas to face the multiple economic, social and environmental challenges that are brought by the 21st century.⁸

3. Methodology

Our research aims presenting the theoretical aspects referring to financing of Romanian agriculture through Common Agriculture Policy. The main aspects that we pursue target presenting the Common Agricultural Policy, the instruments which finance it, the institutions which finance the Romanian agriculture, the schemes and support measurements of farmers and rural development made by agencies and the agencies' activities in numbers. As methods and research techniques, in our study, we have used the theoretical documentation, analysis and synthesis. The theoretical documentation supposed the study of specialty literature. We have used analysis in presenting the numbers concerning the activity made by the agencies which finance Romanian agriculture. Synthesis was used for presenting the theoretical aspects, the domain of agricultural financing being a vast study field.

4. Common Agricultural Policy

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) consists in a set of legislative acts adopted by the European Union for ensuring a cushioned common policy in the field of agriculture.⁹ CAP has the role of supporting the agriculture for providing to over 500

¹<http://www.arceus.ro/lingvistica/CautareDex?query=AGRICULTUR%C4%82>, accessed on 20.06.2019

² <https://www.afir.info/>, accessed on 20.06.2019

³ Ibidem

⁴ <http://madr.ro/docs/dezvoltare-rurala/rndr/buletine-tematice/PT23.pdf>, accessed on 25.06.2019

⁵ <http://www.finantare-rurala.ro/>, accessed on 25.06.2019

⁶ Ibidem

⁷ https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/AR08/AR08_RO.PDF, accessed on 25.06.2019

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-development-2014-2020_ro, accessed on 25.06.2019

⁹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ro/policies/cap-introduction/>, accessed on 20.06.2019

million Europeans qualitative corresponding products (in the context of climate change) and of promoting sustainable and balanced development in all rural areas of Europe, including the ones where the production conditions are harsh,

The Treaty concerning the European Union functioning, in article 39, present the CAP objectives as being:¹⁰

- ✓ Sustainable increasing of agricultural productivity by promoting technical progress, by ensuring rational development of agricultural productions, as well as the optimal usage of production factors, especially the workforce
- ✓ Ensuring a fair living standard for the agricultural population, especially by increasing the individual income of agriculture workers;
- ✓ Markets' stabilization
- ✓ Guarantee of provision safety
- ✓ Ensuring the reasonable delivery prices towards the consumers.

From the moment of setting of until now, CAP has been reformed in three stages, therefore, the first stage was in 1992 when there has been a passing from supporting the agriculture to supporting the farmers by granting them direct aids detrimental to prices subsidizing; the second stage (year 2003) consisted in granting farmers with aids for their incomes, under the condition of respecting certain legal requirements connected to agricultural land care, respecting standards concerning food safety, environment, health and animal welfare, and the last reform took place in 2013 and consisted in consolidating the competitiveness in the agricultural sector, promoting sustainable agriculture and supporting employment in rural environment.¹¹

Common Agricultural Policy has lately registered a remarkable evolution, supporting the farmers to face the new challenges, thus offering the possibility to produce according to request on the market. The new reforms emphasize:

- ✓ Implementation of ecological agricultural practices
- ✓ Effecting research and disseminating knowledge;
- ✓ Supporting the farmers in an equitable way,
- ✓ The importance of farmers as food suppliers.

The new reforms also support the consumers through the European quality labelling system, offering them the possibility of making the right choices being fully aware. The labelling offers information concerning both the geographical origin of the products, as well as using some traditional production methods or of certain ingredients, offering an increase of competitiveness on the international markets of the products made in the European Union. Promoting innovation in agriculture is also taken under consideration through research projects and making certain fair trade relations with the developing countries.¹²

The challenge which is to be taken into account for the future, consists in doubling the world food production by 2050, as a result of population growth and of the more requests of products of animal origin, taking into consideration climate changes, and the European Union comes to greet the farmers with the necessary counselling concerning investments and innovation in order to help them accomplish this mission.

5. CAP's Financing Instruments

Cap uses the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) as main financing instruments.

¹⁰ Treaty concerning the European Union functioning, art.39, published in the European Union's Official Journal 2012/C 326/01

¹¹ European Commission, *Let's Understand the Policies of the European Union: Agriculture*, Brussels, 2017, p.5

¹² http://europa.eu/european-union/topics/agriculture_ro, accessed on 27.06.2019

The *European Agricultural Guarantee Fund* represents one of the funds which contribute to reaching the CAP's objectives through two categories of proceedings financed from the pillar I, namely: income support for farmers (70% from CAP budget) and proceedings for sustaining the market (10% out of CAP budget).¹³

For financing the proceeding from the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund, a total budget of 330.085 million Euros has been made, for the programming period 2007-2013, respectively 308.734 million Euros for the programming period 2014-2020, according to table no. 1.

Table no. 1. Budget allotted to financing the proceeding from EAFG

Year	Programming period 2007-2013 -mil. euro-	Year	Programming period 2014-2020 -mil. euro-	Rate of allocation variance (PP 2014-2020/ PP 2007-2013) %
2007	45.759	2014	43.779	- 4,32
2008	46.217	2015	44.190	- 4,38
2009	46.679	2016	43.951	- 5,84
2010	47.146	2017	44.146	- 6,36
2011	47.617	2018	44.163	- 7,25
2012	48.093	2019	44.241	- 8,00
2013	48.574	2020	44.264	- 8,87
Total	330.085	Total	308.734	- 6,46

Source: Own processing, http://ec.europa.eu/budget/figures/fin_fwk0713/fwkw0713_en.cfm#cf07_13, accessed on 28.06.2019, http://ec.europa.eu/budget/mff/figures/index_en.cfm, accessed on 28.06.2019

Overall, one can observe that the level of budget allotted for the programming period 2014-2020, has registered a 6,46% decrease (-21.351 mil. Euros) as compared to the budget of the programming period 2007-2013.

The allotments for financing the expenses connected to the market and direct payments have followed a positive trend on all programming period 2007-2013, starting from 45.759 million Euros allotted for 2007 and reaching maximum allotment per period of 48.574 million Euros, afferent to 2013.

The allotment afferent to expenses for the programming period 2014-2020 have increased with 0,93% between 2014 – 2015, respectively 0,71% for 2016-2020, while between 2015-2016 it has registered the only decrease of allotment of 0,54%.

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development is a financing instrument situated in the second Pillar of CAP and one of the five funds which consist the European Structural and Investment Funds which contributes to the sustainable rural development of the Member States.¹⁴ The objectives established by CAP's reforming concerning EAFRD, aims at sustaining European competitive agriculture, durable management of natural resources in community space, immunity to climate change, endowment of rural environment with public goods, keeping the sights at European

¹³ European Court of Auditors, Annual report referring to budget execution concerning financial exercise, 2008, pp.89-90, https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/AR08/AR08_RO.PDF, accessed on 28.06.2019

¹⁴https://www.ficompass.eu/sites/default/files/publications/EAFRD_The_european_agricultural_fund_for_rural_development_RO.pdf, accessed on 28.06.2019.

level, amelioration of economies in rural environment, creating jobs in rural environment.

The budget allotted to financing the proceedings of rural development for the programming period 2007-2013 was of total amount of 96.244,2 million Euros, while for the current programming period 2014-2020 it has registered a slight increase reaching the value of 99.349 million Euros according to Table no.2. For the programming period 2014-2020, EAFRD budget is destined to financing 118 programs of rural development unreel in the Member States.

**Table no. 2. Budget destined to rural development in the programming period
-million Euros-**

UE's Member States	Programming period 2007-2013	Programming period 2014-2020	Allotments' increase rate %
Belgium	487,5	648	+32,92
Bulgaria	2.642,2	2.367	-10,41
Czech Republic	2.857,5	2.306	-19,30
Denmark	577,9	919	+59,02
Germany	9.079,7	9.446	+4,03
Estonia	723,7	823	+13,72
Ireland	2.494,5	2.191	-12,16
Greece	3.906,2	4.718	+20,78
Spain	8.053,1	8.297	+3,02
France	7.584,5	11.385	+50,10
Croatia	0	2.026	-
Italy	8.985,8	10.444	+16,22
Cyprus	164,6	132	-19,80
Latvia	1.054,4	1.076	+2,04
Lithuania	1.765,8	1.613	-8,65
Luxemburg	95	101	+6,31
Hungary	3.860,1	3.431	-11,11
Malta	77,7	97	+24,83
Nederland	593,2	765	+28,96
Austria	4.025,6	3.938	-2,17
Poland	13.398,9	8.698	-35,08
Portugal	4.059	4.058	-0,024
Romania	8.124,2	8.128	+0,046
Slovenia	916	838	-8,51
Slovakia	1.996,9	1.560	-21,87
Finland	2.155	2.380	+10,44
Sweden	1.953,1	1.764	-9,68
United Kingdom	4.612,1	5.200	+12,74
Total	96.244,2	99.349	+ 3,22

Source: own processing after http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/biblio/documents/fin_fwk0713/tab_rural_dev_2007-2013.pdf și http://ec.europa.eu/budget/mff/preallocations/index_en.cfm

We can see that overall an increase budget of 3,22% has been registered during the programming period 2014-2020, while the greatest level of increase took place in Denmark with 59,02%, and the greatest budget decrease of 35,08% was in the case of Poland. As compared to the other states situated in the South – East of

Europe which have registered significant budget variations such as Greece (+20,78%) and Hungary (-11,11%), in Romania the allotments have remained approximately at the same level, registering a slight increase of 0,046%.

6. National Institutions Specialised in Managing the European Funds Destined to Developing the Romanian Agriculture

Payments made from the European funds (EAGF and EAFRD) for developing rural economies are made through the Agency for Payments and Intervention for Agriculture, respectively through the Agency for Financing Rural Investments.

The Agency for Payments and Intervention for Agriculture (APIA) is a payment agency under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, which was founded based on Law no.1/2004¹⁵ and which starting from 2007, the year of Romania's integration in the European Union, makes payments for the proceedings of supporting the farmers and the market, proceedings financed from EAGF. Presently, a series of proceedings financed from EAFRD, have been delegated by AFRI to the Agency for Payments and Intervention for Agriculture, proceedings which target ecological agriculture, the areas having natural restraints, agro-environment and climate, improvement of wooded areas, animal welfare.

APIA manages both European funds such as EAGF (100% financed from the EU), and EAFRD (approximately 95% EU financing, the difference being a national contribution), as well as funds from National Budget which it grants under the form of State aid.¹⁶

Community financial allotment managed by APIA for period 2007-2014 was of 7793,91 million Euros from EAGF, representing direct payments and 3160,04 million Euros from EAFRD representing delegated proceedings of rural development on surface, while the absorption degree of European funds managed by APIA for the period 2007-2014 was of 98,33% from EAGF respectively 96,14% from EAFRD¹⁷.

The activity developed by APIA in 2007-2015 supposed spending some significant funds for direct payments as a result of the applications filed by farmers, situation which will be presented in table no.3.

Table no. 3. The evolution of funds spent for direct payments and of applications filed by farmers between 2007-2015

Campaign	Spent funds -Euros-	Growth rate over the previous year (%)	Number of farmers who filed applications
2007	749.126.908	-	1.241.934
2008	1.057.324.142	41,14	1.130.404
2009	1.182.866.854	11,87	1.122.046
2010	1.404.305.740	18,72	1.093.167
2011	1.523.890.364	8,51	1.088.809
2012	1.716.175.762	12,61	1.079.899
2013	1.808.696.364	5,39	1.048.728

¹⁵Law no.1/2004 concerning foundation, organisation and functioning the Agency for Payments and Intervention for Agriculture, Food Industry and rural Development published in the official Monitor no.162 from 25.02.2004

¹⁶Agency for Payments and Intervention for Agriculture, *Activity Report 2013*, http://www.apia.org.ro/files/pages_files/Raport_anual_de_activitate_2013.pdf, accessed on 28.06.2019.

¹⁷Agency for Payments and Intervention for Agriculture, *Activity Report 2015*, pp 11-12 http://www.apia.org.ro/files/pages_files/Raport_activitate_APIA_2015_PT_SITE.pdf, accessed on 16.04.2018

2014	1.911.776.088	5,69	1.027.874
2015	2.088.057.161	9,22	944.076

Source: own processing, after http://www.apia.org.ro/files/pages_files/Indicatori_statistici.pdf, accessed on 28.06.2019

The spent funds registered a positive trend on all the reference period, the greatest level of increase of 41,14% being registered in the year of 2008. We can also infer that the year of 2015 represented the year in which the expenses firstly surpassed the amount of 2 billion Euros. Referring to the number of farmers who filled applications we can see that it is in a continuous decrease due to the agricultural areas' consolidation.

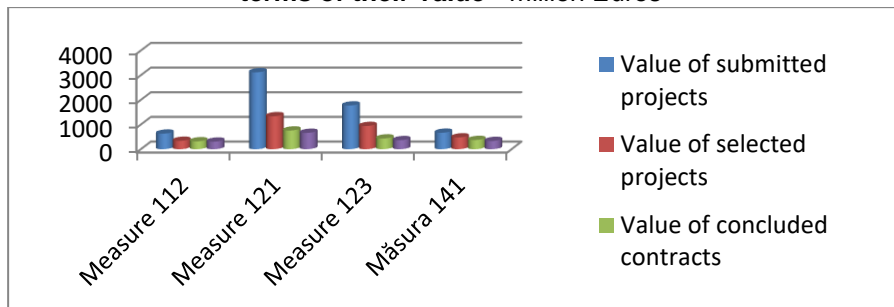
The Agency for Financing the Rural Investments (AFRI) is a public institution subordinated to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development which was founded based on OUG no.41/2014 concerning foundation, organisation and functioning of the Agency for Financing Rural Investments as a result of reorganizing the Agency of Payments for Rural Development and Fisheries (APRDF), approved through Law no.43/2015.¹⁸ The legal attribution of AFRI regards the two types of activities developed by the Agency, respectively the technical implementation and financial activity.

AFRI offers the possibility of accessing the resources within EAFRD, by approving the National Programme of Rural Development (NPRD)¹⁹ by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, program which presents in a detailed way the conditions in which each proceeding may be accessed by applicants. Until present time at MARD have been elaborated two National Programs of Rural Development, a program for each programming period, respectively NPRD 2007-2013 and NPRD 2014-2020.

AFRI activity afferent to NPDR 2007-2013 supposed the verification of a total number of 150.944 financing applications, from which 98.444 were contracted, in total amount of 5,72 billion Euros.²⁰

The proceedings which couldn't be accessed through NPDR 2007-2013 for developing the Romanian agricultural sector integrate Measure 112 "Installing the young farmers", Measure 121 "Modernising the agricultural holdings", Measure 123 "Increasing agriculture's and forest's products added value" and Measure 141 "Supporting the agricultural semi subdivided farms" whose implementation study will be presented by us in figure no.1.

Figure no. 1. The status of implementing projects through NPRD 2007-2013 in terms of their value - million Euros-



Source: own processing after https://portal.afir.info/informatii_generale_pndr_stadiul_implementarii_2007_2013, accessed on 29.06.2019

¹⁸ Agency for Financing Rural Investments, *About AFRI*, <http://www.afir.info/>, accessed on 28.06.2019

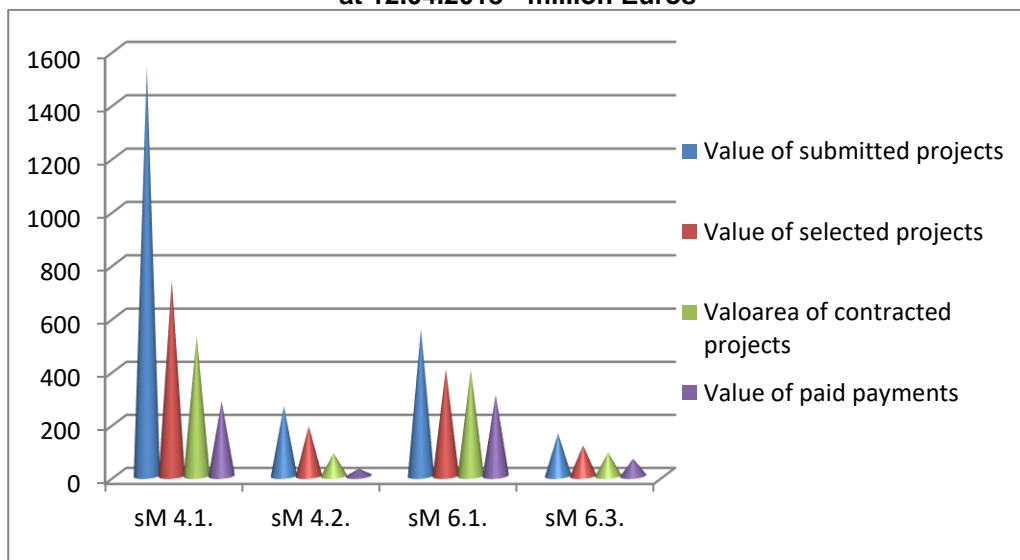
¹⁹ A. M. Marcu, *The regional and local distribution of funds allocated by the European Agricultural Fund for rural development in Romania*, Romanian Review of Regional Studies, nr.2/2013, p.31.

²⁰https://portal.afir.info/informatii_generale_pndr_pndr_2007_2013?amp;lang=RO, accessed on 19.04.2018

The highest value of paid payments corresponds to M121, payments which worth 662.274.906 Euros, and the lowest value of payments is afferent to M112, of only 305.303.458 Euros. M141 even if it had a leading number among the concluded contracts, it is only situated in the third place of paid payments of 333.595.687 Euros.

NPRD 2014-2020 is a program which is currently in progress, which allows accessing certain sub measures of development of Romanian agriculture, such as Sub measure 4.1. "Investments in agricultural holdings", Sub measure 4.2. "Support for investments in processing/marketing of agricultural holdings", Sub measure 6.1. "Support for settling the young farmers", Sub measure 6.3 "Support for development of small farms".

Figure no. 2. Report of the value of submitted projects through NPDR 2014-2020 at 12.04.2018 - million Euros-



Source: own processing <http://www.madr.ro/pndr-2014-2020/implementare-pndr-2014-2020/situatia-proiectelor-depuse-2014-2020.html>, accessed on 29.06.2019

From a valorised point of view we can state that sM4.1. registers the highest value of submitted projects (1.536.318.103 Euros) and contrasting there is sM 6.3. with only 160.515.000 Euros.

Table no.4. The situation of the effected reports at the value of submitted projects, the value of selected projects and the value of contracted projects.

Sub measure	Paid payments/ value of submitted projects	Paid payments / value of selected projects	Paid payments / value of contracted projects
sM 4.1.	18,31%	38,25%	53,26%
sM 4.2.	10,25%	14,36%	31,77%
sM 6.1.	55,28%	75,97%	76,51%
sM 6.3.	40,59%	56,65%	74,22%

Source: own processing after <http://www.madr.ro/pndr-2014-2020/implementare-pndr-2014-2020/situatia-proiectelor-depuse-2014-2020.html>, accessed on 29.06.2019

7. Conclusions

Common Agricultural Policy represents both an instrument of sustaining the farmers, as well as a way of promoting the European agriculture through growth of agricultural productivity and provision of safe foods to the European citizens.

Common Agricultural Policy is considering farming support in a direct way through granting aids and implementing certain market proceedings which are to help them as well as \ sustainable development of rural environment.

The main instruments of financing the Common Agricultural Policy are the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The European Agricultural Guarantee Fund contributes to reaching the objectives of Common Agricultural Policy through two categories of measures financed from CAP's Pillar I, namely: income support for farmers and measures of market support, while the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development is a financing instrument situated in the CAP's second Pillar and one of the five funds which make up the Structural and Investments European Funds, which contribute to a sustainable rural development of Member States.

Nationally, the payments made from the European funds for agricultural development and rural environment are made through the Agency of Payments and Intervention for Agriculture, respectively the Agency for Financing Rural Investments.

Community financial allotment managed by APIA for 2007-2014 was of 7793,91 million Euros from EAGF representing direct payments and of 3160,04 million Euros from EAFRD, representing delegated measures of rural development per surface, while the absorption grade of European funds managed by APIA during 2007-2014 was 98,33% from EAGF respectively 96,14% from EAFRD.

AFRI activity afferent to NPRD 2007-2013 supposed the verification of a number of 150.944 financing applications, out of which 98.444 projects were contracted, having a total value of 5,72 billion Euros.

In conclusion, we can state that Common Agricultural Policy consists in a set of legislative norms adopted by the European Union for ensuring a common depreciated policy in the field of agriculture.

The domain of agriculture and its financing from European funds is a large one, as a result, the future research perspectives are multiple, among which we can suggest:

- ✓ analysis of European funds absorption,
- ✓ analysis of European funds fraud in the European Union's Member States,
- ✓ identifying the causes which determined the impossibility of a corresponding implementation by the beneficiaries of the projects financed from European funds,
- ✓ making certain analyses concerning the influence of the European funds for agriculture on development of the Romanian agricultural holdings (income evolution, realized investments, livestock evolution, respecting the established conditions at European level, concerning the environment's protection).

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