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*National Institute
for Economic Research*

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EXTENDED PROGRAMME

XXth Jubilee International Scientific-Practical Conference

Economic Growth in the Face of Global Challenges

XXth edition

October 8-9, 2026



PROGRAMME

Day 1 — Thursday, 8 October 2026

*Venue: Conference Hall, ASEM Building B (ground floor)
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)*

Plenary Moderator – Victoria IORDACHI, PhD in economics

Plenary Session I | Join the Zoom meeting

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/86931456894?pwd=ef0S1c8NpVZvx1XlvFavEPn3MBslkV.1>

Meeting ID: 869 3145 6894

Passcode: 123

09:00-09:30	<i>Participants registration</i>
09:30-11:00	WELCOME AND OPENING SPEECHES Angela TIMUŞ, PhD in economics, Associate Professor, Director of the National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova Alexandru STRATAN, Habilitated Doctor, University Professor, Academician of ASM, Rector of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova <i>Greetings from the conference guests</i> Representative of the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova Representative of the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization of the Republic of Moldova Representatives of the academic community
11:00-12:00	PLENARY SESSION I Simona MOAGĂR POLADIAN, Habilitated Doctor, Director, Institute for World Economy, Romanian Academy THE NEW FACES OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC ORDER IN THE CURRENT GLOBAL LANDSCAPE Camelia GAVRILESCU, PhD, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher, Institute of Agricultural Economics - Romanian Academy, Romania Ion CERTAN, PhD, Senior Researcher, University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest, Romania THE AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS IN ROMANIA AND REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA – 20 YEARS OF EVOLUTION
12:00-12:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>

Presentation time limits in plenary session I – 20 min

Technical support for plenary speakers: Vlada DASCALESCU (Colesnicova), colesnicova.vlada@ase.md

THEMATIC PARALLEL SESSIONS

Day 1 — Thursday, 8 October 2026

Venue: ASEM Building B & Building F
[59 Mitropolit Gavril Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)

12:30 – Parallel Sessions Begin | 14:30–15:00 – Coffee Break

SESSION I AI-SUPPORTED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH: DIGITALIZATION, BIG DATA AND FORECASTING Join Zoom Meeting: https://us05web.zoom.us/j/83997554233?pwd=hwF1ZXaYabnjfPGguAJqZFYTb1dXdd.1 ID: 839 9755 4233 Passcode: 123	Conference Hall, ASEM Building B (ground floor)
SESSION II ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INNOVATION, COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE Join Zoom Meeting: https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75374537621?pwd=f84HM1qs9bCsLa2FhVwnl2pwmtuKhJ.1 Meeting ID: 753 7453 7621 Passcode: 111	Room 202, Block F
SESSION III THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN FINANCE AND THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES Join Zoom Meeting: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82257459755?pwd=kjZb3b1A7KgcmpnAhL9GMQNXDqAI8d.1 Meeting ID: 822 5745 9755 Passcode: 563028	Room 203, Block F
SESSION IV SUSTAINABLE PATHWAYS FOR MODERN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT Join Zoom Meeting: https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82322273170?pwd=RG5P1DySiTnm90zZC30QtILxxmIO4z.1 Meeting ID: 823 2227 3170 Passcode: 9btZpY	Room 104, Building B (1st floor)
SESSION V ADAPTING TO POPULATION CHANGE: RESILIENCE, INNOVATION, AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION Join by Zoom: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89112919816?pwd=bMQ4Ld2xPfPcuNu2kno6WwGD7JtbDc.1 Meeting ID: 891 1291 9816 Passcode: 200041	Student Hub, Building B (ground floor)
SESSION VI WELL-BEING, INCLUSION AND THE SOCIAL INEQUALITIES REDUCTION Join Zoom Meeting: https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82588271136?pwd=Hi2flmb74ZNTxo20yWSwehgC5fUXdb.1 Meeting ID: 825 8827 1136 Passcode: S6NIER	Room 414, Building B (4th floor)

Presentation time limits in session – 10 min

PROGRAMME

Day 2 — Friday, 9 October 2026

Venue: Conference Hall, ASEM Building B (ground floor)
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)

Plenary Moderator – Dumitru STRATAN, PhD in economics

Plenary Session II | Join in Zoom Meeting

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/81412903447?pwd=AOptdGFZ7HC8U4pkwakilluSYrKZbg.1>

Meeting ID: 814 1290 3447

Passcode: 123

09:30-10:00	<i>Participants registration</i>
10:00-12:00	PLENARY SESSION II Alexandru MONAHOV, PhD in economics, National Bank of Moldova WHEN ONE CRISIS FOLLOWS ANOTHER: DO FUNDAMENTALS STILL MATTER IN COMMODITY PRICING? Olga GAGAUZ, Habilitated Doctor, Associate Professor, Head of the Centre for Demographic Research, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AN AGEING POPULATION Emilia GOGU (LUCA), PhD, Associate Professor, Bucharest University of Economic Studies INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN ROMANIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: TRENDS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DIASPORA IN THE EUROPEAN UNION Alexander DAVCHEV, PhD, Professor, University of Agribusiness and Rural Development, Plovdiv, Bulgaria OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDING THE USE OF GEOTHERMAL ENERGY IN GREENHOUSE PRODUCTION IN BULGARIA
12:00-13:00	<i>Break</i>

Presentation time limits in plenary session II – 20 min

Technical support for plenary speakers: Vlada DASCALESCU (Colesnicova), colesnicova.vlada@ase.md

THEMATIC PARALLEL SESSIONS (CONTINUED)

Day 2 — Friday, 9 October 2026

Venue: ASEM Building B & Building F
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)

13:00 – 16.00 Parallel Sessions

SESSION I AI-SUPPORTED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH: DIGITALIZATION, BIG DATA AND FORECASTING Join Zoom Meeting: https://us05web.zoom.us/j/83519453888?pwd=ZtHX1eeO44k5Pc7NJBID7rmRbFg06L.1 ID: 835 1945 3888 Passcode: 123	NIER Headquarter, 45 Ion Creangă Street, Chişinău
SESSION II ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INNOVATION, COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE Join Zoom Meeting: https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72644833156?pwd=KSCwxSbVNlh73unEPTIY3cLjqXygOm.1 Meeting ID: 726 4483 3156 Passcode: 111	Room 202, Block F
SESSION III THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN FINANCE AND THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES Join Zoom Meeting: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82257459755?pwd=kjZb3b1A7KgcmlpAhL9GMQNXDqAl8d.1 Meeting ID: 822 5745 9755 Passcode: 563028	Room 203, Block F
SESSION IV SUSTAINABLE PATHWAYS FOR MODERN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT Join Zoom Meeting: https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82322273170?pwd=RG5P1DySiTnm90zZC30QtLxxmIO4z.1 Meeting ID: 823 2227 3170 Passcode: 9btZpY	Room 104, Building B (1st floor)
SESSION V ADAPTING TO POPULATION CHANGE: RESILIENCE, INNOVATION, AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION Join Zoom Meeting: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89397088345?pwd=nU5AkJa4zHmBOXw0en0JU5pLKzahN.1 Meeting ID: 893 9708 8345 Passcode: 613228	Student Hub, Building B (ground floor)
SESSION VI WELL-BEING, INCLUSION AND THE SOCIAL INEQUALITIES REDUCTION Join Zoom Meeting: https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82588271136?pwd=Hi2flmb74ZNTxo20yWSwehgC5fUXdb.1 Meeting ID: 825 8827 1136 Passcode: S6NIER	Room 414, Building B (4th floor)

Presentation time limits in session – 10 min

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SANDULESCU Alexandru, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION I
AI-Supported Scientific Research: Digitalization, Big Data and Forecasting

Day 1 — Thursday, 8 October 2026
12:30-17:00

Venue: Conference Hall, ASEM Building B (ground floor)
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)

Join Zoom Meeting:
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Passcode:123

Moderators:

Claudiu COMAN, Professor, PhD, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania
Lilia ŞARGU, PhD, Associate Professor, Coordinator Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
Dumitru STRATAN, PhD, Coordinator Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
Iulia PARA, PhD, Associate Professor, West University of Timişoara, Romania

Larisa ŞAVGA, Habilitated Doctor, University Professor, Trade Co-operative University of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Tatiana BARAN, Lecturer, PhD Candidate, Trade Co-operative University of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: FROM TECHNOLOGICAL EVOLUTION TO SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION

Claudiu COMAN, Professor, PhD, Transilvania University of Braşov, Romania

Iulia PARA, Associate Professor, West University of Timisoara, Romania

Alexandra-Georgiana MISU, MA student, Trasilvania University of Braşov, Romania

FROM FRAGMENTED HR PRACTICES TO AN INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

Jan POLCYN, Professor, Stanisław Staszic State University of Applied Sciences in Pila, Poland

Aleksandra TOŠOVIĆ-STEVENOVIĆ, Professor, Institute of International Politics and Economics, SERBIA

Silvia MAICAN, PhD, Associate Professor, University “1 Decembrie 1918” of Alba Iulia, ROMANIA

Viktorii VOVK, PhD, Associate Professor, Stanisław Staszic State University of Applied Sciences in Pila, POLAND

Gulden BOLUK, Professor, Akdeniz University, Turkey

HOW WE VIEW DIGITALIZATION: DIVERGENT PERCEPTIONS OF ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES

Angela TIMUŞ, PhD, Associate Professor, Director of the National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Lilia ŞARGU, PhD, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

THE ARCHITECTURE OF PERCEIVED ECONOMIC RESILIENCE: A SPEARMAN CORRELATION HEATMAP ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL SHOCKS, ECONOMIC CONFIDENCE AND GOVERNMENT CAPACITY

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION I

AI-Supported Scientific Research: Digitalization, Big Data and Forecasting

Otilia MANTA, Habilitated Doctor, Professor, “Victor Slăvescu” Centre for Financial and Monetary Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, BIG DATA AND INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS FOR MANAGING MACROECONOMIC IMBALANCES AND REGULATING DEFI MARKETS AND CRYPTO-ASSETS

Luigi Umberto ROSSETTI, PhD, Lecturer, University of Sannio, Italy

Martina ROSSETTI, Student, Science High School, Italy

NOTEBOOKLM AS AN AI-ENHANCED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: ADDED VALUE AND PERCEIVED CHALLENGES FROM SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Maxim SANDU, PhD in Economics, ULIM, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE REALLOCATION OF HUMAN EXPERTISE: GLOBAL TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ECONOMY, IT SECTOR, AND DIGITAL GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Dorin-Cristian COITA, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Oradea, Oradea, Romania

Igor PRISAC, PhD, Associate Professor, University Divitia Gratiae, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Dinu-Vlad SASU, PhD, Lecturer, University of Oradea, Oradea, Romania

Marius-Augustin BUJOR, Student, University of Oradea, Oradea, Romania

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN NONPROFIT MARKETING: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMANIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Svitlana SHEKERA, PhD, Associate Professor, Ukraine

Olga SHEPELEVA, PhD, Associate Professor, Ukraine

Ganna SARKISIAN, Habilitated Doctor, Professor, Ukraine

Iryna KRUPITSA, Habilitated Doctor, Associate Professor, Odessa National University of Technology, Ukraine

FORMATION OF INNOVATIVE DIRECTIONS, MECHANISMS, AND STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FORMATS OF DOMESTIC TOURISM

Ilia ZUMBILEV, PhD, College of Agriculture and Regional Business Development, Bulgaria

AI-DRIVEN GROWTH MODELS: REFRAMING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE IN A VOLATILE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Galina BĂDICU, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Svetlana MIHAILA, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN FINANCIAL STATEMENT FRAUD DETECTION: RESEARCH EVOLUTION, METHODOLOGICAL TRENDS AND IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Lesya LYMAR, Professor, Doctor of Pedagogics, Bogomolets NMU, Ukraine

Oksana VYGOVSKA, Professor, Doctor of Medicine, Bogomolets NMU, Ukraine

Inna KUCHERENKO, Associate Professor, PhD, Bogomolets NMU, Ukraine

Ievgeniia BURLAKA, Professor, Doctor of Medicine, Bogomolets NMU, Ukraine

Anna BLAGAIA, Associate Professor, PhD, Bogomolets NMU, Ukraine

MEDICAL RESEARCH AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: OVERVIEW OF CURRENT EUROPEAN PRACTICES

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION I

AI-Supported Scientific Research: Digitalization, Big Data and Forecasting

Mariana Rodica ȚÎRLEA, PhD, Associate Professor, "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, Romania

STUDY ON LEGAL REGULATIONS OF LOCAL TAXATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DIGITAL AGE AND AI (Part One)

Andrzej POREBSKI, Lecturer, Researcher/Research Fellow, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland

THE RISKY PATH OF LEGAL TECH DEVELOPMENT: AGAINST GENERATIVE AI-BASED AUTOMATION IN THE LEGAL SECTOR

Ihor DRAPEI, Vice-Rector, Bogomolets National Medical University, Ukraine

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT AND AI RESPONSIBLE USE

Florina BASALIC (STAN), PhD, Dunărea de Jos University of Galati, Romania

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INTO ECONOMIC MIGRATION USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Laura MICHAŁOWSKA, Master/SGH Warsaw School of Economics, Poland

THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN REDUCING BEHAVIORAL BIASES

Luigi Umberto ROSSETTI, PhD, Lecturer, Student, Science High School, Italy

Enza AMORUSO, USR Campania, Italy

Stefania DI DONATO, High School Teacher, IIS G. Vetrone Benevento, Italy

INTEGRATING AI-POWERED VIRTUAL CHARACTERS IN EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY ON THE MIZOU PLATFORM DURING THE WINTER OLYMPICS

Eveny CIURLEO, PhD, Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Calabria, Italy

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BEYOND ACCESS: IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY AND TERRITORIAL GAPS IN THE DIGITALISATION OF ITALIAN MUNICIPALITIES

Marion SANTORELLI, English Language Lecturer, Università degli Studi del Sannio, Avellino, Italy

Domenico CATULLO, Industry Research Scientist, Cyber Security and AI Specialist, Italy

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: POLICIES, PROMPT DESIGN, AND RISKS FOR SCHOOL INCLUSION IN ITALY

Tran Thi Thu Hien, Lecturer, Hanoi University, Vietnam

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, AND HOUSEHOLD WASTE MANAGEMENT BEHAVIORS: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM NATIONWIDE SURVEYS IN VIETNAM

Nataliia KORZHUNOVA, PhD, Mykhailo Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Life Quality Research of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine

AN AI-BASED INTEGRATED INFORMATION SPACE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND POLICYMAKING: CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION I
AI-Supported Scientific Research: Digitalization, Big Data and Forecasting

Day 2 — Friday, 9 October 2026 – ONLINE SESSION

13:00–16:00 | ZOOM

Hosted from: [NIER Headquarter, 45 Ion Creangă Street, Chişinău](#)

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Vlada DASCALESCU, PhD Student, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Zinovia TOACĂ, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Lucia GUJUMAN, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

COMPUTER SERVICES EXPORTS AND THE STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: EVOLUTION, INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND AN ASSESSMENT OF MACROECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS USING QUARTERLY DATA, 2009Q1–2026Q1

Mariana Rodica ȚÎRLEA, PhD, Associate Professor, "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, Romania

STUDY ON LEGAL REGULATIONS OF LOCAL TAXATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DIGITAL AGE AND AI (Part Two)

Elena RUSU, PhD, Assistant Professor, Moldova State University, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova
ECONOMIC GROWTH, SUSTAINABILITY AND DIGITAL INNOVATION: NEW PARADIGMS FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Mariano MELCHIONDA, Dr., Independent Researcher, Italy
AEROTAINMENT AS AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY FOR ENHANCING PASSENGER EXPERIENCE IN THE AVIATION INDUSTRY

Aurelia TURCAN, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova

DIGITAL INNOVATION IN EDUCATION: BUILDING RESILIENCE IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Dumitru STRATAN, PhD, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A DRIVER OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY TRANSITION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN EMERGING ECONOMIES

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION I

AI-Supported Scientific Research: Digitalization, Big Data and Forecasting

Iulian ALDEA, Scientific Researcher III, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania

DIGITAL INEQUALITIES IN ROMANIA: ACCESS, SKILLS AND THE USE OF DIGITAL SERVICES

Marion SANTORELLI, Scientific Researcher, Former English Lecturer & Independent Researcher, Italy

Domenico CATULLO, Industry research scientist, cyber security and AI specialist, Italy

FROM RESEARCHER TO RELAY: DELEGATED CONTROL, ANSWERABLE ATTRIBUTION, AND THE UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF EPISTEMIC AUTHORITY IN AI-ASSISTED SCIENCE

Cristina UNGUR, PhD, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

DIGITAL INSURANCE ECOSYSTEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Viorica POPA, PhD, Coordinator Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ASSESSING THE DIGITAL MATURITY OF THE BANKING SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENHANCING OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE

Cristian-Răzvan MARIN, PhD Student, National University of Science and Technology Politehnica Bucharest, Romania

Ancuța MARIN, PhD, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for Agriculture Economy and Rural Development Bucharest, Romania

THE LINK BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC FORECASTING BASED ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Alina Ligia DUMITRESCU, Dr., Senior Researcher, Institute for World Economy of the Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND LABOUR MARKET TRANSFORMATION IN ROMANIA AND POLAND: A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Bacco ANNA, Independent researcher, University of Salerno, Italy

TOWARDS RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH WITH GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Andrian TATARU, PhD Student, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

METADATA REQUIREMENTS FOR AUTOMATED ECONOMIC RESEARCH: LESSONS FROM CONSTRUCTING A COMPOSITE INDEX

Viorica POPA, PhD, Coordinator Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Tudor SOLTAN, PhD student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE BANKING SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Vlada DASCALESCU, PhD Student, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

THE EVOLUTION OF IT SERVICES IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

Mihaela PANAIT (ION), The Organizing Institution for Doctoral Studies at Valahia University in Târgoviște (IOSUD), Romania

LONG-TERM FORECASTS REGARDING THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ACCOUNTING DATABASES WITH THE SUPPORT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Nicolae POPA, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

DIGITALIZATION AND THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN UNION ACCESSION

Erica GORGOS, PhD student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

AI-SUPPORTED SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT IN RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Sergiu TIRIGAN, PhD Student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

INTEGRATING AI INTO SOCIO-ECONOMIC FIELD RESEARCH WORKFLOWS: APPLICABILITY, LIMITATIONS, AND METHODOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS

Viorica VERDEȘ, PhD Student, Doctoral School of Legal and Economic Sciences, Moldova State University, Republic of Moldova

MODERNIZING PUBLIC MANAGEMENT THROUGH RESULTS-ORIENTED PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SYSTEMS: THE CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION II

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Competitiveness and Economic Resilience

Day 1 — Thursday, 8 October 2026
12:30-17:00

Venue: ASEM Building F, Room 202
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)

Join Zoom Meeting:

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Meeting ID: 753 7453 7621

Passcode: 111

Moderators:

Natalia VINOGRADOVA, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Tatiana GUTIU, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Larisa POPA, PhD Student Romanian Academy, National Institute for Economic Research "Costin C. Kirişescu", School of Advanced Studies of The Romanian Academy, Doctoral School of Economic Sciences, Bucharest, Romania

Luminiţa CHIVU, PhD, Corresponding Member of the Romanian Academy, National Institute for Economic Research "Costin C. Kirişescu", Romanian Academy, Romania

Anca CRISTEA, PhD, Researcher, Institute for World Economy, Romanian Academy, Romania
HEALTH INVESTMENT, LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE: EVIDENCE FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION

Maryna DUBININA, Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Mykolayiv National Agrarian University, Ukraine

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE OF FARMS UNDER EXTERNAL SHOCKS: DETERMINANTS AND ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES

Vasylyna PODLIESNA, Habilitated Doctor in Economics, Associate Professor, Leading Researcher, Institute for Economics and Forecasting, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine

THE SOCIAL QUALITY PERSPECTIVE IN UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Daniel BULIN, PhD, Researcher, Institute for World Economy, Romanian Academy, Romania
EUROPEAN RESILIENCE TEST: EU ECONOMY UNDER PRESSURE FROM NEW GLOBAL ENERGY SHOCK

Georgeta ILIE, PhD, Researcher, Institute for World Economy, Romanian Academy, Romania
RECONFIGURING GLOBAL BUSINESS STRATEGIES TO ENSURE GEOPOLITICAL RESILIENCE. CASE STUDY: NEARSHORING AND FRIENDSHORING IN EUROPE

Corneliu-George IACOB, PhD, Ministry of National Defence, Romania
Emilia IORDACHE, PhD, Lecturer, "Constantin Brâncoveanu" University of Piteşti, Romania
STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC AND SECURITY RESILIENCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S EASTERN EXTERNAL BORDER

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION II

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Competitiveness and Economic Resilience

Valentina Diana RUSU, Habilitated Doctor, Senior Researcher (CS I), Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Institute of Interdisciplinary Research, Romania

Angela ROMAN, Professor, Habilitated Doctor, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

EFFECTS OF DIGITALISATION ON SMES' FINANCING CONSTRAINTS: AN EMPIRICAL APPROACH

Vittoria FERRANDINO, Full Professor of Economic History, University of Sannio, Italy

Valentina SGRO, PhD, Associate Professor, Università Giustino Fortunato, Italy

AMADEO PETER GIANNINI: AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MODEL OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICA

Georgiana CHITIGA, Researcher, "Victor Slăvescu" Centre for Financial and Monetary Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

Silvia Elena ISACHI, Researcher, "Victor Slăvescu" Centre for Financial and Monetary Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

FIRM SIZE AND INDEBTEDNESS STRUCTURE IN ROMANIA AND CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Camelia MILEA, PhD in Economics, Scientific Researcher III, "Victor Slăvescu" Centre for Financial and Monetary Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

Cătălin DRĂGOI, Scientific researcher, "Victor Slăvescu" Centre for Financial and Monetary Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

ABOUT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CURRENT ACCOUNT

Silvia Elena ISACHI, Researcher, "Victor Slăvescu" Centre for Financial and Monetary Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

Georgiana CHITIGA, Researcher, "Victor Slăvescu" Centre for Financial and Monetary Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

THE IMPACT OF EXTREME EVENTS ON CORPORATE FINANCING: THE CASE OF ROMANIA IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT

Ciprian IFTIMOAEI, Associate Professor, "Petre Andrei" University of Iași, Romania

Simona Maria STĂNESCU, Senior researcher, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

Manuela IFTIMOAEI, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

Vicențiu Robert GABOR, Assistant Professor, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

BETWEEN SOCIAL MISSION AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY: INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCING NEEDS IN ROMANIAN SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Vesela ANGELOVA, PhD in Economics, University of Agribusiness and Rural Development, Bulgaria

ENTREPRENEURIAL RESILIENCE IN BULGARIA'S AGRI-INDUSTRIAL SECTOR AMID GLOBAL ECONOMIC TURMOIL

Mirko MOZZILLO, PhD, Research Fellow, University of Sannio, Italy

DIGITALISATION AND PROFITABILITY OF CATERING COMPANIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS IN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES

Maral JAMALOVA, PhD, Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC), Azerbaijan

PREDICTORS OF REPURCHASE INTENTION IN EMERGING E-COMMERCE MARKETS: THE ROLE OF AGE AND GENDER

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION II

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Competitiveness and Economic Resilience

Guler HAJIYEVA, Researcher, Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan

DETERMINANTS OF INNOVATION ACTIVITY IN AZERBAIJAN: ASSESSING THE ROLES OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, HUMAN CAPITAL, DIGITALIZATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

Aytan Agamovsum HUSEYNOVA, Researcher, Institute of Economics, Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan

ECONOMETRIC ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF INTRAMURAL CURRENT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURES ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ON INNOVATION PERFORMANCE: TIME-SERIES EVIDENCE FROM AZERBAIJAN

Orman ABDINOV, PhD, Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Azerbaijan

THE ROLE AND MAIN DIRECTIONS OF ANTI-CRISIS POLICY IN ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

Alexandra NOVAC, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

MEASURING THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IMPACT ON FIRM PRODUCTIVITY: A DATA WORKFLOW APPROACH

Nelli AMARFII-RAILEAN, Habilitated Doctor, Associate Professor, Alecu Russo Bălți State University, Republic of Moldova

CIRCULAR BUSINESS MODELS AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR COMPETITIVENESS AND RESILIENCE

Irina CALUGAREANU, Habilitated Doctor, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Sergiu AFTENEV, PhD student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH CLUSTERS IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW EUROPEAN PRIORITIES

Tatiana GUTIU, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

TERRITORIAL TYPOLOGY OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: A CLUSTER ANALYSIS APPROACH

Maia PISANIUC, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ASSESSING THE READINESS OF THE ECONOMY OF THE CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT REGION IN LIGHT OF MOLDOVA'S INTEGRATION INTO THE EU: REALITIES AND PROSPECTS

Ludmila GOLOVATAIA, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Moldova State University, Republic of Moldova

Maria KOMPANEETS, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Moldova State University, Republic of Moldova

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY TO A PRE-ENLARGEMENT INSTRUMENT

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION II

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Competitiveness and Economic Resilience

Mihai ROSCOVAN, PhD, Associate Professor, Business Consulting Institute, Republic of Moldova
THE INTEREST AND INVESTMENT CAPACITY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Corina COLIBAUERDI, PhD, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
EXPORT STIMULATION POLICIES IN SMALL-ECONOMY COUNTRIES IN THE CONTEXT OF OVERLAPPING REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CRISES

Igor BELOSTECINIC, PhD in Economics, University Lecturer, Technical University of Moldova
PRODUCT-TO-BRAND TRANSFORMATION AS A STRATEGIC MARKETING PROCESS

Vitali CHIURCCIU, University Lecturer, Comrat State University, PhD student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT FUND AS A COMPONENT OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AT THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC LEVEL (THE CASE OF GAGAUZIA)

Artur GOLBAN, PhD, Independent AML/Compliance Expert, Republic of Moldova
ECONOMIC GROWTH UNDER GLOBAL CHALLENGES: THE ROLE OF OPEN-SOURCE INTELLIGENCE IN PREVENTING AND COMBATING FINANCIAL CRIME

Mircea GUTIU, PhD student, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
SMART BORDERS AND CONNECTED LOGISTICS CORRIDORS: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN THE AGE OF DIGITIZATION

Dumitru NICULĂIȚĂ, Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
REGIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS IN CHIȘINĂU MUNICIPALITY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Svetlana ZLATOVA, PhD Candidate, Comrat State University, Republic of Moldova
THE COMPOSITION-BASED VIEW OF COMPETITIVE ADAPTATION: MODELING THE MULTI-PATH EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS ON REGIONAL ENTERPRISES

Day 2 — Friday, 9 October 2026
13:00-16:00

Venue: ASEM Building F, Room 202
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chișinău](#)

Join Zoom Meeting:
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Passcode: 111

Sorinel Ionel BUCUR, PhD, Scientific Researcher III, Institute of Agricultural Economics, National Institute for Economic Research “Costin C. Kirițescu”, Romanian Academy, Romania
RECENT TRENDS IN ROMANIA'S FOREIGN TRADE WITH MERCOSUR MEMBER STATES

Petruța Antoneta TUREK-RAHOVEANU, PhD, Scientific Researcher III, Research Institute for Agriculture Economy and Rural Development, Romania
DYNAMICS, COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE OF ROMANIA'S EXTERNAL TRADE IN GRAPES DURING 2020-2025

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION II

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Competitiveness and Economic Resilience

Cristian-Nicolae GHENA, PhD, Romanian Academy, School of Advanced Studies of the Romanian Academy, Doctoral School of Economic Sciences, National Institute for Economic Research “Costin C. Kirițescu”, National Institute of Economy, Romania

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND SPORTING PERFORMANCE IN MOLDOVAN FOOTBALL: CHALLENGES OF LABOR MIGRATION IN A SMALL ECONOMY

Tincuta VRABIE, Lecturer, “Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați, Romania

WORK STANDARDIZATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TO ENHANCE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCY

Cătălina-Elena V. ANDRONACHE (VARTIC), PhD Candidate, “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, Romania

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE OF BORDER REGIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTIPLE CRISES

Mihaela NICOLAE (BALOTĂ), PhD Student, National Institute for Economic Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE IN ROMANIA AND EASTERN EUROPE

Anca Ioana BLAGA (MARTIN), PhD Student, The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

Gabriela Iuliana MUNTEANU, PhD, “Andrei Șaguna” University of Constanța, Romania

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION AS A RESILIENCE FACTOR: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF INTERNAL CRISIS COMMUNICATION IN ROMANIAN COMPANIES

Weronika CZAPLEWSKA, PhD Student, Warsaw School of Economics, Poland

CASCADING COMPLIANCE IN SUPPLY CHAINS: MECHANISMS, DETERMINANTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES – PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

Gunay VALIYEVA, Lecturer, PhD Student, Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC), Azerbaijan

Habib VALIYEV, Researcher, Istanbul University, Department of Economics, Türkiye

Vildan RIZAYEVA, Associate Professor, Azerbaijan State University of Economics, Azerbaijan

MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN A RESOURCE-RICH ECONOMY: EVIDENCE FROM AZERBAIJAN

Mihaela DIACONU, Master Student, West University of Timișoara, Romania

Alexandra-Mădălina ȚĂRAN, PhD Lecturer, West University of Timișoara, Romania

INNOVATION PERFORMANCE AS A CATALYST FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM DYNAMICS: EUROPEAN INSIGHTS

Humbat HUMBATOV, Master Student in Economics, Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Germany

SMART DEVELOPMENT IN AZERBAIJAN: INTEGRATING SMART CITY AND SMART VILLAGE PERSPECTIVES

Aleks ZHELYAZKOV, Master Student, University of Agribusiness and Regional Development, Bulgaria

ADAPTING A GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP CURRICULUM TO INCLUDE TOPICS OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION II

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Competitiveness and Economic Resilience

Abul Kashem SHEIKH, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Kathak Academy for Bangladesh, Biodiversity & Development (Special Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC), Bangladesh
Md Abdur RAZZAK, Youth Researcher and Social Development Programme Officer, Kathak Academy for Bangladesh, Bangladesh

Gaffer Md ABDUL, Youth Researcher and Social Development Programme Officer, Kathak Academy for Bangladesh, Bangladesh

Mohammad Mikaeil HOSSAIN, Youth Researcher and Social Development Programme Officer, Kathak Academy for Bangladesh, Bangladesh

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BECOME ECONOMICALLY SELF-RELIANT: PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Cătălina-Elena V. ANDRONACHE (VARTIC), PhD Candidate, “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, Romania

MULTIPLE CRISES - DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONTEMPORARY ECONOMY

Mariana VATAMANITA, PhD Student, “Constantin Stere” University of European Political and Economic Science, Republic of Moldova

Alexandru MARÎȚ, PhD, Moldova State University, Republic of Moldova

CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE AS A DRIVER OF ECONOMIC RESILIENCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR BUSINESSES IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

Valeria RUSU, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

THE EVOLUTION OF MOLDOVA’S COUNTRY BRAND: EVIDENCE FROM BLOOM CONSULTING RANKINGS AND NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Tatiana FURCULIȚA, PhD Student, State University of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION AND DIRECTIONS FOR MODERNIZATION

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION III

The Interplay Between Finance and the Circular Economy in the Face of Global Challenges

8- 9 October 2026

Venue: ASEM Building F, Room 203
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)

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Meeting ID: 822 5745 9755

Passcode: 563028

Moderators:

Svitlana MAKSYMOVA, Cand. Sc. (Eng.), Kharkiv National University of Radio Electronics

Rodica PERCIUN, Habilitated Doctor, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Victoria IORDACHI, PhD, Associate Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Olga TIMOFEI, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Vladyslav YEVSIEIEV, Dr. Eng. Sc., Kharkiv National University of Radio Electronics

Svitlana MAKSYMOVA, Cand. Sc. (Eng.), Kharkiv National University of Radio Electronics

THE IMPACT OF HUMAN-CENTRICITY IN INDUSTRY 5.0 ON ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY PARAMETERS

Rodica CERNIT, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

THE GLOBAL DOMINANT TRENDS OF SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

Dorina CLICHICI, PhD in economics, Institute for World Economy, Romanian Academy

Tatiana COVALSCHI PhD in economics, Moldova State University

Corina CHIRONACHI, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

Cristina-Mihaela COJOACĂ (NEACȘU), PhD Student, National Institute for Economic Research "Costin C. Kirițescu", Institute of World Economy, Romanian Academy

FISCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: A MULTI-METHOD ANALYSIS OF POLICY DECISIONS (2014–2024)

Rodica PERCIUN, Habilitated Doctor in economics, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, National Institute of Economic Research, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

THE VALUE-ACTION GAP IN SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION: EMPIRICAL STUDY BASED ON HOUSEHOLDS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Vesela ANGELOVA, PhD in Economics, University of Agribusiness and Rural Development, Bulgaria

FINANCING THE TRANSITION TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY: GLOBAL TRENDS AND STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS FACING BULGARIA

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION III

The Interplay Between Finance and the Circular Economy in the Face of Global Challenges

Nelea CHIRILOV, Doctor of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Liliana LAZARI, Doctor of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE RISKS ON THE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL EQUILIBRIUM INDICATORS OF THE ENTITY

Stela CIOBU, Associate Professor, PhD, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Chisinau, Rep. Moldova

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE BANKING SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA UNDER ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

Dorina CLICHICI, PhD in economics, Institute for World Economy, Romanian Academy

THE RUSSIAN FINANCIAL SYSTEM: FROM ADAPTIVE RESILIENCE TO SYSTEMIC ISOLATION

Gabriela CAPCELEA, PhD Student, Technical University of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL TAXES IN THE TRANSITION TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Van Anh DO, PhD, Lecturer, Hanoi University, Vietnam

THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN ESG AND FINANCIAL STABILITY, MODERATING EFFECT OF FIRM CHARACTERISTICS

Alexandru STRATAN, Academician, Habilitated Doctor, University Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

Ana HÎRBU, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

REFRAMING MATERIALITY: DOUBLE MATERIALITY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Lica ERHAN, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ALIGNING WITH EU REQUIREMENTS FOR FINANCIAL REPORTING: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Fulya GÜNGÖR, Assist. Professor, PhD, Balıkesir University, Balıkesir Vocational School, Türkiye

Ercan ÖZEN, Professor, Dr., University of Uşak, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Türkiye,

CIRCULAR ECONOMY TRANSFORMATION IN BUSINESSES: THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

CRINA HAREA, PhD student, SNSPA, ROMANIA

PUBLIC POLICY GOVERNANCE AND ITS IMPACT ON SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA (1991–2022)

Ivan LUCHIAN, PhD in economics, Associate Professor, Moldova State University

Traian DONCEV, Founder/CEO, Most Organic, Bulgaria

THE FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF REVERSE LOGISTICS

Biser Yordanov KRASTEV, PhD, Professor, Director of the Department of Economics and Management, University of Agribusiness and Rural Development, Bulgaria

TRANSFORMATION OF BULGARIA'S BANKING SECTOR IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COUNTRY'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROZONE

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION III

The Interplay Between Finance and the Circular Economy in the Face of Global Challenges

Larisa BUGAIAN, Habilitated Doctor in economics, Technical University of Moldova

Cristina DIACONU, PhD in economics, Technical University of Moldova

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AS A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABILITY: AN INTEGRATED INDICATOR FRAMEWORK AND SECTORAL APPLICATIONS

Emanuela-Adina NICULA, PhD student, Romanian Academy, School of Advanced Studies of the Romanian Academy, Doctoral School of Economic Sciences, National Institute for Economic Research "Costin C. Kirițescu", Institute for Economic Forecasting

THE ROLE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE AND CO₂ EMISSIONS IN ROMANIA

Ivan LUCHIAN, PhD in economics, Associate Professor, Moldova State University

Cristina LACHI, PhD student in economics, Moldova State University

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF CIRCULAR FINANCE

Ercan ÖZEN, Professor, Dr., University of Uşak, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Turkey

Bishnu Prasad KHANAL, PhD Candidate, School of Business, Department of Economics, SR University, India, Bank officer, NIC ASIA Bank Ltd., Nepal

GREEN FINANCE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN EMERGING ECONOMIES: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF GREEN INNOVATION AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

Ruxandra Eugenia POP, PhD, Researcher / Research Fellow, The Research Institute for Agriculture Economy and Rural Development, Romania

Steliana RODINO, The Research Institute for Agriculture Economy and Rural Development, Romania

EFFICIENT INSTRUMENTS FOR FINANCING THE TRANSITION TOWARDS A CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY

Victoria POSTOLACHE, PhD in economics, Associate professor, Alecu Russo Balti State University

THE ROLE OF BANKS IN PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING ESG PRACTICES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Viacheslav SLIESAR, PhD, Kyiv National Economic University named after Vadym Hetman, Kyiv, Ukraine

CIRCULAR FINANCE AS A NEW ARCHITECTURE FOR FINANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Veronica RAILEAN, PhD, Researcher / Research Fellow, Moldova State University

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF LOCAL PUBLIC AUTHORITIES: TRENDS AND TERRITORIAL DISPARITIES IN THE SOUTH REGION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Vasillii SCERBATIUC, Doctor of Economic Sciences, university associate professor, NPS Acons, Moldova

ISSUES OF REGULATORY REGULATION OF ACCOUNTING PROCESSES IN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

Angela SECRIERU, Professor, Habilitated Doctor, AESM, Moldova

GEOPOLITICAL RISKS, ENERGY SHOCKS AND FINANCIAL STABILITY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION III

The Interplay Between Finance and the Circular Economy in the Face of Global Challenges

Iulian SECRIERU, PhD Student, AESM, Moldova

QUALITY OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE MANAGEMENT AND RESPECT FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS: IMPACT TRANSMISSION MECHANISMS

Emil SEYIDOV, Doctoral candidate, UNEC, Azerbaijan

FEATURES OF SHORT-TERM LENDING IN NON-OIL SECTOR OF AZERBAIJAN

Ion BARABULA, Researcher, Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts, Republic of Moldova

Sergiu TUTUNARU, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

Anatolie BABIN, Researcher, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR INTEGRATING RURAL COMMUNITIES OF THE DNIESTER AND BLACK SEA BASINS INTO THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA: A TERRITORIAL BIOECONOMY PLATFORM MODEL BASED ON THE VALORISATION OF JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE

Carmen VITA, Associate Professor, University of Sannio, Italy

LOCAL BANKS, CREDIT, AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A HISTORICAL-ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION

Olga TIMOFEI, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE AND ESG INTEGRATION IN THE BANKING SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Victoria IORDACHI, PhD, Associate Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

COMBATING GREENWASHING IN THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

Rodica PERCIUN, PhD Habil. in economics, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, National Institute of Economic Research, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Iulia PERCIUN, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, National Institute of Economic Research, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES AND BEHAVIORS IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE FINANCE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Olga TIMOFEI, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

GREENWASHING IN THE AGRO-FOOD SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRACTICAL MEASURES TO COMBAT IT

Corina GRIBINCEA, PhD, Senior Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE AS A DRIVER OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES: SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

Veronica GARBUZ - PhD, Associate Professor, Technical University of Moldova/ JSC „CET-Nord”

Oleg PETELCA - PhD, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania, Bălți Extension/ JSC „FEE-Nord”

Iurie BEȘLIU - PhD, Alecu Russo Balti State University/ JSC „RED-Nord”

FINANCING THE ENERGY TRANSITION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: FROM RENEWABLE ENERGY POTENTIAL TO BANKABLE PROJECTS

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION III

The Interplay Between Finance and the Circular Economy in the Face of Global Challenges

Vlada VUTCARĂU, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
FISCAL POLICY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY: AN ANALYSIS OF PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Tatiana COLESNICOVA, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
Maia ELISEEVA, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
NAVIGATING THROUGH UNCERTAINTY: FINANCIAL RISK ANALYSIS AS A PILLAR OF BUSINESS GROWTH

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION IV
Sustainable Pathways for Modern Agriculture and Rural Development

8- 9 October 2026

Venue: ASEM Building B, Room 104 (1st floor)
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Moderators:

Eugenia LUCASENCO, PhD, Coordinating Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova
Camelia GAVRILESCU, PhD, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher, Institute of Agricultural Economics, Romanian Academy, Romania
Plamen Marinov LAKOV, Professor, PhD, University of Agribusiness and Regional Development, Department of "Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism", Plovdiv, Bulgaria
Tatiana IATISIN, PhD, Coordinating Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

Elena FLEACA, Professor, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

Theodora DOLTU, Lecturer, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

Beatrice LEUSTEAN, Lecturer, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

Ruxandra IONITA, Lecturer, National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest, Romania

THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF DOUBLE MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT FOR SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Plamen Marinov LAKOV, Professor, PhD, University of Agribusiness and Regional Development, Department of "Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism", Plovdiv, Bulgaria

Krasimir Stoyanov LEVKOV, Professor, PhD, University of Agribusiness and Regional Development, Department of "Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism", Plovdiv, Bulgaria

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VITICULTURE AND WINE PRODUCTION IN BULGARIA - REGIONAL PROJECTIONS

Alexandru STRATAN, Academician, Habilitated Doctor, University Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

Tatul MKRTCHYAN, PhD, Univ. professor, Armenia Economic State University, Armenia

Liliana STAVER, scientific researcher, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

Ani KHACHATRYAN, scientific researcher, Armenian Economic State University of Armenia

Larisa DODU-GUGEA, PhD, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

Anna AYVAZYAN, scientific Researcher, Armenian Economic State University of Armenia, Armenia

Nina ROSCOVAN, PhD, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL-GREEN TRANSITION IN AGRICULTURE: POLICY INSIGHTS FOR MOLDOVA AND ARMENIA

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION IV

Sustainable Pathways for Modern Agriculture and Rural Development

Camelia GAVRILESCU, PhD, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher, Institute of Agricultural Economics - Romanian Academy, Romania

ROMANIAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE ALONG THE MEAT VALUE CHAINS

Guido MIGLIACCIO, Associate professor, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy

Mirko MOZZILLO, PhD, Research Fellow, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy

SHORT-TERM FINANCIAL RESILIENCE OF MOLDOVAN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES: EVIDENCE FROM ASSET PROFITABILITY AND LIQUIDITY

Krisztina Melinda DOBAY, Dr., Senior Researcher (CS II), Gheorghe Zane Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy - Iasi Branch, Romania

FROM MARGINALIZATION TO EMPOWERMENT: ASSESSING GENDER DISPARITIES IN RURAL ROMANIA

Aurelia LITVIN, Habilitated Doctor, Technical University of Moldova, Moldova

Larisa CAISIN, Habilitated Doctor, Technical University of Moldova, Moldova

Ana RAILEAN, master student, Technical University of Moldova, Moldova

Aliona IONESCU, Moldovan Pork Producers Association, Moldova

OPTIMISING THE FOOD SAFETY REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF AGRI-FOOD PRODUCERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Dan Marius VOICILAȘ, PhD, Senior researcher, Institute of Agricultural Economics, Romanian Academy of Sciences, Romania

Aliona BIRCA, Habilitated Doctor in Economics, Associate Professor, Institute of Agricultural Economics - Romanian Academy of Sciences, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

RISK TRENDS IN AGRICULTURE BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND STRATEGIC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Ionut Laurentiu PETRE, PhD, Lecturer, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania

Ana URSU, PhD, Researcher. gr. sch. II, Research Institute for Agriculture Economy and Rural Development, Romania

ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SIZE OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS AND THE LEVEL OF DIGITALISATION OF EUROPEAN FARMS

Irina-Adriana CHIURCIU, Lecturer PhD, University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Bucharest, Romania

Aurelia-Ioana CHEREJI, Associate Professor, Universitatea din Oradea, Romania

Andreea-Roxana FIRĂȚOIU, PhD Student, University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Bucharest, Romania

STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ROMANIA: THE ROLE OF VALUE CREATION, COOPERATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL

Corina Georgeta DINCULESCU, Researcher, The Institute of Agricultural Economics, Romania

AN ECOSYSTEM PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROMANIAN RURAL FAMILY: SUSTAINABILITY, DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Mihnea Tudor PREOTESI, PhD, senior researcher, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romania

FROM TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS TO SOCIAL INNOVATION IN LOCAL MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION IV

Sustainable Pathways for Modern Agriculture and Rural Development

Alina HALLER, PhD, Senior Researcher I, habil., Gheorghe Zane Institute for Economic Research, Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch, Romania

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES OF THE EUROPEAN AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

Andreea - Emanuela DRAGOI, Dr., CS II, Institute for World Economy, Romanian Academy, Romania

SHAPING RURAL DEVELOPMENT AFTER 2027: THE FUTURE OF THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY BETWEEN FOOD SECURITY AND GREEN AMBITIONS

Marie Jacqueline Cosette LEONTE, PhD, Senior Researcher; Institute of Agricultural Economics, Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ROMANIA'S AGRICULTURE

Mioara MIHĂILĂ, Associate Professor, PhD, “Ion Ionescu de la Brad” Iași University of Life Sciences, Iași, Romania

Andy-Felix JITĂREANU, Associate Professor, PhD, “Ion Ionescu de la Brad” Iași University of Life Sciences, Iași, Romania

THE FOOD CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR: A DYNAMIC ANALYSIS OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

Alexandra Marina MANOLACHE, PhD, Scientific Researcher, Research Institute for Agriculture Economy and Rural Development, Bucharest, Romania

ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF PEA CULTIVATION AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL 2018-2024

Petruta Antoneta TUREK-RAHOVEANU, Researcher gr III, Research Institute for Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, Romania

Ancuta MARIN, Researcher gr II, Research Institute for Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, Romania

TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION OF CERTIFIED MOUNTAIN HONEY IN ROMANIA: ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

Giuseppe NAPOLI, adjunct professor, Università degli studi del Sannio, Italy

Benedetta PAGNOTTA, Independent Researcher, University of Sannio, Benevento, Italy

SMALL FARMS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE IRPINIA CASE

Sugra Ingilab HUMBATOVA, PhD, Associate Professor, Head of Department of Economics, Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC), Baku, Azerbaijan

Natig Gadim-Oglu HAJIYEV, PhD, Department of Economics, Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC), Baku, Azerbaijan

DIGITALIZATION, GREEN INNOVATION AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN AZERBAIJAN: ECONOMETRIC EVIDENCE FROM ARDL AND COINTEGRATION APPROACHES

Tudor BAJURA, Habilitated Doctor, Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

Viorel TUREȚCHI, scientific researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE HORTICULTURAL SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Petar DZHANDARMOV, Assoc. Prof. Dr., University of Agribusiness and Rural Development, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

THE AGRICULTURAL LAND MARKET IN BULGARIA IN THE CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL UNCERTAINTY

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION IV

Sustainable Pathways for Modern Agriculture and Rural Development

Sugra Ingilab HUMBATOVA, PhD, Associate Professor, Head of Department of Economics, Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC), Baku, Azerbaijan

Natig Gadim-Oglu HAJIYEV, PhD, Department of Economics, Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC), Baku, Azerbaijan

INNOVATION, DIGITALIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL MARKET COMPETITIVENESS IN AZERBAIJAN: CONSTRUCTION OF A COMPOSITE INDEX AND ECONOMETRIC EVIDENCE

Mihaela - Cătălina FROICU, PhD Student, Iași University of Life Sciences "Ion Ionescu de la Brad", Romania

Carmen Luiza COSTULEANU, Professor, Iași University of Life Sciences "Ion Ionescu de la Brad", Romania

THE FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY: AN ANALYSIS OF ACCOUNTING INFORMATION IN AN AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE

Eugenia LUCASENCO, PhD, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND MOLDOVAN AGRICULTURE: PROSPECTS FOR CONVERGENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS

Anatolie IGNAT, PhD, Senior Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

CHALLENGES OF THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EU ACCESSION

Tatiana IATISIN, PhD, Coordinating Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

AGRI-FOOD EXPORTS – A FACTOR IN THE ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Maria GRUBLEAC, PhD candidate, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

Liliana CIMPOIEȘ, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

DOES CROP PORTFOLIO DIVERSIFICATION LOWER THE COST OF CLIMATE RISK? EVIDENCE FROM MOLDOVA'S SUBSIDIZED AGRICULTURAL INSURANCE SYSTEM

Aslan AZIMZADEH, PhD Student, Baku Eurasian University, Azerbaijan

MACROECONOMIC PROPORTIONALITY OF SECTORAL INVESTMENT AND LONG-RUN AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT: EVIDENCE FROM AZERBAIJAN

Alexandru CEBAN, PhD student, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE, COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE MOLDOVAN HORTICULTURAL SECTOR

Viorel TUREȚCHI, scientific researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova Chisinau, Moldova

SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOLDOVA: ALIGNMENT WITH PILLAR II OF THE EU COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Georgeta MINCU, PhD Student, Moldova State University, Moldova

VOLUME AND QUALITY LOSSES AS INDICATORS OF VALUE CHAIN ORGANISATION AND COMPETITIVENESS: THE WHEAT AND APPLE CHAINS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Svetlana CEBAN, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Moldova

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF AGRITOURISM MANAGEMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION V

Adapting to Population Change: Resilience, Innovation, and Social Transformation

Day 1 — Thursday, 8 October 2026 – ON-SITE SESSION

*Venue: ASEM Building B, Student Hub (ground floor)
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)*

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Meeting ID: 891 1291 9816

Passcode: 200041

12:30–14:30 | PANEL I

Moderator:

Cristina FALUDI, Associate Professor, PhD, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania

Keynote: Solveig ARGESSEANU CUNNINGHAM, Professor, Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute / Emory University, Netherlands
SITTING AROUND THROUGHOUT THE DAY: THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE OF SEDENTARISM ACCOMPANYING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Keynote: Alina BOTEZAT, PhD, Senior Researcher, “Gheorghe Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy, Iaşi Branch, Romania
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION OF SCIENTISTS: DYNAMICS OF KEY DETERMINANTS

Arbnora SHALA, PhD Student, Researcher, Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies (IAMO), Germany
Antje JANTSCH, Dr., Research Associate, IAMO, Germany
BEYOND MIGRATION: UNDERSTANDING WHY PEOPLE STAY IN RURAL SOUTHEAST EUROPE

Johnson KANSIIME, PhD Student, Researcher, IAMO, Germany
Antje JANTSCH, Dr., Research Associate, IAMO, Germany
Arjola ARAPI-GJINI, Dr., Research Associate, IAMO, Germany
Arbnora SHALA, PhD Student, Researcher, IAMO, Germany
Edvin ZHLLIMA, PhD, Associate Professor, Agricultural University of Tirana, Albania
INDIVIDUAL IMMOBILITY THROUGH THE LENS OF WELL-BEING IN RURAL AREAS: INSIGHTS FROM FOUR SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Mariana CRÎŞMARU, PhD, Research Coordinator, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
PATHWAYS TO LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION AND VULNERABILITY AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE: EMPLOYMENT TRANSITIONS AND NEET DYNAMICS ACROSS TWO GGS WAVES

Ewa ILCZUK, PhD Student, Jagiellonian University, Poland
HOUSEHOLD MONEY MANAGEMENT AND ITS RELATION TO RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT AND QUALITY

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION V

Adapting to Population Change: Resilience, Innovation, and Social Transformation

Vladislav BADAN, University Assistant, Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Republic of Moldova

Olga PENINA, Habilitated Doctor, Associate Professor, Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Republic of Moldova

POPULATION AGEING AND DEPOPULATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: REGIONAL PATTERNS AND CHALLENGES FOR DEMOGRAPHIC RESILIENCE

Michał TARACHA, PhD, Warsaw School of Economics, Institute of Econometrics, Poland
MAJOR LIFE TRANSITIONS AND CHANGES IN SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AMONG OLDER EUROPEANS: EVIDENCE FROM SHARE

Mihaela DRAGOMIR, PhD Candidate, Moldova State University

MITIGATING DEMOGRAPHIC PRESSURES: SOMATIC PRACTICES AS A BIO-STRUCTURAL TOOL FOR ACTIVE AGEING AND HEALTHCARE SUSTAINABILITY

14:30–15:00 | COFFEE BREAK

15:00–17:00 | PANEL II

Join us:

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Passcode: 200041

Moderator:

Mariana CRÎȘMARU, PhD, Coordinate Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Cristina FALUDI, Associate Professor, PhD, Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania

Mihaela Elvira CÎMPIANU, Lecturer, PhD, “1 Decembrie 1918” University of Alba Iulia, Romania
THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL SUPPORT IN REDEFINING PERSONAL FULFILMENT AMONG WOMEN EXPERIENCING INFERTILITY AND INVOLUNTARY CHILDLESSNESS IN ROMANIA

Ecaterina GRIGORAȘ, PhD, Research Coordinator, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

CHANGES IN WOMEN’S SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE AUTONOMY IN MOLDOVA: EVIDENCE FROM GGS WAVES 2020 AND 2024

Vitalie ȘTÎRBA, PhD Student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

RECONSTRUCTING DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY BESSARABIA USING REVISION LISTS AND PARISH REGISTERS

Maxim SLAV, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
MOLDOVAN LOCALITIES AND DISTANCES DATASET: DESCRIPTION AND POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS IN DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Mariana BUCIUCEANU-VRABIE, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

DIGITAL AGEISM AND PROCEDURAL ALGORITHMIC FAIRNESS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF OLDER ADULTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION V

Adapting to Population Change: Resilience, Innovation, and Social Transformation

Artiom SAMOHVALOV, PhD Student, Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

INNOVATION AND HISTORICAL EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE IN MOLDOVA'S OLD-AGE INCOME SUPPORT: COMPARATIVE EVIDENCE, 2013–2025

Inga CHISTRUGA-SÎNCHEVICI, PhD, Research Coordinator, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: TRANSFORMATIONS AND EMERGING PATTERNS

Tatiana TABAC, PhD, National Bank of Moldova

Ecaterina GRIGORAȘ, PhD, Research Coordinator, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Artiom SAMOHVALOV, PhD Student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Maxim SLAV, Research Fellow, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

Irina PAHOMII, PhD, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

FACTORS, ASPIRATIONS AND MIGRATION RISKS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Alina BOTEZAT, PhD, Senior Researcher (CS I), “Gheorghe Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy, Iași Branch, Romania

Mariana BUCIUCEANU-VRABIE, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM, Republic of Moldova

Olga POALELUNGI, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM, Republic of Moldova

Aurelian-Petruș PLOPEANU, PhD, Habil., Senior Researcher (CS I),), “Gheorghe Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy, Iași Branch, Romania & Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

Vicențiu Robert GABOR, PhD, Gheorghe Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy, Iași Branch, Romania & Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

Svetlana RUSU, PhD, National Institute for Economic Research, ASEM, Republic of Moldova

Tatiana TABAC, PhD, National Bank of Moldova

Artiom SAMOHVALOV, PhD Student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, ASEM, Republic of Moldova

Delia SCRIPCARIU, PhD Student, “Gheorghe Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy, Iași Branch, Romania & Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Romania

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND EDUCATIONAL MOBILITY INTENTIONS: RESPONSES TO INFORMATION ON DOUBLE-DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Olga POALELUNGI, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
NATURALISATION AS AN INDICATOR OF MIGRATION SETTLEMENT: THE CASE OF EMIGRANTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Natalia BARGAN, PhD Student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

ENSURING CENSUS ACCURACY IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION V

Adapting to Population Change: Resilience, Innovation, and Social Transformation

Arina GAGAUZ, PhD Student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EVERYDAY CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING

Ilie GAGAUZ, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT

Liliana MAMALIGA, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
PROJECT MANAGEMENT BASED ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES IN THE
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Day 2 — Friday, 9 October 2026 – ONLINE SESSION

13:00–16:00 | ZOOM

*Hosted from: ASEM Building B, Student Hub (ground floor)
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)*

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Meeting ID: 893 9708 8345

Passcode: 613228

Moderators:

Ecaterina GRIGORAŞ, PhD, Research Coordinator, National Institute for
Economic Research, AESM

Vitalie ŞTÎRBA, PhD Student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for
Economic Research, AESM

Ioana BĂRBULESCU, PhD Candidate, School of Advanced Studies of the Romanian Academy,
Doctoral School of Economic Sciences, National Institute for Economic Research “Costin C.
Kiriţescu”, Institute of National Economy, Bucharest, Romania

Ana-Maria CIUHU, Researcher, Institute of National Economy, Romanian Academy / Romanian
Institute of Statistics

Valentina VASILE, PhD, Scientific Director, Institute of National Economy, Romanian Academy

Andrei SUCIU, Specialist in Software Architecture, Independent Scholar

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AS A DRIVER OF AI-ENABLED LABOUR MARKET
TRANSFORMATION: A MECHANISM-ORIENTED SCIENTOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF THE
EMERGING KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE

Carmen Marcela CIORNEI, PhD in sociology, Head of the Social Protection Department,
Directorate of Social and Medical Assistance, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Simona Maria STĂNESCU, PhD in Sociology, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for Quality of
Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF POLICIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN ROMANIA

Maria Livia STEFANESCU, PhD in Sociology, Researcher, Research Institute for Quality of Life,
Romanian Academy, Romania

CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC DECLINE IN THE CONTEXT OF CITIZENS' PRIORITIES FOR THE
FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION V

Adapting to Population Change: Resilience, Innovation, and Social Transformation

Iulian STĂNESCU, PhD in sociology, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO DESIRED FERTILITY IN ROMANIA: A TEN-YEAR COMPARISON, 2014–2024

Nasim Ahamed MONDAL, PhD Student, Centre of Migration Research, University of Warsaw, Poland

Aiva JASILIONIENE, Researcher, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Germany
OVERSHOOTING: A NEW HYPOTHESIS ON MIGRANT COMPLETED FERTILITY OUTSIDE THE ORIGIN-DESTINATION CORRIDOR

Veronica CREȚU, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova

Olga GAGAUZ, Habilitated doctor, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM

FROM FORMAL EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS TO DATA-DRIVEN PRACTICE: AN EXPLORATORY CASE OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC POLICY MANAGEMENT IN MOLDOVA

Dmytro SHUSHPANOV, PhD, Professor, Mykhailo Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Quality of Life Research, NAS of Ukraine

Vadym POSHELIUZHNYI, PhD Student, Mykhailo Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Quality of Life Research, NAS of Ukraine

CHANGES IN POPULATION STRUCTURE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF HEALTHCARE DEMAND

Borys KRIMER, PhD, Leading Researcher, Mykhailo Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Quality of Life Research, NAS of Ukraine

Iryna KURYLO, PhD in Economics, Professor, Charles University, Czechia

DOES THE NUMBER OF OLDER ADULTS IN A HOUSEHOLD MATTER? AGE STRUCTURE AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES IN UKRAINE

14:30–14:45 | PAUSE

Igor GUSEINOV, PhD, Komrat State University, Republic of Moldova

DEMOGRAPHIC RESILIENCE AND FISCAL CAPACITY OF THE TERRITORIAL UNITS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AS INTERRELATED INSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES

Eveny CIURLEO, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Calabria, Italy

Alba Maria GALLO, Researcher, Università Giustino Fortunato, Italy

Pietro IAQUINTA, Researcher, University of Calabria, Italy

Ubaldo COMITE, Professor, Università Giustino Fortunato, Italy

FROM BRAIN DRAIN TO BRAIN GAIN: THE ROLE OF MIGRATION, DIASPORA AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ALBANIA

Maksym KURANDA, PhD Student, Institute of Industrial Economics, NAS of Ukraine

THE ADOPTION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO ADAPT TO A DECLINING WORKING-AGE POPULATION

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION V

Adapting to Population Change: Resilience, Innovation, and Social Transformation

Dumitru BINIUC, PhD Student, Ungheni District Hospital, Republic of Moldova
Olga PENINA, Habilitated Doctor in Medical Sciences, Associate Professor, Nicolae Testemițanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Republic of Moldova
QUALITY OF LIFE AND RESILIENCE IN OLDER PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES: A SOCIO-MEDICAL PERSPECTIVE

Oleksii HAVRYLIUK, PhD, Research Fellow, Mykhailo Ptukha Institute for Demography and Life Quality Research, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
ARE WE STILL DOWNLOADING CSVs FOR POPULATION STUDIES? RETHINKING DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ACQUISITION USING THE PYTHON 'EUROSTAT' LIBRARY

Diana CHEIANU-ANDREI, PhD, Associate Professor, Sociopolis Consultancy LTD / Moldova State University
DIGITAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: PREVALENCE, FORMS AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Larysa HUK, PhD in Economics, Researcher, Institute for Economics and Forecasting, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
Victoria BLYZNIUK, Habilitated Doctor of Economics, Institute for Economics and Forecasting, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
Tetiana PEREHUDOVA, PhD in Economics, Institute for Economics and Forecasting, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
THE LABOUR SHORTAGE IN UKRAINE AS AN EXISTENTIAL CHALLENGE FOR POST-WAR RECOVERY

Iryna KURYLO, PhD in Economics, Professor Charles University, Czechia / Mykhailo Ptoukha Institute for Demography and Life Quality Research, NAS of Ukraine
SOCIOECONOMIC SITUATION, ADAPTATION AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OF OLDER UKRAINIANS IN WARTIME

Ecaterina DELEU, PhD, Moldova State University
MOLDOVAN MIGRANTS AND BILATERAL SOCIAL SECURITY AGREEMENTS: WHEN AGE BECOMES A VULNERABILITY

Lyudmyla SLYUSAR, PhD in Economics, Leading Researcher, Mykhailo Ptoukha Institute of Demography and Social Research, NAS of Ukraine
CHANGES IN THE FAMILY STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION IN UKRAINE: MODERN CHALLENGES AND WAYS TO MINIMIZE THEM

Svetlana ZAHAROV, PhD, Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
Galina SVELIEVA, PhD, Associate Professor, National Institute for Economic Research, AESM
THE IMPACT OF LABOUR FORCE QUALITY ON GDP IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

15:50–16:00 | General Discussion and Closing of Section 5

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION VI
Well-Being, Inclusion and the Reduction of Social Inequalities

Day 1 — Thursday, 8 October 2026
12:30-17:00

Venue: ASEM Building B, Room 414 (4st floor)
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)

Join Zoom Meeting:
<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82588271136?pwd=Hi2flmb74ZNTxo20yWSwehgC5fUXdb.1>
Meeting ID: 825 8827 1136
Passcode: S6NIER

Moderators:

Tatiana COLESNICOVA, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Head of Department Social Research and Standard of Living, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Svetlana RUSU, PhD in economics, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Natalia DOBRIANSKA, Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Head of Department Tourism Business and Recreation, Odessa National University of Technology, Ukraine

Yuliia KRAVCHENKO, PhD in Economics, Head of the Department of Accounting and Taxation, Odessa State Agrarian University, Ukraine

Cosmin SICREA, PhD (Associate), Assistant Lecturer, University of Petroşani, Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, Romania

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND THE MINIMUM HEALTH INSURANCE PACKAGE: IMPLICATIONS OF ABOLISHING THE CO-INSURED STATUS IN ROMANIA

Hanna ZELINSKA, Doctor of Biological Sciences, Associate Professor, Academic Center of Continuous Professional Education, Bogomolets National Medical University, Ukraine

Lesya LYMAR, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor, Director of the Academic Center of Continuous Professional Education, Bogomolets National Medical University, Ukraine

Olena KEFELI-IANOVSKA, PhD, Senior Lecturer, Academic Center of Continuous Professional Education, Bogomolets National Medical University, Ukraine

UKRAINIAN PECULIARITIES OF INCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Valeriu DOGA, Habilitated Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Iulia BEJENARU, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

NEET YOUTH AS A FACTOR OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND DECLINING POPULATION WELL-BEING IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Carmina MEOLA, PhD, Adjunct professor, Department of Law, Economics, Management and Quantitative Methods (DEMM), UNISANNIO, University of Benevento, DEMM, Italy

INCLUSIVE TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A NARRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

Loredana Marcela TRANCĂ, PhD, Lecturer, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Department of Social Work, West University of Timișoara, Romania

Raul CIORBA, Master's Student, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Department of Social Work, West University of Timișoara, Romania

FORCED MIGRANTS' PERSPECTIVES ON ACCESS TO THE SOCIAL WORK SYSTEM IN ROMANIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

Angela BELOBROV, PhD, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

BEYOND BLANKET EXCLUSION: REFORMING AML/CFT BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP STANDARDS TO CURB INDISCRIMINATE DE-RISKING AND ADVANCE FINANCIAL INCLUSION

Alina Georgeta AILINĂ, PhD in Economics, „Victor Slăvescu” Financial and Monetary Research Center, INCE, Romanian Academy, Romania

Gabriela Cornelia PICIU, PhD in Economics, „Victor Slăvescu” Financial and Monetary Research Center, INCE, Romanian Academy, Romania

A COMPOSITE INDEX FOR ASSESSING URBAN SUSTAINABILITY IN EU27: A PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS APPROACH

Sabrina Lucilla BARONE, PhD Student, Pegaso Online University, Italy

STRATEGIC INCONSISTENCY AND UNEQUAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: EVIDENCE FROM UPPER ITALIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Nicoleta MIHĂILĂ, PhD, Scientific Researcher III, „Victor Slăvescu” Financial and Monetary Research Center, Romania

STANDARD OF LIVING, INEQUALITY AND TAXATION. SOME CONSIDERATIONS IN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Anatolii ROJCO, PhD in Economics, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Ecaterina HEGHEA, PhD in Economics, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING PROVISION AND ACCESS TO COMMUNAL AMENITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Mihail CIOBANU, PhD Student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

INCOME ELASTICITY OF HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: AN ENGEL-BASED ANALYSIS

Mariana BĂLAN, PhD in mathematics and economics, University Professor, Faculty of Economic Sciences - „Hyperion” University of Bucharest, Romania

Carmen UZLĂU, PhD in law and economics, Associate Professor, Scientific Researcher III, Institute for Economic Forecasting, Romanian Academy, Romania

INCOME AND WEALTH INEQUALITIES: TRENDS AND QUANTIFICATION

Maria KOMPANEETS, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Moldova State University, Republic of Moldova

Ludmila GOLOVATAIA, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Moldova State University, Republic of Moldova

SOCIOECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ACROSS COUNTRIES OF DIFFERENT INCOME GROUPS

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION VI

Well-Being, Inclusion and the Reduction of Social Inequalities

Ecaterina HEGHEA, PhD in Economics, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Iulia GARABAJII, Junior Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

LEVEL OF HOUSEHOLD OWNERSHIP OF DURABLE GOODS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Elena Denisa MATEEVICI, PhD Student, Romanian Academy, School of Advanced Studies of the Romanian Academy, Doctoral School of Economic Sciences, National Institute for Economic Research „Costin C. Kirițescu”, Institute of National Economy, Romania

Volodea MATEEVICI, PhD, Sus Râmnicul LAG Association, Romania

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES AS A TOOL FOR PROMOTING WELL-BEING, SOCIAL INCLUSION, AND THE REDUCTION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

Carmen Marcela CIORNEI, PhD in Sociology, Head of the Social Protection Department, Directorate of Social and Medical Assistance, Romania

Simona Maria STĂNESCU, PhD, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

Crina MOISA, Counsellor, Directorate of Social and Medical Assistance, Romania

FROM INVISIBLE SURVIVAL TO INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION: A CRITICAL GENDER AUDIT OF SERVICE STANDARDS FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN ROMANIA

Tatiana COLESNICOVA, PhD in Economics, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Ecaterina HEGHEA, PhD in Economics, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Mihail CIOBANU, PhD student, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

COMPARISON OF METHODS FOR MEASURING POVERTY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD

Nataliia ZGHADOVA, Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Economic Security, Law, and Social Processes, Odesa National University of Technology, Ukraine

Halyna ATAMAS, Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor, Odesa National University of Technology, Ukraine

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MECHANISMS IN PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

Debora TRINGALI, PhD Candidate in Digital Transformation - Digital Humanities, Università Telematica Pegaso, Italy

MUSEUMS, VULNERABILITY AND WELL-BEING: THE BOTTEGA DEI RAGAZZI AT THE ISTITUTO DEGLI INNOCENTI AS A CULTURAL WELFARE HUB

Olena NIKOLIUK, Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Head of the Department of Public Management and Administration, Odesa National University of Technology, Ukraine

Yuliia KRAVCHENKO, PhD in Economics, Odesa State Agrarian University, Ukraine

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF POPULATION WELFARE AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR ENSURING ECONOMIC SECURITY

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION VI
Well-Being, Inclusion and the Reduction of Social Inequalities

Day 2 — Friday, 9 October 2026

13:00-16:00

Venue: ASEM Building B, Room 414 (4st floor)
[59 Mitropolit Gavriil Bănulescu-Bodoni Street, Chişinău](#)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82588271136?pwd=Hi2flmb74ZNTxo20yWSwehgC5fUXdb.1>

Meeting ID: 825 8827 1136

Passcode: S6NIER

Moderators:

Tatiana COLESNICOVA, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Head of Department Social Research and Standard of Living, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Mihail CIOBANU, PhD Candidate, Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Nataliia ZGHADOVA, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Economic Security, Law, and Social Processes, Odesa National University of Technology, Ukraine

Aliona BALAN, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

DEPTH OF HOUSEHOLD RESILIENCE UNDER ENERGY VULNERABILITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Svetlana BODACI, PhD Student, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Alic BÎRCĂ, Habilitated Doctor, University Professor, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

EMPIRICAL STUDY ON EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION OF THE DETERMINANTS OF INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Adela Sorinela SAFTA, PhD, Associate Scientific Researcher, Titu Maiorescu University, Institute of Studies, Research, Development and Innovation, Romanian Academy, The Center for Studies and Research on Agrosilvic Biodiversity „Acad. David Davidescu”, Romania

INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY AND THE NEW PARADIGM OF WELL-BEING: BETWEEN ECONOMIC EQUITY AND THE REDUCTION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

Ştefan Adrian NEAGOE, PhD student in sociology, Quality of Life Research Institute, SCOSAAR - Romanian Academy, Vice-President of the National Trade Union of Penitentiary Police (Romania), Romania

INFLUENCING FACTORS OF THE ACTIVITY OF PENITENTIARY POLICE OFFICERS

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION VI
Well-Being, Inclusion and the Reduction of Social Inequalities

Maryna KALYUZHNA, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Management, Odesa State Agrarian University, Ukraine

Andrii NAIDA, PhD (Economics), Associate Professor of the Department of Accounting and Taxation, Odesa State Agrarian University, Ukraine

Iryna NAIDA, PhD (Economics), Associate Professor of the Department of Management, Odesa State Agrarian University, Ukraine

WELFARE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION AS FACTORS IN STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC SECURITY WITHIN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM

Svetlana RUSU, PhD, University Lecturer, National Institute for Economic Research, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

FROM MIGRATION TO INVESTMENT: FINANCIAL MECHANISMS FOR TRANSFORMING HUMAN AND SOCIAL CAPITAL INTO PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENT

Simona STĂNESCU, PhD, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

Claudia DELU, PhD Student, Doctoral School of Sociology and Legal Sciences, School of Advanced Studies of the Romanian Academy (SCOSAAR), Romanian Academy, Romania

Simona MIHAIU, PhD, Scientific Researcher III, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

BEYOND THE EXISTENCE OF PUBLIC POLICIES: AWARENESS OF ROMA INCLUSION MEASURES IN ROMANIA

Angela MICCIO, Independent Researcher, Department of Law, University of Naples Federico II, President of the movement “Let’s give the law a soul!” – Human Rights Forum - study center, Italy

TWENTY YEARS AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: AN ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS AND SIBLINGS

Ana-Maria TELEOACĂ, PhD Student, School of Advanced Studies of the Romanian Academy (SCOSAAR); Researcher, Department of Social Policies, National Scientific Research Institute for Labour and Social Protection (INCSMPS), Romania

COORDINATED PREVENTION FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY PARENTAL SUBSTANCE USE: THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Iryna AGEIEVA, Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor, Docent of the Department of Management and Logistics, Odesa National Technological University, Ukraine

Anhelina ZAITSEVA, Assistant of the Department of Management and Logistics, Odesa National Technological University, Ukraine

THE IMPACT OF THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT MECHANISM OF AN ENTERPRISE ON THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Corina KAUSHAN, PhD, University of European Political and Economic Studies “Constantin Stere”, Republic of Moldova

Ghenadie RADU, PhD Student, Technical University of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

Tatiana KAUSHAN, PhD, University of European Political and Economic Studies “Constantin Stere”, Republic of Moldova

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: THE ROLE OF BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

Elena SPIRIDON, Scientific Researcher, Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy, Romania

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE ROMANIAN PARLIAMENT

DETAILED PROGRAMME | SESSION VI
Well-Being, Inclusion and the Reduction of Social Inequalities

Tetiana SAVCHENKO, Doctor of Economics, Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, Business and Trade, Odesa National University of Technology, Ukraine

Liudmyla BEREZOVSKA, PhD, Department of Public Administration, Odesa National University of Technology, Ukraine

PEOPLE-CENTERED PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS A BASIS FOR INCLUSIVE WELL-BEING AND SOCIAL COHESION

Stefano SACCHETTI, Public Employee, Independent Researcher, AIDIMA – Italian Disability Managers Association, Italy

THE ROLE OF THE DISABILITY MANAGER: A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Delia MAGHERESCU, PhD, Lawyer, Bucharest Bar Association, Romania

THE IMPACT OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Tetiana KOLOMIETS, PhD, Associate Professor, Bogomolets National Medical University, Ukraine

MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL RESILIENCE: INTEGRATING SOFT SKILLS AND TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNICATION INTO HEALTH PROFESSIONS TRAINING

Kamelia PETKOVA, PhD, Associate Professor, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IPS-BAS), Bulgaria

Nadezhda ILIEVA, PhD, Professor, National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NIGGG-BAS), Bulgaria

Dessislava POLEGANOVA, National Institute of Geophysics, Geodesy and Geography, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (NIGGG-BAS), Bulgaria

SOCIAL SEGREGATION AMONG THE ROMA URBAN POPULATION IN BULGARIA: REGIONAL PROFILES AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Corina GRIBINCEA, PhD, Senior Scientific Researcher, National Institute for Economic Research of the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

SOCIAL INCLUSION MECHANISMS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS FOR A MORE FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE LABOUR MARKET SUPPORTING LONG-TERM EMPLOYABILITY

Natalia DOBRIANSKA, Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Odesa National University of Technology, Ukraine

Olga SHEPELEVA, PhD in Economics, Associate Professor, Odesa National University of Technology, Ukraine

TOURISM AND SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING: THE UKRAINIAN DIMENSION OF THE RECREATION-QUALITY OF LIFE NEXUS

Ludmila HACINA, Lecturer, Trade Co-operative University of Moldova, Republic of Moldova
Daniel HACINA, MSc Student, Financial and Fiscal Law, Control and Audit, Trade Co-operative University of Moldova, Republic of Moldova

FROM PROTECTION TO PARTICIPATION: REFUGEE LABOUR-MARKET INCLUSION AND DEMOGRAPHIC RESILIENCE IN MOLDOVA

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Simona MOAGĂR-POLADIAN

***Professor, PhD, Director of the Institute for World Economy,
Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania***



Professor Simona Moagăr-Poladian's research focuses on areas of structural changes in the world economy, international economic relations, and European Economic and Monetary integration.

Since 2020, she has been a doctoral coordinator at the School of Economics of the Romanian Academy. She has been also a member of the Management Board of the Romanian European Institute, serving her third term. She has coordinated several national projects and participated in international projects too.

In 2020-2023 period she coordinated the Centre for Writing European Projects in the field of Climate Change funded by the Competitiveness Operational Program as project manager. She was the Manager for the Project of the "Doctoral and Postdoctoral Studies, Horizon 2020: The Promoting of the National Interests Through Excellence, Competitiveness and Responsibility in the Romanian Fundamental and Applied Research"- under the European Structural Funds Programme, in 2014-2015 period.

Professor Moagăr-Poladian is the author of over 100 scientific publications and academic studies, and actively contributes to informing decision makers about the evolution of commodity markets, the economic evolution of states and regions, risks and opportunities in trade and investments, case studies.

Camelia GAVRILESCU

***PhD, Associate Professor, Senior Researcher
Institute of Agricultural Economics - Romanian Academy, Romania***



Dr. Camelia Gavrilăscu is senior researcher and associate professor in agri-food economics and policies at the Institute of Agricultural Economics of the Romanian Academy. Her main areas of expertise include sustainable rural development, agricultural and rural development policies, farm economic and ecologic performance analysis, agri-food trade and competitiveness. She participated in many international projects (FP5, FP6, FP7, Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe), as coordinator and/or expert.

Dr. Gavrilăscu is the author of over 200 scientific publications (articles, working papers, books, book chapters, reports). She is actively participating in important scientific meetings (Conferences, workshops) in her area of expertise. She is also Chief Editor of the journal *Agricultural Economics and Rural Development* (ISSN 1841-0375), open access.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Ion CERTAN

PhD, Senior Researcher, University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest, Romania



Dr. Ion Certan is a scientific researcher at Laboratory of IT, Management and Econometric within the Research Center for Studies of Food and Agricultural Products Quality of University of Agronomic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest.

His main areas of expertise include rural development, rural financing, life cycle cost assessments, agri-food trade and competitiveness. He participated in many national and international projects as expert or evaluator.

Dr. Ion Certan is the author of more than 100 scientific publications (books, articles, guides, etc.). He is actively participating in different scientific events like conferences, workshops, round tables, debates and so

on.

Alexandru MONAHOV

*PhD in Economics, Expert Adviser,
National Bank of Moldova*



Dr. Alexandru Monahov's research interest lies at the intersection of quantitative finance and advanced technology, specifically in enhancing financial resilience through Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence techniques.

Dr. Monahov is an accomplished research economist and expert in financial stability, currently applying his expertise at the National Bank of Moldova, after having worked for the Bank of England and within the French academic sector, at the Universities of Nice and Nantes. He is also affiliated with the Technical University of Moldova and is a Research Lab member at Northeastern University, Boston, USA. Holding a PhD in Economics and Finance, alongside a Professional Certificate in Advanced Risk Management from the New York Institute of Finance, he has developed a robust career focused on

Central Banking, financial risk, and macro-prudential policy. Beyond his institutional role, he is also an experienced lecturer and course designer, contributing to the academic understanding of banking systems.

The research portfolio developed by *Dr. Monahov* includes papers on topics such as stress testing, inflationary shocks, borrower repayment capacity, and the empirical study of European credit markets; as well as software applications in the field of data science and finance. His work focuses heavily on developing prudential instruments, macroeconomic modeling, and risk monitoring with AI for better financial oversight.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Olga GAGAUZ

*Habilitated Doctor in sociology, Associate Professor,
Head of the Centre for Demographic Research "Academician Gheorghe Paladi",
National Institute for Economic Research, AESM*



Dr. Olga Gagauz's research focuses on population dynamics, fertility, ageing, migration, and demographic projections. Throughout her career, she has coordinated numerous scientific projects, including those supported by UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank, GIZ, and other international organisations. She is recognised as a national expert on population and development and actively contributes to evidence-based demographic policy in Moldova.

Dr. Gagauz is the author of more than 150 scientific publications, including monographs and articles published in ranked international journals. She is also the Editor-in-Chief of the journal Economy and Sociology. Under her leadership, the Centre for Demographic Research "Academician Gheorghe Paladi" has strengthened its role as a key national institution in demographic analysis and policy advice. She actively collaborates with international research networks and contributes to comparative studies across Europe and beyond.

Emilia GOGU (LUCA)

*PhD, Associate Professor, Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE),
Research Expert, Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
(ARACIS)*



Dr. Emilia Gogu (Luca) is an Associate Professor at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE), with over 25 years of experience in higher education. Her main research and teaching interests include macroeconomic statistics, econometric modelling, international business statistics, Sustainable Development Goals and indicators, and quality assessment in higher education.

Since 2013, she has served as an evaluator for the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS) and, since 2017, for the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova (ANACEC). Since 2021, she has also been a Research Expert at ARACIS, contributing to national methodologies, external quality assurance guidelines, institutional evaluation frameworks, and research studies on higher education and doctoral education.

Dr. Emilia Gogu (Luca) has participated in numerous national and international conferences and has authored or co-authored over 100 scientific publications. Her work includes several studies and volumes on the development and quality of higher education in Romania. In 2020, she co-authored the Statistical Monograph of the Bucharest University of Economic Studies: 100 Graduating Classes, a research work awarded the "Petre S. Aurelian" Prize by the Romanian Academy.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Alexander DAVCHEV

PhD, Professor, Head of the Department of "Management and Sustainable Development", University of Agribusiness and Rural Development (UARD), Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Member of Scientific and Technical Union and The Union of Scientists in Bulgaria



Prof. Dr. Alexander Davchev completed his doctorate at the University of Food and Technology - Plovdiv. His work experience began in the National Commodity Exchange in 2003, and today he is its administrative director. Since 2011 he has been working as an assistant professor at UARD and teaches in disciplines such as: "Exchanges and Exchange Operations", "Sales Management", "Marketing", "Labor Market", "Business History" and others.

In 2018 he was appointed as an Associate Professor at UARD – Plovdiv and later in 2025 as a professor. His fields of interest are related with the sustainable development of urban and rural areas, marketing, sales promotions, labor market and tourism.

Currently, *Professor Davchev* is the Head of the Department of "Management and Sustainable Development". His scientific publications include studies, articles and reports in various specialized publications, co-author of two textbooks, participant in international and regional conferences, round tables and more. Member of Scientific and Technical Union and The Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

Solveig ARGESSEANU CUNNINGHAM

Professor, Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute / Emory University, Netherlands



Professor Solveig Argeseanu Cunningham is a demographer and sociologist and Theme Leader for Health, Ageing and Longevity at the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI). and Professor of Global Health at Emory University, USA. She holds a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania, an MSc in International Development from the London School of Economics and Political Science and completed postdoctoral training in Chronic Disease Epidemiology at Emory University.

Her research focuses on global health and development, chronic diseases, and health in childhood and across the life course. She employs both quantitative and qualitative methods and has extensive experience in population-based data collection and analysis. She has conducted research in the United States, Europe, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East. Her work has been published in leading international peer-reviewed journals, including The New England Journal of Medicine, Demography, Social Science & Medicine, Population Studies, Epidemiology, and The Journals of Gerontology. Her research has generated interest outside of academia, including The New York Times, USA Today, NPR, and NBC Nightly News. She contributes to policy discussions, for example the American College of Endocrinology Consensus Statement on Obesity.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Alina BOTEZAT

PhD, Senior Researcher (CS I), “Gheorghe Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy, Iași Branch, Romania



Alina Botezat is a senior researcher at the Romanian Academy, Iași Branch, where she actively contributes to the fields of migration, economics of education, health, and policy impact evaluation. She holds a degree in Economics from the University of Mannheim and has successfully completed her PhD in Applied Microeconomics and Economics of Education at the “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi, Romania.

In her recent research, *Alina Botezat* been particularly focused on high-skill migration, with a specific emphasis on the migration of health professionals and international student mobility. She also dedicates her efforts to investigating the impact of parental labor migration on left-behind children, shedding light on the multifaceted consequences of migration. In her work, she employs the latest statistical and econometric methods in an effort to identify causal effects.

Her research is accepted for publication in various international peer-reviewed journals like World Development, Population, Space and Place, Journal of Economic Psychology, Globalization and Health, International Regional Science Review. In the past decade, *Dr. Alina Botezat* has had the privilege of serving as the Principal Investigator for various research grants. Between 2013-2016, she was fellow of the College for Interdisciplinary Educational Research (CIDER, Berlin). *Dr. Alina Botezat* is also an expert member of the Expert Network on Economics and Sociology of Education and Training (ENESET).

ABSTRACTS

THE NEW FACES OF GLOBAL ECONOMIC ORDER IN THE CURRENT GLOBAL LANDSCAPE

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Global economic order is undergoing a deep structural transformation. But this change does not signal the absolute decrease of international integration as we know. Today we assist in increasing geopolitical tensions, an erosion of the supply chains, a rapid technological transformation, and a dynamic speed of digitalization. All these challenges have an increasing impact on the international trade growth, influencing also the main scope from more profits to strategic resilience in an increasingly fragmented global economy. The primary objective of this study is to examine the new form of global economic order and its operating paradigm. This paper examines the gradual transition from the traditional globalization, which was developed in the XX century and focused on cost minimization, toward a new form of a global landscape defined by resilience, security, and strategic realignment. The methodology encompasses a trade-flow analysis, tariff policy, and FDI patterns. Also the study takes into consideration the geopolitical orientation which reflects a more politically aligned blocs, identified as friend shoring. The significance of this study is to see how globalization has evolved into a new form that is highly linked to the emerging global new order.

The study analyzes a comparative methodology, introducing a possible new concept of globalization influenced by regional fragmentation, new trade barriers, and the scarcity of energy and raw material resources. The results and key insights focus on the new globalization framework marked by trade blocs' reconfiguration.

Key-words: globalization, trade flows, regionalization, international trade, FDI, trade blocs

THE AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS IN ROMANIA AND REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA – 20 YEARS OF EVOLUTION

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Last twenty years meant for both Romania and Republic of Moldova a period of significant changes in their agri-food systems on their path to growth and development. In both countries, GVA in agriculture increased rather continuously, improved technologies resulted in important yield gains, despite fluctuations due to frequent droughts affecting both countries. Domestic and foreign capital investments, together with EU and non-EU funds resulted in changes of the farm structure and development and diversification of value chains. Integration in the Single Market for Romania and in DCFTA for Republic of Moldova respectively resulted in a boost in their international agri-food trade, and fostered specialization in traditional production branches, different for each country. The present paper analyses the main indicators for the post-accession development of the agri-food sectors in Romania and Republic of Moldova, and emphasizes by comparison the structural evolutions, the growth trends, as well as the main gains and shortcomings of the period, as a result of the CAP and national policies.

Keywords: Romania, Republic of Moldova, production, international trade, DCFTA

WHEN ONE CRISIS FOLLOWS ANOTHER: DO FUNDAMENTALS STILL MATTER IN COMMODITY PRICING?

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The unprecedented macroeconomic volatility of the 2020s, characterized by pandemic-induced lockdowns, fractured global supply chains, and a historic resurgence in inflation, raised fundamental questions regarding the continued relevance of traditional macroeconomic determinants in commodity pricing. This paper investigates whether the role of macroeconomic fundamentals in explaining commodity prices decoupled, or structurally adapted, during these exogenous shocks. Employing a dual-model empirical framework, this paper juxtaposes a static, full-sample regression against a Dynamic OLS (D-OLS) approach across a diverse portfolio of precious metal, industrial, energy, and agricultural commodities. The empirical evidence decisively rejects the hypothesis of a fundamental decoupling. Instead, the dynamic framework reveals that underlying pricing architectures underwent complex, time-varying structural re-weightings. Notably, the analysis captures the empirical inversion of the industrial production coefficient, transitioning from a traditional proxy for aggregate demand to an indicator of acute, systemic supply constraints. Furthermore, the nominal variance decomposition illustrates an amplified sensitivity to the cost of capital as monetary tightening regimes took hold. The findings underscore the inadequacy of static forecasting models during era-defining structural breaks. The paper concludes by outlining important implications for Central Bank policy. The dynamic framework produces time-varying coefficients and comprehensive model performance distribution plots that can be dissected by asset class and time period. Regulators can thus prevent the misdiagnosis of macroeconomic shocks which could lead to incorrect policy decisions. Macroprudential policy stands to gain by utilizing the tail-distribution parameters produced by the proposed framework, within comprehensive stress-tests for systemic institutions exposed to commodity price fluctuations.

Key-words: Commodity Pricing, Macroeconomics, Fundamentals, Inflation, Monetary Policy, Macroprudential Regulation.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AN AGEING POPULATION

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Population ageing affects labour supply, productivity and public finances, but its effects vary across countries. Demographic trajectories, labour markets, pension systems and fiscal institutions shape both the scale of these effects and available responses. This study assesses ageing's economic impact in the Republic of Moldova through complementary scenario projections using population forecasts and National Transfer Accounts (NTA). The analysis links age-specific employment and labour-income profiles with population change, consumption, asset-based reallocations and age-related public expenditure. It compares a demographic benchmark, moderate labour-market adaptation and active ageing, alongside alternative GDP growth and spending assumptions. The projections indicate that population change places sustained pressure on labour supply. Higher employment, particularly among older workers, can mitigate this pressure and support labour income, although it cannot reverse demographic decline. Fiscal scenarios suggest that faster real GDP growth can help contain age-related expenditure relative to GDP if spending growth remains controlled. Where public expenditure grows faster, stronger GDP growth may not prevent fiscal pressure. The findings underline the need for country-specific policies that raise employment and productivity through skills development and innovation, improve public spending quality and preserve fiscal room. Demographic ageing calls for coordinated labour-market, pension and budget responses tailored to national conditions.

The article was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024-2027).

Keywords: demographic ageing, economic impact, labour-market adaptation, sustainability, Moldova

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN ROMANIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: TRENDS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DIASPORA IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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International migration is one of the socio-demographic and economic phenomena with a major impact on the development of Romania and the Republic of Moldova, both states having recorded significant migration flows to European Union countries in recent decades. This paper aims to comparatively analyze the scale, dynamics, and particular features of the migration phenomenon in the two countries, as well as the socio-economic contribution of the diaspora to the development of the countries of origin and of the economies of the destination countries.

The analysis follows the evolution of emigrant flows and stocks, the main European destinations, the socio-demographic and professional characteristics of the migrant population, as well as the role of remittances, employment, and the transfer of financial, human, and social capital. Distinct attention is given to the diaspora's contribution to supporting household income, consumption, investment, and macroeconomic balances in the countries of origin, while also examining its participation in the labor market and in the creation of added value in European Union member states.

From a comparative perspective, the study highlights both the common elements of the two migration models, determined by income disparities, professional opportunities, and European economic integration, and the particularities associated with the different status of Romania and the Republic of Moldova in relation to the European Union. At the same time, it analyzes the contradictory effects of migration, between the benefits generated by remittances, the accumulation of skills, and the strengthening of transnational networks, on the one hand, and the decline of the active population, labor shortages, depopulation, and the risk of brain drain, on the other.

The research results can support the formulation of public policies aimed at harnessing the economic and social potential of the diaspora, stimulating circular migration and return, and strengthening the relationship between the diaspora, the labor market, and the sustainable development of Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: international migration, diaspora, Romania, Republic of Moldova, European Union, remittances, labor market, human capital, socio-economic development.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDING THE USE OF GEOTHERMAL ENERGY IN GREENHOUSE PRODUCTION IN BULGARIA

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Humanity is changing. Words like eco-friendly, sustainable, efficient, or nature-sparing are increasingly acquiring real meaning. The Green Deal, as the EU's flagship strategy to turn the continent climate-neutral by 2050, creates new perspectives and challenges. Reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions, alongside the ambition to build sustainable food systems, can be viewed as priority number one in the EU's vision for the future. Focusing on agriculture, greenhouse production is indisputably one of the most energy-intensive endeavors; respectively, it should be the most affected by the new paradigm. Consequently, finding solutions to create a climate-neutral process ought to be of critical importance and a subject of special attention. One such approach is harnessing geothermal energy as a promising solution for sustainable greenhouse production. This renewable and ecologically clean resource is not sufficiently represented in modern Bulgarian agriculture, yet it carries immense potential. Bulgaria is one of the richest in Europe in terms of thermo-mineral water reserves and historically possesses experience—and one could even say traditions—in this type of efficient greenhouse production. However, these achievements have been lost over time due to negligence, shortsightedness, lack of vision, and other factors. Today, it is time to talk about restarting this opportunity and, why not, viewing it as a serious competitive advantage for our country.

Keywords: Green Deal, sustainable greenhouse production, geothermal energy

SITTING AROUND THROUGHOUT THE DAY: THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE OF SEDENTARISM ACCOMPANYING ECONOMIC GROWTH

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Economic growth is accompanied by changes in lifestyles: changes in labour markets shift the working-age population from manual work towards service and knowledge industries, which are largely desk-based; economic growth facilitates access to technology that renders transportation and housework largely sedentary; even modes of leisure shift towards screen-based sedentary relaxation. The health consequences of some of these changes are positive, entailing lower risk of injury and depletion through strenuous physical tasks. However, reductions in physical activity also entail reductions in the benefits of physical activity and increased risk of cardiometabolic disease.

In this study, we compare the activities of adolescents in a high-income and a middle-income country. Adolescence is when sedentary behaviours are established and already may affect wellbeing. We used data from population-based 24-hour time-use diaries from two very different settings: a nationally representative study from the USA and primary data from a remote globalizing city in South India.

Because all movement is important for health, we characterized the movement continuum to the 24-hour day, calculating total daily energy expenditures and durations of time in each activity category. We used multiple linear regression to examine socioeconomic patterns of activities.

In spite of differing economic development, adolescents in both the USA and India spent a large portion of their time sedentary: this amounted to almost 530 minutes per weekday in India and 677 minutes in the USA. In India, adolescents attending higher socioeconomic schools were more sedentary, while in the USA it was racial minority children who were more sedentary. In both countries, girls spent more time being sedentary; in both settings, girls spent more of their active time doing chores, while boys spent more of it playing.

Keywords: health; physical activity; adolescents; development.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION OF SCIENTISTS: DYNAMICS OF KEY DETERMINANTS

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Scientists have always moved between countries. Today, amid renewed geopolitical rivalry and a global race for leadership in artificial intelligence and technology, attracting and keeping scientific talent has become a strategic national priority. Yet we know surprisingly little about what drives scientists to relocate for the long term rather than for short stays.

This research is part of a broader agenda on high-skilled migration, which has also examined the international migration of physicians and nurses. Scientists, however, are a special case among the highly skilled. They are among the most mobile professionals, and international mobility has become an expected step in an academic career. The markets for health professionals are tied to national regulation and the demand for services. The academic labour market, by contrast, is largely detached from national business cycles. It works as a global epistemic network driven by reputation, peers and access to knowledge, so research infrastructure and the institutional climate for independent research can weigh as much as pay.

The study follows the long-term migration of scientists across more than 160 countries from 1998 to 2020, using bibliometric data from Scopus and OpenAlex. It maps the main migration corridors and adds academic-specific factors to standard migration models: university prestige, research capacity, academic freedom, campus integrity and gender inclusion. Income gaps and governance quality matter, but so do these academic factors. The drivers also change over time. Cultural proximity dominated before the 2008 crisis, university prestige gained weight during it, and innovation ecosystems became the main pull factor afterwards, while economic incentives grew stronger throughout. Scientists also tend to leave research-dense systems for less saturated ones, and the drivers differ across regions and income groups.

Competing for global talent requires more than higher salaries. It also requires sound institutions, universities free from political interference, inclusive academic environments and strong innovation ecosystems.

Keywords: high-skilled migration; academic mobility; academic freedom; innovation ecosystems.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: FROM TECHNOLOGICAL EVOLUTION TO SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION

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Artificial intelligence (AI) has evolved from a specialized technological innovation into a transformative force reshaping economies, labour markets, education, governance, and society. This study aims to examine the evolution of AI and to develop an integrated conceptual perspective on the mechanisms through which AI generates systemic transformation. The research adopts a qualitative conceptual approach based on a comprehensive synthesis of the scientific literature and the analysis of recent reports published by leading international organizations. Through comparative analysis, content analysis, synthesis, and logical generalization, the study examines the technological evolution of AI and its multidimensional implications across interconnected societal domains. The findings demonstrate that AI should be understood not merely as a technological advancement but as a catalyst of continuous systemic transformation. This study proposes two complementary conceptual models: a conceptual framework illustrating the structural architecture of AI-enabled transformation and a transformation continuum explaining its dynamic evolution from technological innovation to societal transformation. Together, these models provide an integrated analytical perspective on the mechanisms of systemic transformation generated by artificial intelligence. The study contributes to the growing body of conceptual research on AI by offering a comprehensive framework that may support future theoretical developments, empirical investigations, and strategic decision-making in education, public administration, and economic policy.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; generative artificial intelligence; systemic transformation; digital transformation; education; labour market.

FROM FRAGMENTED HR PRACTICES TO AN INTEGRATED TALENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

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Talent management is analyzed in this study as a set of formal and informal organizational practices through which organizational actors identify, develop, mobilize, reward, and seek to retain employees, rather than exclusively as a functional tool of human resources. The objective of the research is to examine how these practices are connected both at the structural level and at the level of organizational actors' perceptions, as well as the discontinuities between the existence of individual practices and their integration into a coherent talent management architecture. The study addresses three research questions: (1) how are existing HR practices used to identify, develop, promote, reward, and retain high-performing or high-potential employees; (2) what connections between these practices can be identified in participants' accounts and perceptions and in organizational observation; and (3) what discontinuities arise between the existence of individual practices and the configuration of a coherent talent management architecture. We conducted qualitative research through ten semi-structured interviews, supplemented by unstructured organizational observation. The interviews focused on employees in leadership positions across all departments to capture their experiences with the processes under analysis; the sample was limited to ten participants once theoretical saturation was reached. The results highlight how formal and informal talent management practices are perceived and interpreted by organizational actors, as well as the gaps between the existence of these practices and their integration into a coherent organizational system. Performance evaluation serves as the primary formal benchmark for identifying high-performing employees, while

potential, adaptability, and behaviors observed in projects emerge as more informal indicators of talent. Practices related to development, internal mobility, compensation, and recognition are associated with opportunities for employee development and retention. A central finding is that the existence of HR practices does not automatically imply either their structural integration or their perception by organizational actors as elements of a coherent system. To interpret this tension, the study proposes the concept of “HR integration gap” as an interpretive tool derived from the analyzed case, with two components: structural integration and perceived integration. The concept requires validation in future research. The results also suggest the relevance of integrating talent management practices to organizations’ ability to mobilize, develop, and retain human capital, with possible implications for organizational resilience.

Keywords: talent management; HR practices; HR integration; organizational resilience; human capital development.

HOW WE VIEW DIGITALIZATION: DIVERGENT PERCEPTIONS OF ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES

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Digital technologies now play a vital role in economic, environmental, and social development. Even though many researchers have studied digital transformation, we still do not fully understand how people view digitalization and its connection to sustainable growth. Current research on this topic is often mixed and incomplete, especially when comparing countries with different levels of technology.

This study compares how people in Poland, Romania, and Serbia see digitalization and its impact on the economy, environment, society, human capital, and competitiveness. The data comes from an online survey filled out by 300 participants (100 from each nation) in January 2026. The researchers used the CRITIC–TOPSIS method to create special metrics and applied a one-way ANOVA test to group and compare the answers into four different levels of digital awareness.

The findings show clear differences between the three countries:

- Poland: People who see high levels of digitalization care more about environmental problems, but they worry less about social issues.
- Romania and Serbia: As people notice more digital growth, their concern for economic problems goes down. There are also clear links between technology and how people view social and human development.
- All countries: Interestingly, how people view competitiveness does not change based on their digital awareness in any of the studied nations.

Keywords: Digitalization, Sustainable competitiveness, Public perception, Comparative analysis, Central and Eastern Europe.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF PERCEIVED ECONOMIC RESILIENCE: A SPEARMAN CORRELATION HEATMAP ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL SHOCKS, ECONOMIC CONFIDENCE AND GOVERNMENT CAPACITY

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The intensification of polycrises generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the military conflict in Ukraine and the global economic instability has highlighted the need for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that influence economic resilience from the perspective of population perceptions. Although the specialized literature recognizes the importance of external shocks, economic confidence and institutional capacity in strengthening resilience, the relationships between these dimensions are predominantly investigated through causal models, with little attention being paid to the structure of the associations between them. In this context, the study aims to analyze the correlation patterns between the perception of external shocks, economic confidence, government capacity and perceived economic resilience in the Republic of Moldova. The research uses a quantitative approach based on a survey applied to a sample of 542 respondents, and the statistical analysis is carried out through the Spearman correlation coefficient and the graphical representation through the Spearman Correlation Heatmap, a method suitable for exploring the relationships between ordinal variables measured on Likert scales. The results highlight the existence of significant associations between the perception of external shocks, confidence in the evolution of the economy and the assessment of the capacity of public institutions, suggesting that perceived economic resilience is configured by the interaction of these dimensions and not by the isolated influence of a single factor. The contribution of the study consists in proposing an integrated conceptual model of perceived economic resilience and in mapping the relationships between the analyzed constructs, offering a complementary perspective to approaches based exclusively on macroeconomic indicators and explanatory models. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: perceived economic resilience; polycrisis; external shocks; economic confidence; government capacity; Spearman correlation analysis; heatmap; Republic of Moldova.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, BIG DATA AND INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS FOR MANAGING MACROECONOMIC IMBALANCES AND REGULATING DEFI MARKETS AND CRYPTO-ASSETS

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The accelerated digitalisation of the global economy and the rapid development of decentralised finance (DeFi) ecosystems are fundamentally transforming the mechanisms of operation, monitoring, and regulation of financial markets. At the same time, increasing economic complexity and global uncertainty have intensified the challenges associated with the early identification and management of macroeconomic imbalances. In this context, artificial intelligence (AI), Big Data analytics, and advanced forecasting models provide strategic opportunities for improving risk anticipation, strengthening financial resilience, and designing innovative mechanisms for economic and regulatory intervention.

The aim of this research is to develop an integrated analytical framework based on digital technologies and artificial intelligence methods for monitoring macroeconomic imbalances, assessing risks associated with DeFi markets, and supporting the development of innovative financial instruments aimed at enhancing financial system resilience. The

study addresses the following research questions: (1) To what extent can AI-driven models and Big Data analytics improve the accuracy of macroeconomic forecasting and the early detection of financial vulnerabilities? (2) How can digital technologies contribute to the effective monitoring and regulation of DeFi markets and crypto-assets? (3) What role can innovative financial instruments play in mitigating the risks generated by digital asset volatility and emerging financial disruptions?

The methodological approach combines conceptual analysis and empirical investigation, integrating traditional econometric techniques with machine learning algorithms and predictive analytics applied to complex macroeconomic datasets and digital financial information. The research adopts an interdisciplinary perspective by combining macro-financial analysis, digital finance, and technology-based regulatory approaches in order to identify adaptive solutions for financial governance in the digital era.

The originality of the research lies in proposing an integrated model for the application of artificial intelligence in anticipating economic imbalances and supporting evidence-based decision-making in financial policy and regulation. The expected results may contribute to the development of more effective supervisory mechanisms for DeFi markets and crypto-assets, while supporting the design of innovative financial solutions capable of strengthening financial stability in an environment characterised by rapid technological transformation and persistent economic uncertainty.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, macroeconomic forecasting, macroeconomic imbalances, decentralised finance (DeFi), crypto-assets, innovative financial instruments, digital regulation, financial stability.

NOTEBOOKLM AS AN AI-ENHANCED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: ADDED VALUE AND PERCEIVED CHALLENGES FROM SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Objective. Generative AI is transforming education, offering innovative tools for personalized learning and complex information management. This study evaluates the added value of NotebookLM, Google's "contextualized AI" tool, in the learning process of 3 science high school students. It analyzes perceptions from an already administered satisfaction questionnaire to understand how NotebookLM's features fostered critical understanding, and to identify strengths and critical issues emerging from real-world use. *Research Question.* How did NotebookLM's features contribute added value in terms of critical understanding, synthesis skills, and study personalization, and what strengths and critical issues emerged from students' perceptions? *Methodology.* A mixed-methods approach was adopted in two phases: (1) Active experimentation – students used NotebookLM to study a physics or biology module, uploading teacher-provided sources and freely exploring features, while the researcher conducted observations and students kept logbooks; (2) Perception analysis – a structured satisfaction questionnaire (Likert scale and open questions) was administered and analyzed, with data integrated with observations and logbooks for a holistic understanding. *Results and Discussion.* The questionnaire revealed significant added value in several areas: personalization (mind maps and infographics were highly valued for visualization; audio/video overviews aided review); critical interactivity (the chatbot stimulated deeper questioning and active engagement); and organization (reports, slide decks, and data tables supported logical structuring; quizzes and flashcards aided self-assessment). Critical issues included an initial learning curve requiring guided training, information overload due to the wide range of features, occasional concerns about chatbot response accuracy (highlighting the need for a critical approach and source validation), and technical dependencies on the quality of uploaded sources. The findings confirm NotebookLM's transformative potential but underscore the need for conscious, guided integration within a broader teaching strategy, offering practical guidelines for implementing personalized learning paths in science high schools while mitigating the identified challenges.

Keywords: Generative Artificial Intelligence, NotebookLM, Personalized Learning, Critical Thinking.

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE REALLOCATION OF HUMAN EXPERTISE:
GLOBAL TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ECONOMY, IT SECTOR, AND
DIGITAL GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA****Maxim SANDU**

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Artificial intelligence is reshaping the allocation of human expertise by changing the tasks performed by workers, the skills required by organizations, and the relationship between technology and professional judgment. This paper examines these transformations and their implications for the economy, information technology sector, and digital government of the Republic of Moldova. It adopts a conceptual and comparative approach, organizing the analysis around task automation, human augmentation, skills adaptation, and institutional readiness. The analytical framework distinguishes between the substitution of routine activities and the reallocation of expertise toward complex problem solving, strategic decision making, creativity, and accountability. It considers how these processes may influence productivity, employment structures, organizational competitiveness, and public service delivery. For Moldova, the discussion focuses on opportunities to strengthen digital capabilities, increase the value of IT services, and improve administrative efficiency, alongside challenges associated with skills mismatches, unequal access to technology, data governance, cybersecurity, and dependence on external technological providers. The paper argues that productivity gains depend on the capacity to redesign workflows and develop complementary human skills, rather than on technology adoption alone. In the IT sector, this implies a potential shift toward systems integration, AI oversight, and specialized services. In digital government, it requires transparent procedures, reliable data, and human supervision. The contribution is an integrated framework connecting technological change with expertise reallocation across economic and institutional contexts. The paper outlines policy priorities encompassing continuous learning, collaboration between education and industry, responsible AI governance, and institutional capacity building to support an inclusive digital transformation in Moldova.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, IT sector, digital government, AI oversight, global trends.**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN NONPROFIT MARKETING: CHALLENGES AND
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROMANIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA****Dorin-Cristian COITA**

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This paper asks how nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in Romania and the Republic of Moldova use artificial intelligence (AI) in communication, promotion and fundraising, and where they might use it but do not. Our starting point is the nonprofit marketing mix proposed by Coita, Fotea, Prisac and Nemțeanu (2022). NPOs in both countries work under chronic resource constraints, so generative AI would seem to have much to offer them; regional research has so far said little about it. Three questions guide the research. How far do NPOs in the two countries already use AI tools in their marketing activity? What do their managers see as opportunities, and what as the obstacles? And where do the two national contexts diverge, in practice and in perception alike? The design is exploratory and comparative. We combine

a comparative reading of documents on current digital communication practice with fieldwork: a questionnaire administered to at least 30 to 40 NPOs per country (60 to 80 in all), and semi-structured interviews with five or six managers per country (10 to 12 in all). Given the exploratory purpose, the sample is indicative rather than statistically representative; we intend to widen it later. We expect opportunities of several kinds: more economical use of scarce resources, wider communication capacity, closer contact with donors. We also expect barriers particular to the sector, among them weak digital skills, too little money for paid AI subscriptions, and unease about the ethics of handling donor data. The intended contribution is a conceptual model of AI adoption within the nonprofit marketing mix, fitted to the Romanian and Moldovan settings, with practical recommendations for managers on small budgets and for policymakers supporting digitalization in the social sector.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, nonprofit marketing, fundraising, nonprofit organizations, Romania, Republic of Moldova.

FORMATION OF INNOVATIVE DIRECTIONS, MECHANISMS, AND STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FORMATS OF DOMESTIC TOURISM

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The article examines the theoretical and applied foundations for the formation of innovative directions, mechanisms, and strategies for the development of new formats of domestic tourism. The relevance of the research is determined by changes in tourist demand, the growing role of digital technologies, the need to diversify domestic tourism products, and the importance of strengthening the competitiveness of regional destinations. The purpose of the study is to substantiate promising approaches to the transformation of domestic tourism and to identify mechanisms for introducing innovative tourism formats adapted to contemporary socioeconomic conditions and consumer needs. The research systematizes the main factors influencing the development of domestic tourism and identifies promising formats, including ecological, rural, gastronomic, cultural, event-based, recreational, inclusive, educational, industrial, and digital tourism. Particular attention is paid to the use of regional resources, modern information and communication technologies, public-private partnerships, cooperation between tourism enterprises and local communities, and the development of integrated tourism products. Strategic priorities include improving tourism infrastructure, digitalizing tourism services, enhancing service quality and safety, promoting regional tourism brands, supporting local initiatives, and applying the principles of sustainable development. The proposed directions and mechanisms may contribute to increasing domestic tourist flows, expanding the range of tourism services, strengthening regional competitiveness, and ensuring the sustainable recovery and long-term development of the tourism sector.

Keywords: domestic tourism, innovative tourism formats, tourism development strategy, tourism innovations, regional tourism, tourism product, digitalization, sustainable development, destination competitiveness, tourism infrastructure.

AI-DRIVEN GROWTH MODELS: REFRAMING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE IN A VOLATILE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

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This article develops a conceptual and policy-oriented framework for understanding how artificial intelligence can reshape economic growth under conditions of volatility, fragmentation, and structural uncertainty. The central argument is that growth in the 2020s can no longer be treated as the output of a stable system driven by capital accumulation, labour, and exogenous technical change; instead, it must be understood as an emergent property of adaptive socio-technical systems that continuously sense shocks, update expectations, and reallocate resources. Drawing on recent policy analyses by the IMF, the

OECD, and the World Bank, the paper argues that AI should be considered not only as a productivity-enhancing technology but also as a resilience-enabling capability. The article proposes a multi-layer architecture for AI-driven growth, introduces a closed-loop policy model in which data, prediction, decision, and feedback are recursively linked, and formulates an economic system model integrating productivity, resilience, inclusion, and sustainability. The paper concludes that AI can support economic growth only when embedded in strong governance arrangements, digital infrastructure, human-capital investment, and context-sensitive institutional design.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, economic growth, resilience, digital transformation, adaptive systems.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN FINANCIAL STATEMENT FRAUD DETECTION: RESEARCH EVOLUTION, METHODOLOGICAL TRENDS AND IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

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The use of artificial intelligence in financial statement fraud detection has become increasingly important for researchers, accountants, and auditors. The growing volume of data, the diversification of financial manipulation techniques, and the limitations of traditional verification procedures have encouraged the development of models based on machine learning, data mining, and textual analysis. This study aims to examine the evolution of research on the use of artificial intelligence in financial statement fraud detection, identify the main methods and thematic directions, and highlight the challenges that limit their application in accounting and auditing practice. The study addresses the following research questions: How has research in this field evolved? Which artificial intelligence methods are most frequently used? What are the main themes and conceptual relationships in the literature? What challenges affect the implementation of these models in professional practice?

The research applies a bibliometric approach based on publications indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection. The search combined terms related to financial statement fraud with terms associated with artificial intelligence, machine learning, deep learning, data mining, and textual analysis. Articles, review articles, and conference papers published in English between 2010 and 2025 were considered. Of the 154 documents initially identified, 93 were retained after applying the selection criteria and screening the titles and abstracts. The analysis was conducted using Biblioshiny and covered the evolution of scientific production, citation impact, keyword co-occurrence, thematic mapping, and factorial analysis.

The preliminary results indicate a marked increase in research interest after 2020 and confirm the central role of machine learning, data mining, and classification techniques. At the same time, the literature remains fragmented between a technical-predictive orientation and an accounting and auditing perspective. The study highlights the need for better integration between algorithmic performance, model explainability, and professional applicability.

Keywords: financial statement fraud; artificial intelligence; machine learning; fraud detection; bibliometric analysis.

MEDICAL RESEARCH AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: OVERVIEW OF CURRENT EUROPEAN PRACTICES

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The aim of this abstract is to summarize current European practices in the use of artificial intelligence in medical research, with emphasis on digitalization, Big Data and forecasting.

The research questions are: how is AI applied in European medical research; which digital data infrastructures support these practices; and what ethical and regulatory issues shape responsible AI-supported research?

A narrative overview of 30 sources was conducted, including 20 peer-reviewed publications indexed in PubMed, Scopus and Web of Science, and 10 European policy, regulatory and institutional documents from the European Commission, the European Medicines Agency, WHO Europe and European research infrastructures. The inclusion criteria covered sources directly related to biomedical data science, real-world evidence, drug development, diagnostic research, genomic research, medical imaging and predictive modelling.

The overview shows that AI is used in Europe as a research instrument for analysing large biomedical datasets, identifying disease patterns, forecasting treatment outcomes, optimizing clinical trial design, supporting pharmacovigilance, monitoring drug safety, and integrating genomic, laboratory and electronic health record data. European practice is characterized by secure and interoperable data environments, including cross-border and federated models that allow researchers to work with large-scale medical data while reducing unnecessary movement or leakage of sensitive patient information.

A significant feature of European AI-supported medical research is the link between innovation and governance. The European Health Data Space, the EU AI Act, GDPR-based data protection principles and EMA initiatives on Big Data and real-world evidence create a framework in which AI research must be scientifically valid, transparent and socially responsible. The ethical aspect is central: AI-based medical research requires informed consent or legally justified secondary data use, privacy protection, algorithmic fairness, explainability, human oversight and continuous validation of models in real medical populations.

The paper concludes that European medical research is moving toward a data-driven, predictive and ethically regulated model. The main challenge is to balance scientific progress with trust, patient rights and responsible use of medical data.

Keywords: Medical research; artificial intelligence; research ethics.

STUDY ON LEGAL REGULATIONS OF LOCAL TAXATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DIGITAL AGE AND AI (Part One)

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In Romania, in the context of the Digital Era (DE) and Artificial Intelligence (AI), starting from January 1, 2026, in the field of local taxation in Romania, we observe a new philosophy not only in terms of their growth percentages, but also as administrative processes that personalize the Administrative-Territorial Units (ATU). The legal framework regulating National Local Taxes and Duties is represented by the Fiscal Code, to which the Fiscal Procedure Code is added for the way of application and specific procedures. The specificity of the types of local taxes and fees is determined through the Decisions of the Local Councils of the Administrative-Territorial Units, which set, within the minimum and maximum limits indicated by the Fiscal Code, percentages or fixed absolute amounts for each type of tax and local fee applied by each mayor's office. Local Council decisions are administrative documents that: 1. set local taxes and fees, and 2. must be fully followed by individual taxpayers and corporate taxpayers who owe them to the local budgets. The study first aimed to highlight the novel aspects introduced in Romania by the latest legal regulations on local taxation, namely local taxes and fees, and on the other hand, to present practical examples from the field that illustrate how these legal regulations on local taxes and fees are applied in practice.

Keywords: Local budgets, digitization, Local Council Decisions, local taxes, Artificial Intelligence, local fees.

THE RISKY PATH OF LEGAL TECH DEVELOPMENT: AGAINST GENERATIVE AI-BASED AUTOMATION IN THE LEGAL SECTOR

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The present study, which is a position paper, combining a narrative survey with an analysis of empirical and simulation data, aims to examine the long-term risks associated with the widespread application of generative artificial intelligence (genAI) tools in the legal profession—a critical field of human activity. The paper consists of three parts, based on three methodological approaches: (1) a narrative literature review, (2) an analysis based on data collected from two compact large language models (LLMs; GPT-4o mini and Bielek-11B-v2-Instruct) concerning the fabrication of case reference numbers under Polish law, (3) a simple simulation of the behaviour of a legal data system in the event of the mass deployment of genAI tools. These parts seek to outline answers to the following questions, respectively: (1) What are the main risks associated with the use of genAI-based automation in legal practice? (2) How often compact LLMs fabricate case reference number and how this phenomenon impacts on the need for supervision? (3) How might the risk of flooding the legal system with inaccurate information evolve, depending on the frequency with which fabricated information is returned and the effectiveness of human oversight?

The main findings of the research are: (1) The main risks associated with the use of genAI-based solutions for the automation of legal practice include: (a) errors and fabrications that are difficult to detect, (b) the need for constant supervision of results, which prevents full automation, (c) the quality of responses is heavily dependent on computational cost, (d) these models are algorithmic and usually also institutional 'black boxes', (e) psychological risks, in particular cognitive dependence and incompetence. (2) Smaller-scale LLMs (approx. 10 billion parameters) are typically unable to reliably refer to case law, with nearly 100 per cent of the case reference numbers fabricated in simple tasks relating to Polish law. Larger LLMs mask this problem through better adaptation to the data, but the fabrication remains a problem and, paradoxically, hinders verification, making it more difficult to find an error. (3) The lack of oversight over the results returned by genAI used in a legal context leads to the system being flooded with erroneous claims regarding case law; and since oversight is more difficult in the case of more accurate LLMs (errors are more concealed, and the user places greater trust in the output), this effect may also apply to cases where accurate technologies are used. The main recommendation arising from this paper is the wider application in law of classic, reliable automation methods, rather than genAI solutions.

Keywords: judiciary; AI & law; generative AI; automation; law and technology.

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT AND AI RESPONSIBLE USE

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The aim of the work is to analyse current approaches to research management in the context of responsible artificial intelligence use. The study focuses on how AI tools are changing the organization, monitoring and quality assurance of scientific research, while also creating new ethical and managerial responsibilities. The research questions are: how can AI support research management; what risks arise from the use of AI in planning, data processing, writing and evaluation; and which principles should guide responsible AI use in research institutions?

Methodology. A narrative overview of 30 sources was conducted, including 18 peer-reviewed publications indexed in Scopus, Web of Science and PubMed, and 12 policy, regulatory and institutional documents from the European Commission, ALLEA, UNESCO, OECD and European research organizations. The methodological approach included a thematic analysis of sources selected using Boolean search combinations such as (“research management” OR “research governance”) AND (“artificial intelligence” OR “AI tools”) AND (“responsible use” OR “research integrity” OR “AI ethics”) AND (“data management” OR “digital research infrastructure”).

The overview shows that AI can support research management at different stages of the research cycle: literature mapping, project planning, grant preparation, data organization, risk prediction, monitoring of research productivity, detection of plagiarism or image manipulation, and preparation of reports. AI tools may increase efficiency, transparency and evidence-based decision-making in research administration. However, their use also creates significant risks, including overreliance on automated outputs, hidden bias, unreliable references, data privacy violations, unclear authorship, loss of human expertise and possible distortion of research evaluation.

The ethical aspect is central to responsible AI use. AI should not replace the researcher’s intellectual responsibility, critical judgment or accountability. Research institutions need clear policies on disclosure of AI use and prevention of academic misconduct. AI can improve research governance only when it is used transparently and under ethical institutional control.

Keywords: AI use, research management, ethics, educational institution.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INTO ECONOMIC MIGRATION USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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International migration is a complex 21st-century macroeconomic phenomenon, directly influencing labor markets, remittance dynamics, and fiscal sustainability. Traditional linear models often fail to process large volumes of unstructured data or capture complex non-linear relationships.

This paper investigates the added value of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) in modeling the economic impact of migration, providing a modern methodological framework for doctoral research. In the Big Data era, researchers utilize unprecedented information sources, including satellite data, search engine queries, social media, and digital financial transactions. This AI-driven approach demonstrates increased forecasting accuracy for migration flows, providing advanced tools to substantiate strategic economic policies.

While traditional census data are often outdated upon publication (Bilsborrow, 2016), recent studies (2022–2025) show that NLP sentiment analysis on recruitment platforms like LinkedIn can predict brain drain months before official statistics report it. Rather than replacing fundamental economic theories, AI optimizes the calibration of macroeconomic variables. Integrating AI models yields three major advantages: superior predictive accuracy, real-time identification of labor shortages, and advanced policy simulation.

However, implementation raises methodological challenges, such as the "black box" effect—the difficulty of explaining pure economic causality within complex neural networks. Ultimately, AI transforms economic migration research from a descriptive, past-oriented field into a predictive, strategic discipline. Future research must address ethical barriers regarding data confidentiality and focus on creating early indicators for return migration, which is essential for the economic rebalancing of Eastern European countries.

Keywords: Economic migration; Artificial Intelligence; Big Data; Brain drain; Predictive modeling.

THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN REDUCING BEHAVIORAL BIASES

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The increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) in financial markets is transforming the way investors process information and make investment decisions. At the same time, individual investors remain susceptible to behavioral biases that can lead to systematic deviations from rational decision-making. This study examines the potential role of AI in limiting selected behavioral biases among individual investors, with particular emphasis on overconfidence, anchoring, and confirmation bias.

The main research question is: How can artificial intelligence contribute to limiting behavioral biases in the investment decision-making process of individual investors? The study also addresses the following questions: How can AI influence overconfidence, anchoring, and confirmation bias? What are the potential directions for the future development of AI-based tools from a behavioral finance perspective?

The research adopts a conceptual and literature-based approach, reviewing and synthesizing existing academic literature and empirical studies on behavioral finance and the application of AI in financial markets. It discusses the theoretical foundations of behavioral finance and the characteristics of the three selected biases. What is more, it examines the development and applications of AI in finance: its benefits, limitations, and risks in investment decision-making. Also, based on existing research, it analyzes the mechanisms through which AI may contribute to mitigating behavioral biases, including data-driven analysis, systematic evaluation of information, and support for more disciplined decision-making. Particular attention is given to the potentially different effects of AI on overconfidence, anchoring, and confirmation bias.

The study discusses also future directions for the development of AI from a behavioral finance perspective, including explainable artificial intelligence (XAI), hybrid human-AI decision-making models, behavioral bias indicators, and AI-based tools for monitoring investors' behavioral tendencies. The literature suggests that AI may support more systematic and evidence-based investment decisions. However, its effectiveness in reducing behavioral biases depends on the design, transparency, and use of AI systems. Further empirical research is needed to assess its effectiveness in mitigating specific behavioral biases.

Keywords: judiciary; AI & law; generative AI; automation; law and technology.

INTEGRATING AI-POWERED VIRTUAL CHARACTERS IN EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY ON THE MIZOU PLATFORM DURING THE WINTER OLYMPICS

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This study investigates the pedagogical value of integrating the Mizou AI platform into classroom practice, focusing on a specific educational experience conducted in an Italian comprehensive institute during the winter olympics. The primary objective is to demonstrate how interaction with a virtual character, specifically a virtual olympic athlete, can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes, while simultaneously empowering teachers with robust tools for monitoring and assessing student performance.

Research Question: How does the use of a teacher-designed AI chatbot on the Mizou platform, within the context of an event-based educational activity, contribute to student learning and critical thinking, and what advantages does the platform's teacher control and monitoring system offer in this process?

Methodological Approach: The experience involved students from multiple campuses of an Italian comprehensive institute, who connected online via a Google workspace meet platform. After viewing a video on Olympic values, students were invited to engage in a virtual conversation with an AI-powered virtual athlete created on Mizou. Access was provided through a secure link distributed to each class, respecting privacy regulations. The activity promoted student collaboration and self-organization. Upon completion, the results of the interactions and related comments were shared and reviewed. The methodology leverages Mizou's key features: the creation of interactive learning scenarios

through virtual characters with specific personas and instructions; the capacity for real-time monitoring of student-AI interactions; and the provision of immediate, personalized feedback to students.

Added Value: The virtual athlete served as a catalyst for an immersive, dialogic learning experience, encouraging students to formulate questions, explore complex topics, and apply critical thinking. Furthermore, the teacher's ability to review conversation logs and utilize the platform's analytical tools provided direct insight into the learning process, enabling effective formative assessment and creating a valuable bridge between innovative technology and the traditional evaluative role of the educator.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence in Education, Virtual Characters, Dialogic Learning, Teacher Monitoring, Formative Assessment.

BEYOND ACCESS: IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY AND TERRITORIAL GAPS IN THE DIGITALISATION OF ITALIAN MUNICIPALITIES

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Migration has long represented one of the main drivers of economic and social transformation in contemporary economies, influencing human capital mobility, the distribution of skills, and territorial development trajectories. In this context, Albania represents a particularly significant case, as the transition to a market economy was accompanied by intense migration flows that contributed to the formation of a large diaspora and the development of transnational economic relationships capable of influencing the country's growth dynamics. The growing relevance of remittances, return migration, and knowledge transfer processes makes the relationship between international mobility and economic development particularly worthy of investigation.

This paper analyzes the relationship between migration and economic development in Albania, focusing on the role played by the diaspora, remittances, return migration, and human capital. The study addresses the following research question: How do migration, diaspora networks, remittances, and return migration contribute to economic development and territorial growth in Albania? The objective is to understand how these factors influence economic growth and create new development opportunities.

To achieve this objective, a qualitative literature review was conducted using the Scopus database. Fifteen scientific contributions published between 2014 and 2026 were selected and analyzed to explore the links between migration, entrepreneurship, innovation, human capital, and economic development within the Albanian context.

The findings highlight that migration generates effects extending well beyond population mobility, fostering the circulation of financial resources, professional skills, entrepreneurial capabilities, and international relational networks. Remittances emerge as an important source of economic support and local development, while return migration appears closely associated with the transfer of knowledge, managerial experience, and innovative practices acquired abroad. The growing diffusion of entrepreneurship and digital innovation further confirms the strategic role of human capital in economic growth processes.

The evidence suggests that diaspora communities, human capital, and transnational networks represent valuable resources for strengthening the country's competitiveness and economic resilience, highlighting the importance of policies aimed at enhancing skills, supporting innovation, and reinforcing ties between migrant communities and their country of origin.

Keywords: Migration; Diaspora; Remittances; Human Capital; Economic Development; Albania.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: POLICIES, PROMPT DESIGN, AND RISKS FOR SCHOOL INCLUSION IN ITALY

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Recent advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) are reshaping educational practices across Europe, raising critical questions about equity and social inclusion. In Italy, the adoption of AI-based educational tools coincides with new regulatory mandates — most notably the European AI Act and the Italian Guidelines for the Introduction of AI in Educational Institutions (Ministerial Decree No. 166/2025) — intended to govern AI use in schools while safeguarding learners. Yet little scholarly attention has been devoted to how these frameworks translate into classroom practice, and to whether their implementation may widen, rather than reduce, existing educational inequalities. This paper examines the interplay between AI governance, prompt design, and school inclusion in the Italian educational system. It addresses three questions: how European and national policy frameworks conceptualize AI integration in schools; how educational prompt design — understood as the deliberate structuring of teacher–AI interactions for pedagogical purposes — can support inclusive and differentiated instruction, particularly for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN); and which systemic constraints threaten equitable implementation. Methodologically, the study combines a qualitative document analysis of the two regulatory frameworks with a conceptual analysis of prevailing prompt-design frameworks for education, evaluated against established criteria for inclusive instructional design. The analysis indicates that, while current policies position AI as an assistive instrument operating under human oversight, the realization of its inclusive potential hinges on teachers' capacity to formulate pedagogically sound prompts. Operational opportunities, however, remain constrained by structural risks, including persistent digital divides, unequal technological infrastructure, and algorithmic bias. The paper argues that prompt design functions as a crucial pedagogical interface for differentiated instruction, and offers one of the first scholarly analyses of Ministerial Decree No. 166/2025 read in light of the AI Act. It concludes that AI can foster educational justice only when instructional competence is coupled with comprehensive teacher education, ethical safeguards, and systemic policies designed to redress structural disparities.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, educational equity, school inclusion, educational prompting, Special Educational Needs, AI Act.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, AND HOUSEHOLD WASTE MANAGEMENT BEHAVIORS: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM NATIONWIDE SURVEYS IN VIETNAM

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Improper domestic solid waste management poses severe environmental and public health hazards across emerging economies. This study pursues two primary research objectives: first, to evaluate how household-level digital connectivity and educational attainment shape domestic waste disposal choices; and second, to identify the socioeconomic determinants that drive the transition from informal disposal to centralized formal collection systems.

We address three core research questions: (i) to what extent do household Internet connectivity and household head educational attainment promote the adoption of formal municipal waste collection while mitigating hazardous on-site burning, burial, and open dumping; and (ii) how do household economic affluence and access to basic public infrastructure facilitate compliant domestic waste disposal practices?

Regarding methodology, we utilize a nationally representative pooled cross-sectional dataset of 28,186 households from the Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey (VHLSS) spanning 2020, 2022, and 2024. Econometric estimations are conducted using Binary Probit and Multinomial Logit specifications, incorporating demographic characteristics, basic infrastructure access, and both economic region and survey-year fixed effects.

The main findings indicate that household Internet adoption significantly increases the predicted probability of utilizing formal waste collection by 13.5 percentage points ($p < 0.001$) in the Probit model. The Multinomial Logit results

further confirm that Internet connectivity substantially reduces informal on-site burning/burial (\$-9.4\$ percentage points, $p < 0.001$) and open dumping into waterways (\$-4.0\$ percentage points, $p < 0.001$). Educational attainment of the household head exhibits a monotonic positive gradient, with university-educated heads being 22.3 percentage points more likely to comply with formal collection relative to the below-primary baseline. Furthermore, access to clean water and grid electricity increases formal collection likelihood by 19.8 percentage points each, alongside a 17.8 percentage-point increase for urban residents. These findings demonstrate that digital connectivity effectively lowers information search costs and strengthens civic norms, highlighting its role in modernizing municipal waste governance.

Keywords: household waste management; digital connectivity; educational attainment; pro-environmental behavior; discrete choice models.

AN AI-BASED INTEGRATED INFORMATION SPACE FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND POLICYMAKING: CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

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The relevance of the article is due to the improvement of data quality for socio-economic research and evidence-based policymaking. Today, there is a clear trend, on the one hand, towards a significant increase in the amount of data and information, on the other hand, towards their fragmentation and, quite often, inconsistency. Therefore, it is quite important to find possible solutions to solve the problem.

The aim of the research is to develop conceptual approaches to building an integrated information space using artificial intelligence.

The article explores the main aspects of building a data ecosystem that combines statistical and sociological data, administrative registry data, digital platforms and other data sources and the role of AI in this process. It is noted that the use of AI can significantly improve the processing of unstructured data, increase the speed of data analysis and the ability to model the behaviour of key agents, including simulation of development scenarios. The main ways of interaction between all participants in the process from data development, processing, analysis and use are proposed. At the same time, attention is focused on the need for common standards, classification, quality assessment procedures and secure data exchange. Machine learning and data processing methods can be used to harmonize heterogeneous data sets, identify inconsistencies, process unstructured information, estimate missing values, identify new socio-economic trends, develop forecasts and evaluate policy scenarios. It is noted that artificial intelligence tools should increase the efficiency of data management, complement expert knowledge and institutional decision-making, but not replace them.

Therefore, the proposed approaches create a basis for transforming dispersed data resources into a holistic analytical environment that will improve the timeliness and reliability of socio-economic research and data-based policymaking.

Keywords: Keywords: AI, integrated information space, data ecosystem, socio-economic research, data management, evidence-based policy.

COMPUTER SERVICES EXPORTS AND THE STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: EVOLUTION, INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND AN ASSESSMENT OF MACROECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS USING QUARTERLY DATA, 2009Q1–2026Q1

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This study examines the evolution of Moldova's computer-services exports and their relationship with structural economic transformation over 2009Q1–2026Q1. The core export measure is balance-of-payments credit for computer services under BPM6/EBOPS, allowing a strict distinction between national computer-services exports, Moldova Innovation Technology Park (MITP) resident sales, ICT goods, and the broader category of digitally deliverable services. The harmonised quarterly database combines National Bank of Moldova, National Bureau of Statistics and IMF series on exports, real GDP, gross fixed capital formation, foreign direct investment, the real effective exchange rate, ICT employment and productivity. The empirical strategy combines descriptive analysis, ADF, Phillips–Perron and KPSS unit-root tests, structural-break diagnostics, ARDL/UECM models, Bounds Testing and robustness checks. Quarterly computer-services exports increased by approximately 44.9 times between 2009Q1 and 2026Q1, while their share in total services exports rose from 2.72% to 26.72%. Structural-break tests locate a major regime change around 2018, temporally consistent with the launch of MITP. The association between IT exports and real GDP is consistently positive, but evidence of cointegration is specification-sensitive. ICT employment displays a robust positive association with exports in the estimated models, whereas the hypothesis of a positive relationship between IT exports and ICT labour productivity is not supported. The findings therefore suggest that Moldova's IT-sector transformation has so far been predominantly extensive, driven more clearly by export and employment expansion than by average productivity gains. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: computer-services exports; Moldova IT Park; productivity; ARDL; structural breaks.

STUDY ON LEGAL REGULATIONS OF LOCAL TAXATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DIGITAL AGE AND AI (Part Two)

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In Romania, at the level of Administrative-Territorial Units (UATs), digitalization and AI are present and adapted to the specificity of each local council, depending on their level of knowledge and availability of human and material resources. The range of Administrative-Territorial Units studied allowed us to identify aspects that differentiate them on one hand but, on the other hand, represent the source and database that can serve as the basis for planning and forecasting local taxes in the context of digitalization and AI. Keywords: Local budgets, digitization, Local Council Decisions, local taxes, Artificial Intelligence, local fees. I can be especially helpful in applying the scenario method, starting from plans and programs, carrying out analyses, selecting the most effective and suitable option among those established based on real criteria in a very short time, and finally turning the best plan option into a workable Program, which, within local administrative units, is represented by the decisions of the Local Councils. The database is obtained from the information and data specific to each Administrative-Territorial Unit, taking into account the classification within the minimum and maximum values indicated by the Fiscal Code, either as percentages or fixed absolute amounts assigned to each type of local tax. The version chosen as optimal will be implemented in the Local Council Decisions, which become law for individual taxpayers and legal entities that owe them to the local budgets. The digitalization and AI applied to local taxes have quick benefits, helping both the local administration with planning, forecasting, and collections, and taxpayers by giving them a better understanding of their obligations, available tax breaks, payment options, and the bonuses they can get.

Keywords: Digitization, Local Council Decisions, Artificial Intelligence, plan, forecasts, local taxes.

ECONOMIC GROWTH, SUSTAINABILITY AND DIGITAL INNOVATION: NEW PARADIGMS FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

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In the context of global economic transformations, economic growth is influenced by a range of factors such as digitalization, technological innovation, climate change, and the need to implement sustainable development principles. Contemporary economies are forced to identify new development models that allow for increased competitiveness while also protecting natural resources and improving people's quality of life. The article analyzes the relationship between economic growth, sustainability, and digital innovation, highlighting their role in building resilient and competitive economies. To carry out the study, it authorizes an applicable traditional research method: monographic method, document analysis, comparison, trend analysis, etc. The conclusions appear as a result of the analysis of international documents, guides and case studies and reflection in order to be able to give to public expenditures for public expenditures for the purchase of products, services, project care favoring sustainable use. Special attention is given to green and digital public procurement as a tool to promote sustainable development in the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: economic growth, sustainability, digital innovation, sustainable development, green public procurement, digitalization.

AEROTAINMENT AS AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY FOR ENHANCING PASSENGER EXPERIENCE IN THE AVIATION INDUSTRY

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The rapid development of digital technologies has transformed the aviation industry, creating new opportunities to improve passenger experience through innovative entertainment and service solutions. Aerotainment, which integrates in-flight entertainment, digital connectivity, and personalized passenger services, has become an important element in enhancing customer satisfaction and airline competitiveness. This study aims to examine the role of aerotainment in improving the overall passenger experience and to evaluate its contribution to service quality within the aviation sector. The research employs a qualitative approach based on a review and analysis of relevant academic literature, industry reports, and current technological developments. The findings indicate that modern aerotainment systems significantly enhance passenger comfort, engagement, and satisfaction by providing personalized content, real-time connectivity, and interactive digital services. Furthermore, the integration of advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence and data analytics, enables airlines to better understand passenger preferences and deliver more customized travel experiences. The study concludes that aerotainment represents a strategic innovation that not only improves passenger experience but also strengthens customer loyalty and supports the sustainable competitiveness of airlines in an increasingly digital aviation environment. Future research should explore the long-term impact of emerging technologies on aerotainment systems and their influence on passenger behavior and airline performance.

Keywords: Behavioral finance, artificial intelligence, heuristics, mitigating behavioral biases, investment decisions.

DIGITAL INNOVATION IN EDUCATION: BUILDING RESILIENCE IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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This study examines the significance of digital innovation in strengthening educational resilience amid the rapid transformations associated with digitalisation. In particular, the paper investigates how digital solutions, pedagogical approaches, and support structures can be used to increase the adaptability of educational communities to disruptive changes. The study pursues three research objectives: to identify factors and barriers affecting the innovation process, to evaluate the impact of educators' digital competences on successful technology adoption, and to propose strategies for strengthening institutional resilience. A mixed-method approach is applied, combining quantitative surveys conducted among educators in secondary and tertiary educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova with interviews involving education policymakers and administrative staff. Thematic and statistical analyses reveal four main findings: (1) digital competence is the strongest determinant of successful innovation adoption, although substantial skills gaps remain; (2) institutional culture and commitment outweigh infrastructure in determining sustainable transformation; (3) peer cooperation is more effective than mandated practices in building collective resilience; and (4) the COVID-19 pandemic played a significant role as a catalyst for the adoption of digital innovations while simultaneously exposing existing disparities. The study concludes that strengthening educational resilience in the era of digital transformation requires not only continuous professional development, but also institutional support, adequate technological infrastructure, and policies ensuring equitable access. The paper recommends the creation of sustainable professional learning ecosystems, the wider use of Open Educational Resources (OER), and the development of national digital competence certification frameworks.

Keywords: digital innovations, educational resilience, digital transformation, professional development of teachers, educational policies.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A DRIVER OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY TRANSITION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN EMERGING ECONOMIES

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The transition towards a circular economy has become a strategic priority in addressing environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and social inequality. In this context, social entrepreneurship plays a critical role as a facilitating mechanism that combines economic viability with social and environmental impact. This paper explores the correlation between social entrepreneurship and circular economy practices, with a particular focus on emerging economies such as the Republic of Moldova.

The study analyses how social enterprises contribute to circular economy objectives through innovative business models focused on waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and resource efficiency. It also investigates the enabling ecosystem factors, including access to finance, policy frameworks, institutional support, and cross-sector collaboration, that influence the development and scaling of circular social enterprises.

Methodologically, the paper is based on a qualitative synthesis of existing literature, policy documents, and selected case studies of social enterprises operating in circular economy sectors such as agriculture, waste management, and sustainable production. The findings highlight that while social entrepreneurship demonstrates significant potential to accelerate circular economy transitions, its development is constrained by limited financial instruments, weak institutional support, and low awareness among stakeholders. Moreover, the study shows a direct dependence between circular economy approaches and sustainability of social oriented firms.

The paper concludes that strengthening policy coherence, improving access to tailored funding mechanisms, and fostering collaboration between academia, government, and private sector actors are essential for unlocking the full potential of social entrepreneurship in advancing circular economy objectives. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: social entrepreneurship, circular economy, sustainability.

DIGITAL INEQUALITIES IN ROMANIA: ACCESS, SKILLS AND THE USE OF DIGITAL SERVICES

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Digitalisation has expanded access to information, education, economic activities and public services. However, having an internet connection does not automatically ensure digital inclusion. Inequalities are no longer determined solely by access to technology, but also by the skills required to use it and by people's ability to turn digital access into tangible benefits. This issue is particularly relevant in Romania, where widespread internet access coexists with a low level of digital skills compared with other European Union countries. The aim of this paper is to examine the relationship between internet access, digital skills and the use of online services in Romania. The main research question is whether the expansion of internet access has been accompanied by a reduction in inequalities concerning digital skills and effective participation in the digital society. The analysis also seeks to identify the social groups facing a higher risk of digital exclusion, considering differences related to age, educational attainment, economic situation and place of residence. The study uses secondary and comparative analysis of data provided by Eurostat, the Romanian National Institute of Statistics and the European Digital Decade monitoring framework. Romania's situation is compared with the European Union average. Statistical data are complemented by reports published by the European Commission and the OECD, as well as by relevant academic literature. Preliminary findings reveal a substantial gap between the expansion of internet access and the development of the skills required for its effective use. According to Eurostat data published in 2026, only 32% of people aged 16–74 in Romania had at least basic digital skills in 2025, compared with 60% across the European Union. The analysis suggests that the rapid transfer of services online, without adequate digital literacy and support measures, may reproduce or deepen existing social inequalities.

Keywords: digital inequalities, digital inclusion, digital skills, digital services, social exclusion, Romania, European Union.

FROM RESEARCHER TO RELAY: DELEGATED CONTROL, ANSWERABLE ATTRIBUTION, AND THE UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF EPISTEMIC AUTHORITY IN AI-ASSISTED SCIENCE

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Large language models now support nearly every stage of research, and three bodies of literature have tracked the consequences: unequal access and use (the AI divide); the epistemic risks of delegation (cognitive offloading, illusions of understanding); and the technical finding that underspecified prompts collapse silently onto training defaults. None connects them.

This conceptual paper pursues two goals: to explain why the epistemic risks of AI assistance fall unequally on researchers, and to provide a construct that makes this inequality observable. It addresses two research questions.

How do three measurable conditions — tiered access to models, domain knowledge, and the competence to specify constraints in prompts — jointly determine how much epistemic control a researcher retains in an AI-assisted workflow?

What are the consequences for science's system of warranted trust when researchers sign work over which they have exercised neither generation nor control?

*Methodologically, we proceed by theoretical synthesis: we integrate the three strands, develop the construct of the *epistemic relay* — a workflow position, articulated through six process dimensions and four ideal-typical profiles, in which model-generated content is transmitted under the researcher's signature although the researcher has neither generated nor controlled it — and derive five falsifiable propositions, operationalized in a pre-registered companion validation study.*

We argue that the relay breaks the chain of accountable authorship on which scientific trust rests: a signature certifies both that the epistemic work was performed and that an identifiable agent can answer for it, and in the relay position this conjunction no longer holds. The result is a novel form of epistemic inequality — invisible to those it affects, self-legitimizing through rising output. We take the leveling counter-hypothesis seriously (models compress disparities of form while control diverges) and conclude that remedies must target conditions rather than individuals.

Keywords: Epistemic relay; AI-assisted research; Accountable authorship; Epistemic control; AI divide.

DIGITAL INSURANCE ECOSYSTEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

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The digital transformation of financial services has become one of the key drivers of competitiveness, operational resilience and sustainable development in the insurance industry. For the Republic of Moldova, this process is particularly relevant in the context of the country's European Union accession agenda, which requires the gradual alignment of the insurance regulatory framework with the EU acquis, including the Insurance Distribution Directive (IDD) and related consumer protection and sustainability requirements.

The paper aims to assess the current level of digitalisation of the Moldovan insurance sector, identify the main challenges affecting the digital transformation of insurance distribution and analyse the opportunities created by the ongoing harmonisation with European legislation. The study is based on a qualitative research design combining documentary analysis, comparative analysis of European and national regulatory frameworks, and the synthesis of recent reports issued by the National Bank of Moldova, EIOPA and the European Commission.

The research demonstrates that digitalisation extends beyond the adoption of digital sales channels and increasingly influences the entire insurance value chain, including customer interaction, underwriting, claims management, risk assessment and supervisory reporting. At the same time, the implementation of European regulatory standards creates favourable conditions for improving transparency, consumer protection, operational efficiency and the integration of sustainability principles into insurance products and distribution practices. Nevertheless, the Moldovan insurance market continues to face important challenges related to digital infrastructure, financial and digital literacy, cybersecurity, regulatory adaptation and institutional capacity.

The paper concludes that the successful digital transformation of the insurance sector requires an integrated approach combining technological innovation, regulatory convergence with the European Union, consumer-oriented digital services and sustainable business models. The proposed recommendations may support policymakers, supervisory authorities and insurance undertakings in accelerating the modernisation of the insurance market and strengthening its resilience and competitiveness within the European financial space. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: insurance; digitalization; European integration.

ASSESSING THE DIGITAL MATURITY OF THE BANKING SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN ENHANCING OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE

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The digital transformation of banking has become a decisive factor for competitiveness, stability, and institutional resilience, especially in economies aligning their financial systems with European Union standards. In the Republic of Moldova, banks are increasingly adopting digital services, automated processes, data-driven management tools, and cybersecurity measures, while facing new challenges related to technological risks, regulatory compliance, customer expectations, and operational continuity. In this context, the paper aims to assess the digital maturity of the Moldovan banking sector and to examine the role of artificial intelligence in strengthening operational resilience.

The research focuses on the main dimensions of digital maturity, including digital infrastructure, online and mobile banking services, data governance, cybersecurity capacity, process automation, customer-oriented digital

solutions, innovation readiness, and managerial adaptability. Particular attention is given to the potential of artificial intelligence in risk assessment, fraud detection, forecasting, customer support, internal control, regulatory reporting, and early identification of operational vulnerabilities.

The study applies a mixed methodological approach based on the analysis of statistical data, regulatory documents, specialized literature, and international good practices in digital banking and operational resilience. The research also considers the relevance of European requirements related to digital finance, cybersecurity, and resilience of financial institutions.

The expected results will contribute to the development of a conceptual and analytical framework for evaluating the digital maturity of banks in the Republic of Moldova. The paper will also identify management solutions aimed at improving technological preparedness, institutional adaptability, risk management, and continuity of critical banking operations.

The findings may be useful for banking institutions, regulators, policymakers, and researchers interested in the sustainable digitalization of the financial sector. The study emphasizes that artificial intelligence should be viewed not only as a technological innovation, but also as a strategic management tool capable of enhancing efficiency, predictability, and resilience in the banking sector. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: digital maturity, banking sector, artificial intelligence, operational resilience, digital transformation, Republic of Moldova, European integration.

THE LINK BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC FORECASTING BASED ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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This paper aims to assess the economic and logistical synergy between regional agricultural production and smart transport infrastructure in Romania, using a methodological framework based on Artificial Intelligence (AI). The analysis integrates agro-economic indicators with freight transport indicators in the main development regions of Romania during the period 2021-2024 (with projections for 2025). By applying a predictive machine learning model, we estimate the potential for transport optimization and regional economic outcomes. The model is aggregated and focuses on high-level regional interactions, allowing for a consistent national comparison. The conclusion highlights that integrating AI-based logistics in grain transport could reduce regional supply chain costs by approximately 13.5% (average calculated for 2024). Smart transport infrastructure acts as a critical multiplier for agricultural value added, especially in high-yield regions.

Keywords: judiciary; AI & law; generative AI; automation; law and technology.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND LABOUR MARKET TRANSFORMATION IN ROMANIA AND POLAND: A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming labour markets by changing employment patterns, skill requirements, and workplace organization. As European Union Member States are undergoing digital transformation, Romania and Poland provide relevant case studies for examining how AI adoption affects employment and economic competitiveness under different institutional and technological conditions. This study aims to comparatively analyse the impact of artificial intelligence on the labour markets of Romania and Poland, identifying the main opportunities,

challenges, and policy implications associated with AI-driven workforce transformation. The research is based on a comparative analysis of academic literature, European Union reports, national policy documents, and statistical data related to AI adoption, digitalization, employment, and workforce skills. The study evaluates the influence of technological readiness, innovation capacity, institutional frameworks, and human capital on labour market adaptation in both countries. The findings indicate that AI is transforming labour markets in both Romania and Poland, although its effects differ according to national levels of digital development and institutional capacity. Poland has made greater progress in AI integration through stronger investment in innovation, advanced digital infrastructure, and closer collaboration between government, academia, and industry, enabling its workforce to adapt more effectively to emerging AI-related skill demands. Romania benefits from a competitive ICT sector and a qualified workforce but continues to face challenges, including uneven digitalization, regional disparities, shortages of advanced digital skills outside the ICT sector, and limited research and innovation investment. The analysis suggests that AI is more likely to transform jobs than replace them, increasing demand for analytical, creative, and interpersonal competencies while automating routine tasks. Consequently, both countries require sustained investment in lifelong learning, workforce reskilling, and education reform. Inclusive labour market policies supporting digital skills development, innovation, and cooperation between employers and educational institutions will be essential to maximize AI's economic benefits while reducing inequalities and promoting sustainable employment and long-term social cohesion.

Keywords: labour market, Artificial Intelligence, Romania, Poland, workforce reskilling.

TOWARDS RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH WITH GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Generative artificial intelligence (GAI) is an AI technology that is transforming the way scientific knowledge is produced. Compared to traditional forms of AI, GAI technologies can generate new content. This content can be text, images, and code. They are created based on user-provided instructions. Research problem: Why is it important to understand what generative AI is and what it entails? Research question: How is generative AI changing the production of scientific knowledge? Research objective: What is needed for responsible scientific knowledge production with generative AI? ChatGPT was launched in late 2022, the first generative artificial intelligence tool available to the general public worldwide. In scientific research, the spread of these innovative tools raises questions about their impact on knowledge production processes and the conditions required for their responsible use. The research is based on a qualitative method based on the examination of international documents and guidelines concerning generative artificial intelligence and its use in scientific research. Particular attention is paid to the 2023 UNESCO documents on artificial intelligence and generative artificial intelligence, with the aim of identifying principles and conditions for the responsible use of these innovative tools. The analysis examines, in particular, the role of human supervision, autonomy, responsibility, and accountability in the production of scientific knowledge through generative artificial intelligence. This paper aims to highlight how to integrate generative artificial intelligence into scientific research. This not only represents a technological innovation, but also impacts the ways in which scientific knowledge is produced, verified, and validated.

Keywords: Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI); Scientific Research; Knowledge Production; Responsible Research; Human Oversight.

METADATA REQUIREMENTS FOR AUTOMATED ECONOMIC RESEARCH: LESSONS FROM CONSTRUCTING A COMPOSITE INDEX

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Digitalisation has sharply reduced the cost of computing statistical indicators, but not the cost of verifying them. As extraction and processing become automated, a failure mode that produces no signal becomes harder to detect: an indicator built from a series that is not comparable over time, from an institutional perimeter that does not match the benchmark applied to it, or from a price basis inappropriate to the operation performed on it yields a plausible value that normalises and aggregates without difficulty. A missing value warns; a wrongly constructed one does not.

Purpose. The paper asks what information a statistical series must carry for automated processing to remain

auditable, and which verification procedure distinguishes a correct value from a merely credible one.

Research methods. The argument is developed from the complete construction of a composite index of macroeconomic vulnerability for the Republic of Moldova over 2014-2024, in which every decision between concept, measure, source, normalisation and aggregation was documented, and each series was reconstructed from its elementary components with verified closure. Three errors identified during construction are analysed as failure modes for automated pipelines.

Results. The three cases represent distinct classes - structural, semantic and institutional-temporal. A column slip between two price bases produced a coherent ten-year series, and the erroneous variant was smoother than the correct one. An aggregate of claims was labelled credit, the label matching the intended concept rather than the measure obtained. Two institutional perimeters of public debt converge in a single year, so that a point-in-time extraction cannot detect the difference. The paper derives six metadata attributes required for auditable automated processing: institutional perimeter, price basis, vintage with extraction date, level of disaggregation, financial instrument and temporal status, and proposes verification by reconstruction from elementary components, combining arithmetic provenance with semantic provenance. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: statistical metadata; data provenance; reproducibility; composite indicators; automated research.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE BANKING SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Digital transformation represents one of the major changes influencing the management of contemporary organizations. The accelerated development of digital technologies, changes in consumer behaviour, and the emergence of new business models require organizations to reconsider their strategies, structures, processes, and approaches to customer interaction. Digital transformation has thus become a process through which digital technologies generate changes that require strategic responses and reshape the ways in which value is created.

The banking sector is one of the areas in which this transformation is particularly visible. Banks are progressively shifting from a model based predominantly on branches and face-to-face interaction towards one in which a significant share of services can be accessed and completed digitally. Processes such as establishing a banking relationship, customer identification, applying for and obtaining a loan, making payments, and managing banking products can be carried out either fully or partially through digital channels. This shift generates significant potential benefits, including shorter processing times, the automation of repetitive operations, lower costs, increased accessibility of services, and an improved customer experience. At the same time, digital transformation creates new managerial challenges. Particular attention is paid to the use of artificial intelligence in assessing customer creditworthiness, anticipating risks, detecting suspicious transactions, and forecasting consumer behaviour. The study highlights the opportunities, constraints, and risks associated with the adoption of these technologies in a small economy and proposes directions for developing an integrated managerial framework for the digital transformation of the banking sector in the Republic of Moldova. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: digital transformation, artificial intelligence, banking management, digital banking, risk management.

THE EVOLUTION OF IT SERVICES IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

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In the modern global economic world, Information Technology (IT) serves as a foundational element of organizational agility, strategic alignment, and sustained performance. Globally, the widespread adoption of cloud technologies, artificial intelligence, and automation (ERP systems, CRM, SaaS platforms) is reshaping business models. Examples from retail, financial services, and manufacturing shows that digital flexibility optimizes operational workflows and economic resilience. For businesses in the Republic of Moldova, the transition from purely technical IT management to a structured IT Service Management (ITSM) framework is an imperative condition for development.

The main objective of this research is to provide a theoretical foundation and develop practical tools for aligning ITSM in local companies with international standards (ITIL), thereby increasing market competitiveness. The research addresses the main question: What are the gaps in IT service management within local companies, and through which international models based on best practices can ITSM be improved to support digitalization?

The methodology employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative analysis of the literature.

The main findings shows that, although there is growing interest in digitalization, many companies treat IT as a reactive technical support function, facing barriers such as a shortage of skilled personnel, cyber risks, and the difficulty of integrating legacy systems. To move forward, it is essential to adopt proactive IT governance frameworks, intelligently outsource services, and continuously invest in employees' digital skills. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: IT services, ITSM, ITIL, digital transformation, IT governance, Republic of Moldova.

LONG-TERM FORECASTS REGARDING THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ACCOUNTING DATABASES WITH THE SUPPORT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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The accelerated digital transformation of economic activities is bringing about significant changes in the field of accounting and in the way financial and accounting information is managed. In this context, artificial intelligence (AI) represents one of the key technologies capable of redefining the way accounting databases are conceptualized, developed, and used. This paper examines the long-term prospects for integrating artificial intelligence into accounting databases and highlights the main directions of their future development. The paper addresses the automation of accounting processes, predictive analytics, fraud and anomaly detection, the integration of data from different information systems, real-time accounting, and the transformation of the role of accounting professionals. In the long term, accounting databases are expected to evolve from simple systems for storing and reporting information into intelligent infrastructures capable of interpreting data, identifying complex relationships, anticipating financial developments, and supporting decision-making processes. At the same time, the implementation of these technologies involves challenges related to data quality, information security, data protection, algorithmic transparency, and professional responsibility. The paper emphasizes the need for a balanced approach in which the benefits of artificial intelligence are fully exploited without diminishing human oversight and professional accountability in the accounting field.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, accounting databases, digital accounting, predictive analytics, automation, financial and accounting information, digital transformation.

DIGITALIZATION AND THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN UNION ACCESSION

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The development of renewable energy has become a strategic priority for the Republic of Moldova in the context of energy security challenges, climate commitments, and the country's European Union accession process. Digitalization and artificial intelligence offer new opportunities for improving the efficiency, predictability, and resilience of the renewable energy sector. This paper aims to analyze the role of digital technologies and artificial intelligence in supporting the development of renewable energy in the Republic of Moldova and in facilitating alignment with European energy policies and standards. The research focuses on the main directions in which digitalization can contribute to the modernization of the energy sector, including smart monitoring systems, digital platforms for energy management, data collection and analysis, forecasting of renewable energy production, optimization of energy consumption, and integration of prosumers into the energy system. Particular attention is given to the potential use of artificial intelligence in forecasting solar and wind energy generation, identifying technical risks, improving grid management, supporting investment decisions, and increasing the operational efficiency of renewable energy projects. The study applies a qualitative and analytical approach based on the review of specialized literature, strategic documents, regulatory frameworks, and international good practices in the field of renewable energy, digital transformation, and artificial intelligence. The expected results aim to highlight the main opportunities and challenges associated with the digital transformation of the renewable energy sector in the Republic of Moldova. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: renewable energy, digitalization, artificial intelligence, energy resilience, European Union accession.

AI-SUPPORTED SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT IN RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The transition to a sustainable energy sector involves adopting advanced technological solutions capable of optimizing the use of energy sources, reducing losses, and ensuring the efficient integration of renewable energy sources. In this context, artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming an important tool for sustainability management in energy projects, thanks to its ability to process large volumes of data generated by digital infrastructure, smart meters, connected sensors, and Internet of Things (IoT) devices. This article analyzes the opportunities and challenges of using AI-based solutions in the development of smart grids and the management of renewable energy projects in the Republic of Moldova. The research highlights that the application of artificial intelligence in the energy sector can contribute to improving consumption and production forecasts, optimizing operational processes, reducing energy losses, increasing economic efficiency, and strengthening the electrical infrastructure. International studies demonstrate that investments in AI-powered smart grids offer significant economic benefits, including increased return on investment and reduced costs associated with the operation and maintenance of energy systems. In the case of the Republic of Moldova, the rapid development of renewable energy generation capacity creates new opportunities for the energy transition, but simultaneously poses challenges related to the imbalance between production and consumption, the lack of sufficient storage infrastructure, and the need to modernize the power grids. The analysis highlights the strategic role of smart meters, battery energy storage systems (BESS), and artificial intelligence algorithms in creating a more flexible, resilient, and sustainable energy system. The research findings indicate that integrating artificial intelligence into the management of renewable energy projects can be a key factor in increasing economic efficiency, enhancing energy security, and accelerating the Republic of Moldova's transition to a sustainable energy model.

Keywords: sustainability management, renewable energy, artificial intelligence, smart grids, sustainable development.

INTEGRATING AI INTO SOCIO-ECONOMIC FIELD RESEARCH WORKFLOWS: APPLICABILITY, LIMITATIONS, AND METHODOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS

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Artificial intelligence is increasingly used in survey research, from design and instrumentation to the processing of collected records, and has itself become a direct object of methodological research. While most research examines one task at a time, integrated approaches tend to appear most often as proposed frameworks or in settings without field data collection. In the Republic of Moldova, application of these tools is becoming increasingly visible in research and institutional practice. This trend is reflected by the establishment of the Moldova AI Hub consortium in 2025 and in the inclusion of AI-supported methods among the National Bureau of Statistics' broader modernisation priorities, alongside preparations for the 2030 census round.

The methodological concern lies less in whether these tools can perform individual tasks than in the limited extent to which their use contributes to cumulative methodological knowledge. An important part of the available experience remains practice-based and is not systematised or assessed within explicit analytical frameworks. Adoption is often justified in terms of efficiency and output production, while evidence concerning AI performance remains dependent on particular models, versions, prompts and conditions of use. As these systems evolve rapidly, such evidence may have limited comparability, reproducibility and transferability across studies.

The study examines the applicability, methodological opportunities and limitations of integrating artificial intelligence into survey and interview-based field research workflows. By relating evidence from the two applied studies to the methodological literature, it analyses the criteria for determining which tasks may be supported by AI and the corresponding human-verification arrangements required at each stage. It also examines the implications of such integration for team preparation, the allocation of responsibilities, process documentation and the validation of AI-assisted outputs

The empirical basis comprises two applied field studies in which artificial intelligence supported multiple stages of the research process, from methodological design and implementation planning to post-collection data processing, a structured socio-economic survey administered through an electronic data-collection platform and a sector study conducted using semi-structured interview instruments. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; survey methodology; research workflow; human supervision; field data collection.

MODERNIZING PUBLIC MANAGEMENT THROUGH RESULTS-ORIENTED PERFORMANCE INDICATOR SYSTEMS: THE CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

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Modernizing public management requires a transition from monitoring administrative activities and resource use to evaluating measurable outcomes and public value. In the context of the Republic of Moldova's European integration, results-oriented performance indicator systems offer a framework for strengthening institutional accountability, strategic planning, and evidence-based decision-making. This paper aims to develop a conceptual framework for integrating performance indicators into public management, with particular attention to the relationship between policy objectives, resource allocation, service delivery, and societal outcomes.

The proposed methodology combines a review of academic literature, comparative analysis of European approaches to performance management, and examination of the institutional conditions relevant to the Republic of Moldova. The analytical framework distinguishes between input, process, output, outcome, and impact indicators, emphasizing their complementary roles in assessing administrative effectiveness. It also considers data quality, institutional coordination, digital infrastructure, and managerial capacity as essential conditions for implementation.

The paper proposes an integrated indicator system linking strategic priorities to operational targets, monitoring

procedures, and periodic evaluation. Particular attention is given to indicator relevance, measurability, comparability, and the risks associated with excessive reporting, fragmented information systems, and incentives that prioritize numerical targets over substantive improvements. The framework incorporates transparency, citizen feedback, and the alignment of performance information with budgeting and policy revision.

The study contributes to the discussion on public administration modernization by outlining practical principles for designing and implementing results-oriented performance systems. Its central argument is that indicators support meaningful reform when embedded in an institutional culture of learning, accountability, and continuous improvement in public services environment for economic actors, positioning PBM as a cornerstone of resilient governance and sustainable growth.

Keywords: *public management, results-oriented management, performance indicators, public administration reform, institutional accountability, European integration.*

HEALTH INVESTMENT, LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE: EVIDENCE FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION

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This paper examines the relationship between health investment and labour productivity in the European Union, with particular interest in the role of health in supporting economic resilience. Health expenditure is usually discussed in connection with social welfare and the sustainability of public finances. At the same time, population health is closely related to human capital, since workers' health can affect their physical and cognitive capacity, participation in the labour market and absenteeism.

The analysis covers the 27 EU Member States and investigates the relationship between health expenditure and labour productivity. Other factors that may influence productivity are considered, including innovation, education, capital formation and employment, together with country- and time-specific effects. Since the economic effects of health expenditure may occur with a delay, lagged values of health expenditure are included in the analysis. Potential endogeneity in the relationship between health expenditure and productivity is also taken into account.

The paper further considers whether the relationship between health investment and labour productivity differs according to the innovation capacity of EU economies. In addition, it examines the role of healthcare investment during periods of economic and health-related shocks, focusing on whether higher investment is associated with lower productivity losses.

The analysis connects health investment with the wider discussion on human capital, productivity and competitiveness in the European Union. From this perspective, healthcare expenditure can be considered not only as a current public expenditure, but also in terms of its possible contribution to productive capacity and economic resilience over time. The results may offer useful evidence for the discussion of European policies related to human capital, innovation, competitiveness and sustainable economic growth.

Keywords: health investment; healthcare expenditure; labour productivity; human capital; innovation; competitiveness; economic resilience; European Union

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE OF FARMS UNDER EXTERNAL SHOCKS: DETERMINANTS AND ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES

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The study examines the economic resilience of Ukrainian farms under conditions of intensified external shocks, including market volatility, rising input costs, logistical disruptions, constrained access to finance and institutional uncertainty. The research objective is to systematise the determinants that shape farm resilience and to substantiate adaptive strategies capable of maintaining financial capacity, resource potential, market position and continuity of economic activity. The study addresses the following research question: how do different types of external shocks affect the key determinants of farm resilience, and which adaptive responses are most appropriate for reducing the resulting vulnerabilities?

The research is based on a systemic approach. The information base includes scientific publications, official statistical materials and analytical documents of the OECD, FAO, the European Commission, the World Bank and the State Statistics Service of Ukraine. Methods of analysis and synthesis, comparative analysis, grouping, content analysis and structural-logical generalisation were applied to identify the links between external shocks, channels of impact, vulnerable determinants and corresponding adaptive strategies.

The findings show that farm resilience is determined by a combination of financial, market, resource, logistical, institutional and organisational-managerial factors. The same external shock may produce different economic consequences depending on the degree of vulnerability of particular determinants and the adaptive capacity of a farm. The most relevant strategies include maintaining liquidity, diversifying financing and sales channels, improving resource-use efficiency, adapting logistics, strengthening cooperation and using institutional support instruments. The study demonstrates that economic resilience should be understood as a dynamic capacity to absorb adverse impacts, adjust managerial and economic decisions and preserve the prerequisites for further development. The proposed approach provides a structured basis for farm-level decision-making and for designing more targeted support measures for agricultural producers. It also highlights the importance of matching adaptive measures to the dominant source of vulnerability rather than applying universal responses.

Keywords: economic resilience; farms; external shocks; determinants; adaptive strategies

THE SOCIAL QUALITY PERSPECTIVE IN UKRAINE IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

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The results presented are relevant because the upcoming recovery phase of the cyclical development of the Ukrainian political-economic system, after the crisis stage, which is natural in cyclical development, is the key period in which a more egalitarian and comprehensively balanced societal structure can be realized. The purpose of this study is to examine the main aspects of the social quality perspective and socio-economic resilience in relation to the recovery phase of the Ukrainian political-economic cycle. The study mainly applied logical and historical methods, as well as dialectical ascent from the abstract to the concrete, including general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction. It presents a brief historical account of the formation of the Ukrainian military-economic cycle, the geopolitical role of Ukraine, and their impact on social quality and socio-economic resilience; it analyzes the current state of social quality in Ukraine, including the consequences of the local-global conflict on its territory. It has been shown that to ensure social consolidation and socioeconomic sustainability in Ukraine, the practical implementation of the concept of "Neighborhood Crystallization Points as Alternative Health Centers", which were first created in the Netherlands, is relevant. It is substantiated that an important ideological component of stabilization and transition to recovery and development after the end of hostilities in Ukraine should be the idea of improving social quality for all strata of society, the successful practical implementation of which is possible under the condition of symbiosis of the efforts of the state, business and civil society.

Keywords: social quality, socio-economic resilience, military-economic cycle, local-global conflict, recovery phase, "societal crystallization points"

EUROPEAN RESILIENCE TEST: EU ECONOMY UNDER PRESSURE FROM NEW GLOBAL ENERGY SHOCK

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Less than five years after the energy shock of 2022, the European Union economy is being tested again, this time by the escalation of the conflict in the Middle East and the risk of disruption of global energy flows. The article analyses the evolution and prospects of the European economy in the period 2025–2027, following the channels through which the shock is transmitted to economic growth, inflation, public finances, external balances and the labour market. The analysis indicates a temporary slowdown in economic activity and a short-term resumption of inflationary pressures, without these coagulating into a generalized macroeconomic slippage. Compared to 2022, the EU economy is absorbing the blows

better: it has reduced its energy intensity, diversified its sources of supply and pushed up the share of renewable energy. However, resilience remains unevenly distributed across Member States and is constrained by a significantly reduced fiscal space, persistent structural vulnerabilities and high geopolitical uncertainty. It also details the risks that weigh on this trajectory – the prolongation of the conflict in the Middle East, the fragility of critical resource supplies, the fragmentation of international trade, the weakening of the labour market, climate risks and the ambivalent effects of artificial intelligence on productivity, employment and financial stability – as well as the economic policy responses that this context calls for: temporary and well-targeted fiscal measures, coupled with investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy and competitiveness. The central conclusion is that a sustainable growth trajectory remains within reach, but it depends on accelerating structural reforms and strengthening European and international cooperation, at a time when the room for maneuver for policymakers seems narrower than in any of the previous crises.

Keywords: resilience; economic growth; risks; European Union

RECONFIGURING GLOBAL BUSINESS STRATEGIES TO ENSURE GEOPOLITICAL RESILIENCE. CASE STUDY: NEARSHORING AND FRIENDSHORING IN EUROPE

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The recent global economic context, marked by systemic shocks caused by pandemic restrictions, trade wars, and escalating geopolitical conflicts, has led both companies with globally dispersed operations and national decision-makers to prioritise geopolitical resilience over economic efficiency. Driven by security concerns and market instability, global economic players are reconfiguring their operations in countries that ensure safety while trying to maintain competitiveness, with national authorities welcoming them with attractive policies. The objective of this paper is to highlight the main characteristics of strategic decisions of nearshoring and friendshoring in the context of intensifying geopolitical risk. While nearshoring involves relocating production to geographically close countries, friendshoring entails reorienting supply chains toward politically aligned nations. Both aim to ensure the robustness and resilience of supply chains by minimising physical transit disruptions and geopolitical vulnerabilities. Our paper is based on an investigation of recent studies and representative publications analysing global value chain reconfiguration strategies, supported by data from the World Trade Organisation, the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development, the World Bank and Eurostat. The conceptual foundations of nearshoring and friendshoring strategies are illustrated with representative examples from the world's main regions. The second part of the paper is dedicated to identifying the stages of the reconfiguration trend adopted by companies serving and operating in European markets, as well as the national strategies aimed at supply chain and economic security. The research results indicate that the two strategies are increasingly important options in the relocation decisions of companies with extensive international operations. Nearshoring and friendshoring strategies will also influence European trade and investment flows, with security becoming a major factor in national economic stability.

Keywords: nearshoring; friendshoring; global value chains; geopolitical tensions; Europe

STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMIC AND SECURITY RESILIENCE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S EASTERN EXTERNAL BORDER

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The term resilience is a concept with many meanings and definitions; in general, resilience refers to the capacity of a system to respond to and adapt to external pressures. While resilience was an emerging concept in the first decade of the 21st century, recent approaches have transformed it into a strategic operational concept and a useful tool in countering threats. Economic resilience refers to the capacity of (economic) systems to absorb disruptions induced by economic or other events (pandemics, other natural disasters, technological disasters, climate change, etc.) limiting damage or loss. Geopolitical resilience refers to strengthening Europe's "open strategic autonomy" and its leading role at global level. In 2020, the European Commission published for the first time a strategic document aimed at guiding

European Union policies towards building a more resilient Europe - Strategic Foresight Report 2020 – Charting the course towards a more resilient Europe. In 2026, against the backdrop of Russia's war against Ukraine and the pressures directly felt by the EU's eastern border areas, the European Commission announced a plan of measures for the eastern external border regions structured around three strands: security and defence, investment and support for local communities. At national and supranational level, effectively strengthening societal resilience requires robust and integrated frameworks. The convergence of crises in the EU demonstrates the essential role of governments and international institutions in strengthening societal resilience. Strengthening societal resilience in an era of multi-crisis requires a paradigm shift from reactive and isolated crisis management to proactive, adaptive governance capable of managing systemic complexity. In the EU context, efforts aimed at strengthening societal resilience can directly contribute to the EU's new strategies for enhancing security.

Keywords: resilience, crises, security, European Union, geopolitics

EFFECTS OF DIGITALISATION ON SMES' FINANCING CONSTRAINTS: AN EMPIRICAL APPROACH

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The development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is crucial for promoting economic growth, as these enterprises are significant contributors to added value, employment, and poverty alleviation. However, due to their specific characteristics, SMEs face several financing challenges, which are mainly driven by a lack of collateral, limited or absent credit history, and information asymmetries in their relationships with financial resource providers. These constraints limit SMEs' ability to invest, expand, and innovate.

In this context, the increasing use of digital technologies may contribute to improving SMEs' access to finance by reducing some of the barriers that limit their access to external sources of financing. Based on this premise, our study aims to empirically investigate whether and how the adoption of digital technologies can mitigate SMEs' financing constraints.

The study uses data on the SME sector in EU countries, which were obtained from the World Bank Enterprise Surveys and the European Commission. Using a panel data model, our results indicate that adopting digital technologies can mitigate SMEs' financing constraints in the EU countries included in the sample. However, the magnitude and statistical significance of the effects vary according to the type of technology used and the size of the enterprise. Overall, our study contributes to a better understanding of how digital technologies could play a significant role in facilitating SMEs' access to finance.

Keywords: digital technology; small and medium-sized enterprises; financial constraints; bank credit; European Union

AMADEO PETER GIANNINI: AN ENTREPRENEURIAL MODEL OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICA

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This paper examines the entrepreneurial model of Amadeo Peter Giannini (1870–1949), founder of the Bank of Italy and later one of the leading figures in the development of Bank of America. The study focuses on the distinctive model of banking that Giannini developed in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century, with particular attention to its ethical foundations, its approach to financial inclusion, and its capacity to create opportunities for economic and entrepreneurial development.

The research addresses three main questions: how did Giannini's entrepreneurial vision challenge the prevailing practices of the American banking system? How did his approach to credit contribute to the financial inclusion of Italian immigrants, workers and small entrepreneurs? And to what extent can his banking model be interpreted as a factor of economic resilience and competitiveness?

The analysis adopts a historical approach based on the examination of biographical, institutional and documentary sources concerning Giannini, the Bank of Italy and the subsequent development of Bank of America. Particular attention is devoted to Giannini's lending practices, the relationship established with immigrant communities and small businesses, and the expansion of his banking model through branch networks and organizational innovation. The study combines perspectives from economic and business history in order to interpret financial inclusion not only as a social objective, but also as an entrepreneurial strategy.

The paper argues that Giannini's innovation lay in the integration of financial inclusion with an entrepreneurial model based on trust, accessibility and the financing of productive activities. By extending credit to customers who were often underserved by conventional banking institutions, his model contributed to transforming access to finance into an instrument for entrepreneurial initiative and economic recovery. The case of Giannini therefore illustrates how an inclusive approach to banking could simultaneously generate business opportunities, strengthen local economic resilience and contribute to the expansion and competitiveness of a financial institution.

Keywords: Amadeo Peter Giannini, financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, economic resilience, banking innovation, immigrant entrepreneurship

ABOUT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CURRENT ACCOUNT

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Current account sustainability is a concept that is highly debated in the literature, and it refers to both surpluses and deficits. Both in theory and practice, external deficits (and not surpluses) are mainly analysed, given that vulnerabilities are more important in the case of deficits, which makes the adjustment process bring the country under the pressure of corrective measures and lead to a decrease of its international reserves. Therefore, the article analyses the factors that influence the current account deficit, respectively its sustainability. Thus, the sustainability of the current account deficit refers both to the provision of the necessary financing and to the quality of financing. The paper shows that the sustainability of the current account deficit depends, first of all, on the type of resources used to cover the deficit, as well as on the economic characteristics of each country. Also, the causes that determined the emergence and the evolution of the current account deficit, the period of time over which it develops, but also the size of the current account deficit as a share of GDP are very important for ensuring sustainability. The methodology used combines the analysis of economic literature and the descriptive analysis with the identification of causalities.

Keywords: disequilibrium; deficit; sustainability; quality of financing; causes

FIRM SIZE AND INDEBTEDNESS STRUCTURE IN ROMANIA AND CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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The paper takes as its starting point the size of firms, which represents a determining factor of capital structure and financing decisions, influencing access to financial resources, the cost of capital and the ability of firms to get through with economic shocks. In the economies of Central and Eastern European (CEE), characterized by a high dependence on bank financing and different levels of development of financial markets, the comparative analysis of the indebtedness of SMEs and large firms is particularly relevant in the context of the challenges generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the energy crisis, high inflation and the tightening of monetary policy. The aim of the research is to comparatively analyse the indebtedness structure of SMEs and large firms in Romania and the Central and Eastern European countries, in order to identify differences regarding the level and structure of indebtedness and the factors that influence them. We will consider to compare the main indicators of indebtedness depending on the size of the firms; analysis the debt structure and the main sources of financing; identifying the particularities of the indebtedness profile of Romanian firms compared to those in CEE countries and highlighting the implications of these differences on financial resilience. The study answers the following research questions: How does the firm size influence the indebtedness structure and access to financing? To what degree does the indebtedness profile of firms in Romania be different from that of CEE economies? What are the main financial vulnerabilities associated with each category of firms? The research proposes a descriptive-comparative methodological approach, based on the analysis of representative indicators of the indebtedness structure and financial autonomy. We will use aggregated data from official statistical sources which will be analysed through descriptive statistics and comparisons between categories of firms and countries. The expected results highlight the fact that SMEs are more dependent on short-term financing and trade credit, having less access to long-term financing compared to large firms. The study contributes to understanding the relationship between firm size and indebtedness structure and can provide useful benchmarks for developing policies aimed at improving SMEs' access to finance and strengthening the resilience of the firms sector.

Keywords: indebtedness structure; firm size; small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); capital structure; financial resilience

DIGITALISATION AND PROFITABILITY OF CATERING COMPANIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS IN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES

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The growing adoption of digital technologies is profoundly changing the competitive models of service companies, making digital transformation a strategic factor in creating value and improving business performance. In this context, the literature has still devoted limited attention to the relationship between the level of digital maturity of national economic systems and the economic performance of catering companies. This study analyses this relationship in the Mediterranean catering sector, verifying whether contexts characterised by greater digital development are associated with higher business profitability.

The analysis is conducted on a sample of 8,801 catering companies operating in Italy, France, and Portugal during 2014-2023. The economic and financial data, obtained from the AIDA/Bureau van Dijk database, are integrated with the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) of the European Commission. The relationship between digital maturity and corporate profitability, measured through Return on Equity (ROE), is analysed using descriptive statistics and linear regression.

The study aims to investigate the role of national digital maturity in promoting the competitiveness of catering companies, offering a comparison across three Mediterranean countries characterised by different levels of digital development. In this way, the research contributes to the debate on the competitiveness of service companies, proposing an interpretative framework useful for understanding the potential impact of digital ecosystems on corporate economic performance and offering indications to public decision-makers and managers for the definition of innovation and development strategies in the sector.

Keywords: Digital transformation, restaurant industry, firm performance, ROE, Mediterranean Countries

THE IMPACT OF EXTREME EVENTS ON CORPORATE FINANCING: THE CASE OF ROMANIA IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT

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This paper assesses the impact of extreme events (financial crises, pandemics, geopolitical conflicts) on corporate indebtedness in Romania, focusing on sectoral differences and disparities between SMEs and large firms. The central objective is to identify structural vulnerabilities of the Romanian corporate sector and to understand how major shocks influence financing behavior. A secondary objective is to place the Romanian indebtedness profile in a regional context through comparison with Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary.

The research explores which economic sectors are most exposed regarding leverage and debt structure and to what extent financing differs between SMEs and large firms. Particular attention is given to the impact of major crises on corporate indebtedness and identifying vulnerable firm segments.

The study employs descriptive analysis, using indicators such as the debt-to-assets ratio, the debt-to-equity ratio, and the share of short-term debt. These are calculated at the sector level and for firm categories (SMEs versus large firms). Data sources include the National Bank of Romania, the National Institute of Statistics, and international financial institutions. The analysis compares indicator evolution during crisis periods with periods of economic stability. The comparative dimension relies on Eurostat and World Bank data for Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. Descriptive analysis reveals significant sectoral heterogeneity: construction and real estate record the highest leverage, while IT and professional services are the least exposed. Construction and trade depend heavily on short-term debt, making them vulnerable to liquidity shocks. Independent SMEs have the lowest financial leverage, but the highest total indebtedness (including trade credit), indicating substitution of bank financing with supplier credit. Compared to Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, Romania exhibits lower bank indebtedness but greater reliance on trade credit, especially among SMEs. The impact of extreme events affected construction and SMEs more severely across all four countries. Debt concentration among large companies generates systemic risks, while currency exposure remains a structural vulnerability for Romania.

Keywords: corporate indebtedness; extreme events; capital structure; SMEs; sectoral analysis

ENTREPRENEURIAL RESILIENCE IN BULGARIA’S AGRI-INDUSTRIAL SECTOR AMID GLOBAL ECONOMIC TURMOIL

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The relevance of this study stems from the asymmetry between the volume of public support for the Bulgarian agro-industrial sector and the resilience it has demonstrated in the face of cumulative exogenous shocks during the 2020-2025 period. The aim is to identify the determinants of entrepreneurial resilience and to explore why public support does not automatically lead to resilience.

The study tests three hypotheses: that the amount of support is not a significant predictor of performance, while managerial capacity moderates its effect; that a price shock has a differentiated impact, whereby relative terms of trade reverse in intervals shorter than the investment cycle; and that efficiency shows no statistically significant spatial autocorrelation, a result interpreted as the absence of detectable geographic clustering rather than as proof that geographic factors are irrelevant. The methodology applies triangulation across three empirical layers that differ in data level and analytical approach: an econometric analysis of data from the Farm-Level Agricultural Accounting Information System (2019-2023); an analysis of the data envelope with Bootstrap correction for 21 predominantly rural regions (2022-2024); and the author’s calculation of the price gap through multiplicative chaining of the National Statistical Institute’s indices (2020-2025). The results confirm the first two hypotheses, whilst the third is not ruled out, as no statistically significant spatial autocorrelation was found. Investment subsidies show no significant correlation with profitability, while environmental payments have an effect only on medium- and large-scale farms. The region with the highest capital investment ranks 17th out of 21 in terms of competitiveness. The relative rankings of the subsectors reverse every three years. The conclusion is that resilience is determined by managerial capacity rather than by the amount of available capital, which justifies a shift toward performance-based support.

Keywords: entrepreneurial resilience, agribusiness sector, management capacity, price gap, global shocks

BETWEEN SOCIAL MISSION AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY: INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT AND FINANCING NEEDS IN ROMANIAN SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

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Social enterprises are expected to reconcile economic viability with the inclusion of disadvantaged groups. This paper examines the gap between these ambitions and the organisational capacities of Romanian social enterprises, using data from an online questionnaire administered to 151 representatives of social-economy entities in 2024. The descriptive analysis focuses on employment, workplace accessibility, digitalisation, revenue sources, access to finance, and policy expectations. The findings reveal a sector strongly oriented towards social missions: 80.8% of respondents report acting to a large or very large extent in the general interest of the community. However, inclusive employment remains limited in scale. Only 55 organisations employ persons from vulnerable groups, who account for 14.5% of the 1,682 employees reported. While 57% of planned jobs for 2025 target vulnerable persons, organisational readiness is uneven: only 6.0% of respondents provide assistive technologies and 16.6% offer adequate workplace accommodations for employees with disabilities. Financial constraints compound these challenges. Lack of tailored financial products, insufficient guarantees, high interest rates, and administrative burdens restrict development; 88.8% of respondents consider a preferential credit product for NGOs necessary. The paper argues that social enterprises' inclusion potential depends not only on their declared social mission, but also on accessible workplaces, patient and flexible finance, specialised advisory support, and public procurement and employment-subsidy mechanisms. It proposes a policy framework for transforming social-enterprise inclusion from a normative commitment into a measurable and sustainable labour-market outcome.

Keywords: social economy; social enterprises; inclusive employment; vulnerable groups; workplace accessibility; social finance

PREDICTORS OF REPURCHASE INTENTION IN EMERGING E-COMMERCE MARKETS: THE ROLE OF AGE AND GENDER

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This study examines the predictors of consumer intent to buy again from Trendyol, one of the most popular online shopping platforms in Azerbaijan. A survey was conducted among young adults in early 2026 using Spearman's rho (a non-parametric measure) to assess the relationship between four variables and Repurchase Intention, the study found all four variables were positively connected with Repurchase Intention at a level of statistical significance. The variable with the strongest relationship was Perceived Value ($\rho = 0.590$, $p < 0.001$). Community Platform Engagement ($\rho = 0.411$, $p < 0.001$) was the second in a row, while both Influencer Trust and Perceived Influence had lower strength of relationship. In addition, results from the study suggest that although social media influencers can provide avenues through which to create an environment for customers to engage in activity, it is the actual transactional benefit and ability for customers to interact and become part of an online community that provides the greatest impetus for long-term loyalty in this growing internet-based marketplace.

Keywords: Trendyol; age; gender; repurchase intention; Azerbaijan

DETERMINANTS OF INNOVATION ACTIVITY IN AZERBAIJAN: ASSESSING THE ROLES OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, HUMAN CAPITAL, DIGITALIZATION, AND INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

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Innovation has become one of the principal drivers of sustainable economic growth, technological progress, and international competitiveness in the knowledge-based economy. For resource-rich developing countries such as Azerbaijan, strengthening innovation capacity is essential for accelerating economic diversification beyond the hydrocarbon sector and fostering a knowledge-based economy. Although Azerbaijan has implemented reforms to promote research and development (R&D), digital transformation, human capital development, and institutional modernization, empirical evidence on the influence of these factors on innovation performance remains limited. The main objective of this study is to identify the determinants of innovation activity in Azerbaijan by examining the short-run and long-run effects of R&D expenditure, tertiary education, Internet usage, government effectiveness, foreign direct investment (FDI), trade openness, and GDP per capita on patent applications. The study addresses three research questions: (1) Which technological and institutional factors significantly affect innovation activity? (2) Is there a long-run relationship between patent applications and their determinants? (3) Are the relationships robust across alternative cointegration techniques? The empirical analysis is based on annual data for the period 2000–2025, with resident patent applications serving as a proxy for innovation performance. The methodological framework includes Augmented Dickey–Fuller (ADF), Phillips–Perron (PP), and Kwiatkowski–Phillips–Schmidt–Shin (KPSS) unit root tests, VAR lag selection, and the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) Bounds Testing approach. To verify the robustness of the estimates, FMOLS, DOLS, CCR, OLS, and VECM estimators are employed. In addition, diagnostic and stability tests are performed to ensure the reliability and validity of the model. The empirical findings confirm a long-run cointegration relationship among the variables. R&D expenditure, trade openness, and government effectiveness positively and significantly influence patent activity, whereas tertiary education exhibits a significant negative effect during the study period. Internet usage, GDP per capita, and FDI do not show statistically significant long-run effects. These findings suggest that strengthening research capacity, improving institutional quality, and promoting international economic integration are essential for enhancing Azerbaijan's innovation performance and supporting innovation-led economic development.

Keywords: innovation; human capital; institutional quality; digitalization; Azerbaijan; ARDL

ECONOMETRIC ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF INTRAMURAL CURRENT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURES ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ON INNOVATION PERFORMANCE: TIME-SERIES EVIDENCE FROM AZERBAIJAN

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Innovation is an important determinant of technological development, productivity, and long-term economic growth. Research and development (R&D) expenditure contributes to innovation through knowledge creation, technological development, and the strengthening of national innovation capacity. For Azerbaijan, understanding whether the composition of R&D expenditure contributes to innovation is particularly relevant to economic diversification and the development of a knowledge-based economy. This study examines the relationship between intramural current and capital R&D expenditures and innovation-related outcomes in Azerbaijan using annual time-series data for 2000–2024. Two empirical models are specified: the first examines resident patent applications as a measure of innovation performance, while the second investigates resident R&D expenditure as an alternative R&D-related outcome. Intramural current and capital R&D expenditures are the main explanatory variables, while research personnel, gross fixed capital formation, and foreign direct investment are included as control variables. The empirical analysis employs the Augmented Dickey–Fuller, Phillips–Perron, and KPSS unit-root tests, followed by the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) bounds-testing approach and an Error Correction Model (ECM) to distinguish between long-run and short-run relationships. The results of the bounds tests provide evidence of cointegration across the estimated specifications. The error-correction estimates further indicate statistically significant adjustment toward long-run equilibrium following short-run deviations. Long-run relationships are additionally examined using OLS, FMOLS, DOLS, CCR, and VECM estimators. Diagnostic tests indicate that the principal ARDL specifications are generally stable, with the CUSUM and CUSUMQ tests supporting parameter stability. The findings demonstrate that the relationship between current and capital R&D expenditures and innovation-related outcomes differs across model specifications and estimation methods, highlighting the importance of distinguishing between R&D expenditure components when evaluating innovation performance in Azerbaijan. The study

contributes to the limited empirical literature on the composition of R&D expenditure in Azerbaijan and provides econometric evidence relevant to the assessment of R&D financing and innovation policy.

Keywords: research and development expenditure; innovation performance; patent applications; intramural R&D; ARDL; cointegration; Azerbaijan

THE ROLE AND MAIN DIRECTIONS OF ANTI-CRISIS POLICY IN ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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In the modern era, the intensification of global economic processes and the growing interdependence between countries have significantly expanded the potential impact of financial and economic crises on national economies. In such circumstances, one of the main objectives of states is to minimise the negative impacts of emerging external and internal economic shocks, to maintain macroeconomic stability and to ensure long-term sustainable development.

This article analyses the impact of the crisis processes in the global economy in 2014–2015 on the Azerbaijani economy and the role of the anti-crisis policy implemented by the state during that period in terms of sustainable development. The study assesses the main impacts of the crisis on economic growth, the financial sector, employment, the investment environment and macroeconomic stability, while also systematising the main directions of the measures implemented to address these impacts.

During the research, comparative analysis, an analytical approach, analysis of normative legal documents, logical generalisation, and systematic evaluation methods were used. The information base was composed of strategic documents adopted in the Republic of Azerbaijan, state programmes, and scientific sources used on the subject.

The results of the study show that the anti-crisis measures implemented during the crisis period made a significant contribution to maintaining macroeconomic stability, reducing the risks that had arisen in the financial sector, ensuring the sustainability of public finances, and restoring economic activity. Furthermore, the continuation of institutional reforms, the improvement of the business environment, the coordination of fiscal and monetary policies, the efficient allocation of financial resources, and the strengthening of coordination in public administration have been assessed as the key conditions for ensuring long-term sustainable development.

The findings of the study are of theoretical and practical significance for the formulation of economic policy aimed at minimising the effects of future economic crises and enhancing the resilience of the national economy.

Keywords: sustainable development, anti-crisis policy, economic crisis, macroeconomic stability, financial stability, fiscal policy, economic growth, Republic of Azerbaijan

DYNAMICS, COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE OF ROMANIA'S EXTERNAL TRADE IN GRAPES DURING 2020-2025

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This study examines the dynamics, competitiveness and economic resilience of Romania's external trade in grapes during 2020–2025, using data from Trade Map and UN Comtrade. The analysis focuses on export and import values and quantities, the trade balance, the export-to-import coverage ratio, average unit values and the geographical distribution of trade flows. Exports increased from EUR 378 thousand in 2020 to EUR 8.443 million in 2025, indicating a substantial improvement in Romania's presence on external markets. However, imports remained considerably higher, rising from EUR 46.163 million to EUR 89.683 million. The trade deficit reached EUR 89.663 million in 2024 before declining to EUR 81.239 million in 2025. The export-to-import coverage ratio improved from 0.8% to 9.4%, but remained insufficient to offset the country's structural dependence on imports. The European Union was Romania's main export destination and principal source of imports. The results indicate that the recent expansion of exports has strengthened external trade performance without correcting the persistent commercial imbalance. Increasing competitiveness and economic resilience requires expanding marketable domestic production, improving producer organisation, investing in storage and post-harvest infrastructure, and diversifying export markets.

Keywords: external trade; grapes; competitiveness; import dependence; economic resilience

RECENT TRENDS IN ROMANIA'S FOREIGN TRADE WITH MERCOSUR MEMBER STATES

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Recently, there has been increasing public discussion about the impact the Mercosur agreement will have on member states' foreign trade with Mercosur countries, in terms of the tariffs that will be applied, customs duties, and, above all, the quality of imported products. From the perspective of the agri-food sector, the agreement includes limited tariff quotas as well as certain instruments to protect European farmers from imports of meat and grains from Latin America. From this perspective, this study aims to analyze Romania's agri-food trade with the four Mercosur member states for the period 2020–2024, focusing on the agreement's impact on the Romanian agri-food sector. From a methodological point of view, the study is based on public data from the FAOSTAT database.

Keywords: agreement, agricultural sector, export, tariffs, Mercosur.

HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AND SPORTING PERFORMANCE IN MOLDOVAN FOOTBALL: CHALLENGES OF LABOR MIGRATION IN A SMALL ECONOMY

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This paper explores the relationship between human capital development, labor migration, and sporting performance in Moldovan football. As one of the European countries most affected by emigration, the Republic of Moldova faces persistent challenges in retaining skilled workers across multiple sectors, including sport. Football provides an interesting case for examining how institutions attempt to develop and preserve local talent while operating in a highly mobile labor market.

The study focuses on the role of the Moldovan Football Federation (FMF) and its educational initiatives in supporting the professional development of coaches, referees, managers, and players. Using a mixed methodology that combines document analysis, institutional reports, statistical evidence, and relevant academic literature, the research evaluates the contribution of institutional investments in human capital and the constraints generated by labor migration.

The findings suggest that the modernization of football governance and the expansion of professional training opportunities have strengthened the quality of human resources within the sector. At the same time, the continuous outflow of players and coaches toward foreign markets limits the long-term domestic benefits of these investments. Nevertheless, improved sporting results, participation in international competitions, and the growing visibility of Moldovan football generate economic and symbolic returns that extend beyond the sport itself. Football therefore emerges not only as a field of athletic activity but also as a mechanism through which a small economy can invest in human capital, increase international visibility, and reinforce collective identity.

Keywords: football governance, human capital, labor migration, sporting performance, Moldova

WORK STANDARDIZATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TO ENHANCE PUBLIC MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCY

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Work standardization in public administration serves as an essential tool for measuring workload, optimizing costs, and eliminating institutional bottlenecks through action strategies that include clearly defining task volumes, utilizing performance indicators, and streamlining workflows to reduce bureaucracy. The objectives of standardization in the public sector include measuring workload, optimizing staffing levels, and evaluating performance by aligning employee tasks with available time and allocated resources, establishing an objective basis for staffing structures and position requirements, and shifting from formal oversight to a genuine assessment of institutional efficiency. Methods to enhance public management efficiency based on work standardization involve standardizing procedures, digitizing workflows, and monitoring results. This leads to simplified document processing and faster resolution times for citizen requests, the introduction of electronic tools to reduce the time required for specific operations, and the use of precise efficiency indicators focused on the quality of public services.

Keywords: public management, public administration, performance

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE OF BORDER REGIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTIPLE CRISES

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The concept of resilience has undergone significant development in recent decades, becoming one of the most widely used theoretical frameworks for analyzing how economies and territories respond to major disruptions. Initially, resilience was associated with the capacity of a system to maintain its essential functions in the face of external shocks, then the concept evolved towards the capacity of regional economies to resist, adapt or transform in the face of shocks, subsequently recovering to maintain or improve previous economic performance. The development of the concept of resilience was not linear, but followed the economic and social transformations of recent decades. If the first contributions aimed to explain the behavior of systems in the face of disruptions, subsequent research has gradually expanded the area of analysis to regional economies, emphasizing the differences between territories in terms of the capacity to respond and adapt to change. The analysis of the evolution of the concept highlights the change in perspective, from explaining how economies recover from a recession, to a multidimensional process, dependent on the structural characteristics of regions and the interaction between economic, institutional and territorial factors. The analysis of multiple crises highlights the fact that the effects produced on regional economies cannot be explained exclusively by the magnitude of the shock or by the evolution of individual economic indicators. Recent research defines resilience as a dynamic process, which describes how regional economies respond, adapt and evolve following major disturbances and the emphasis shifts from the analysis of the final outcome to understanding the mechanisms through which regions absorb the effects of a shock, reorganize their economic activities and build new development trajectories.

Keywords: resilience, polycrisis, shocks, regional integration, macroeconomic imbalances.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE IN ROMANIA AND EASTERN EUROPE

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Objectives. This paper examines how digital transformation influences entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and economic resilience in Romania and selected Eastern European economies. The study is motivated by the need to strengthen adaptive capacity in contexts marked by economic volatility, uneven digital adoption, and persistent barriers to firm development. The central research question is: how do digital payment systems and digital financial services affect entrepreneurial activity and the resilience of firms and local economies? The main objective is to identify the mechanisms through which digitalization contributes to lower transaction costs, improved market access, and greater flexibility in business operations. *ideas.*

Methods. Methodologically, the paper adopts a qualitative and analytical approach based on a focused review of recent academic literature, policy reports, and regional evidence on digital finance, financial inclusion, and SME digitalisation. The analysis considers the interaction between digital infrastructure, access to finance, entrepreneurial performance, and institutional conditions that shape the diffusion of digital tools. Particular attention is given to Romania, where financial inclusion gaps, rural-urban disparities, and limited digital capabilities continue to constrain entrepreneurial potential, while digitalisation offers opportunities for more inclusive business growth.

Results. The paper argues that digital transformation should be understood not merely as a technological upgrade, but as a strategic development process that can reinforce competitiveness and resilience. In Romania and Eastern Europe, the expansion of digital financial services may support micro and small enterprises, improve access to markets, and facilitate innovation-led growth. At the same time, the effectiveness of digitalization depends on coherent public policies, financial literacy, and institutional support. By linking entrepreneurship, innovation, and resilience, the study contributes to the debate on how economies can respond to global challenges through more inclusive and adaptive development strategies.

Keywords: digital transformation; entrepreneurship; economic resilience; financial inclusion; Romania; Eastern Europe.

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION AS A RESILIENCE FACTOR: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF INTERNAL CRISIS COMMUNICATION IN ROMANIAN COMPANIES

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Internal crisis communication remains less studied than its external counterpart, often treated as reactive and activated only once a crisis has occurred. This gap matters for resilience, since internal communication during disruption may condition a company's capacity to adapt and recover. This paper examines how managers in Romanian companies describe communication with employees during crisis situations, and asks whether such communication can be understood as a resilience factor. The study draws on 21 semi-structured interviews with representatives of Romanian organizations, conducted between March 2025 and March 2026, as part of a qualitative study of crisis management in public relations. Interviews were coded manually through thematic analysis and complemented by a descriptive, non-validating reading of the transcripts using Voyant Tools. Three patterns emerged. In several organizations, internal communication followed a structured, cascading rhythm, with regular meetings passing information down through levels of responsibility; in smaller, owner-led firms, it remained direct and informal, substituting for any distinct communication function. A further, less expected finding concerned the locus of internal tension: for one respondent, internal crises arose not between employees and management but between departments holding differing views on how to proceed, while another respondent's account illustrated the opposite case, in which the absence of internal communication was itself experienced as a crisis. The findings nuance the predominantly reactive view of internal crisis communication in the literature and identify variables, the degree of structural formalization, the locus of internal tension, and the presence of a dedicated communication channel, for further quantitative investigation.

Key-words: internal crisis communication, organizational resilience, employee communication, qualitative research, Romania

CASCADING COMPLIANCE IN SUPPLY CHAINS: MECHANISMS, DETERMINANTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES – PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Regulatory and private compliance requirements increasingly extend beyond organizational boundaries, as focal firms translate external obligations into contractual clauses, supplier codes of conduct, audit criteria, reporting duties, and operational expectations imposed on supply chain partners. Despite the growing relevance of this phenomenon, particularly in the context of cybersecurity regulation and the NIS2 Directive, the literature remains fragmented across supply chain management, compliance, institutional theory, and interorganizational governance. This study examines how compliance requirements cascade from focal firms to their direct suppliers and how suppliers respond to these demands.

The research addresses three questions: What mechanisms are used to transmit and enforce compliance requirements? Which organizational, relational, and institutional factors determine supplier responses? What outcomes does cascading compliance generate for suppliers, focal firms, and supply chain resilience?

The study forms part of an ongoing doctoral research project and applies a systematic literature review methodology. English-language publications in management and economics, issued between 2020 and 2026, were identified through Scopus and Web of Science. The initial search yielded approximately 1,700 records. Titles and abstracts are being screened using criteria focused on focal firm <> supplier relationships, the transmission of mandatory or voluntary requirements, implementation mechanisms, response strategies, determinants, and organizational outcomes.

Preliminary findings indicate that compliance is transmitted through contractual requirements, supplier standards, audits, monitoring, documentation obligations, training, supplier development, and collaborative governance. Supplier responses range from substantive organizational adaptation and capability development to selective, symbolic, or minimum compliance. These responses are shaped by regulatory pressure, focal-firm power, supplier capabilities, resource availability, relationship quality, perceived legitimacy, and institutional context. Cascading compliance may strengthen transparency, learning, risk management, and resilience, but may also create costs, administrative burdens, and interorganizational tensions.

The study contributes an integrated framework explaining how compliance obligations travel across organizational boundaries and when they support genuine capability building rather than formal conformity.

Keywords: cybersecurity compliance; supply chains; NIS2; compliance cascade; organizational resilience

MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN A RESOURCE-RICH ECONOMY: EVIDENCE FROM AZERBAIJAN

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This study examines how key macroeconomic indicators affect economic growth in Azerbaijan, a resource-rich economy heavily dependent on oil and gas revenues, over the period 2000–2023. Using annual data from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, an autoregressive distributed lag (ARDL) bounds testing approach is applied to GDP growth, oil rents, inflation, gross capital formation, trade openness, government expenditure, foreign direct investment (FDI), and the current account balance. The results confirm a long-run cointegrating relationship among the variables. Oil rents raise growth but with high volatility; gross capital formation and FDI are the strongest positive drivers; inflation and government expenditure significantly reduce growth; and trade openness has only a weak positive effect. The findings support a modified form of the resource curse hypothesis: oil wealth fuels short-run growth while creating long-run risks. Policy priorities include economic diversification, more efficient public spending, sustained price stability, and a stronger rule-based stabilization role for the State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan.

Keywords: ARDL, Azerbaijan, economic growth, macroeconomic indicators, oil rents, resource curse, resource-rich economy

INNOVATION PERFORMANCE AS A CATALYST FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM DYNAMICS: EUROPEAN INSIGHTS

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The European Union has focused over the past two decades on developing a regulatory framework and funding programs to support sustainable development, in light of the challenges facing the global economy, including the pandemic and post-pandemic consequences. A large part of these measures is specifically intended for the entrepreneurial sector, aiming to encourage innovation and technological transition. Therefore, this study proposes to identify disparities regarding sustainable entrepreneurial activity and innovation performance at the European Union level and examine their evolution by analyzing the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic periods. Moreover, using the advanced econometric procedure - Mixed Graphical Models based on a panel dataset this study investigates the links between the innovation process and sustainable entrepreneurship. The comprehensive empirical approach also encompasses the application of cluster analysis using two techniques: the Ward method and the K-means algorithm, based on a dataset comprising the two dimensions. The data correspond to European Union member states, being collected from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) and European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) databases, and covering the period from 2018 to 2024. The clustering results revealed a pronounced polarization among European Union member states regarding sustainability-oriented entrepreneurial activity and innovation-driven technological transition. In particular, Nordic countries stand out as having managed to maintain their leading position both before and after the pandemic by benefiting from European recovery programs and regulations supporting digitalization and innovation, contributing to strengthening economic resilience by developing competitive advantages. In contrast, countries in Central and Eastern Europe, such as Romania and Bulgaria, lagged behind the other groups due to structural constraints and post-pandemic recovery, as well as limited institutional adaptability. The outcomes of the Mixed Graphical Models indicate that sustainable entrepreneurship is strongly connected with the adoption of innovation and investment in research and development, as well as in continuous learning aimed at improving the public's skills in using new technologies. Meanwhile, the development of sustainable business models and the dynamism of the entrepreneurial ecosystem also depend on the government framework and good governance, which, through policies and measures, can either stimulate or limit these trends that are reflected in economic growth and societal well-being.

Keywords: sustainable entrepreneurship; innovation; EU disparities; cluster analysis; Mixed Graphical Models

MEASURING THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IMPACT ON FIRM PRODUCTIVITY: A DATA WORKFLOW APPROACH

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In a knowledge-based economy, credibly evaluating how intangible assets shape firm performance depends less on raw data volume than on the rigor with which administrative records are turned into an analyzable dataset. This paper presents a four-step data workflow and an associated testing procedure designed to transform raw microdata into a validated analysis of intellectual property rights (IPR) ownership and labor productivity. The sequential pipeline includes: (1) merging balance-sheet and profit-and-loss filings via a unique firm identifier; (2) auditing the merged records through systematic consistency checks; (3) technically filtering out zero-employee firms to eliminate division-by-zero errors in productivity ratios; and (4) pivoting the cleaned dataset by firm size and IPR category. Using revenue per employee as the productivity metric, a two-sample Welch's t-test, which accounts for unequal variances, is applied to test for overall productivity differences between IPR owners and non-owners. Applied to administrative filings for 62,608 Moldovan enterprises, the workflow yielded a filtered analytical sample of roughly 47,000 firms. The pipeline successfully validated a statistically significant overall productivity premium for IPR-owning firms ($p < 0.001$), while generating granular descriptive metrics across enterprise sizes and IP asset types, fully reproducing the empirical patterns reported in Novac (2025). The primary contribution of this paper is methodological: it provides researchers with a transparent, auditable, and reproducible sequence for converting raw administrative registers into inferential statistics, applicable across a wide range of empirical settings. The research was

developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101, “Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union.”

Keywords: administrative data workflow; Welch’s t-test; intellectual property rights; firm productivity; reproducible methodology.

SMART DEVELOPMENT IN AZERBAIJAN: INTEGRATING SMART CITY AND SMART VILLAGE PERSPECTIVES

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Smart City and Smart Village approaches increasingly support sustainable development, digital transformation, and urban–rural integration. However, their integration within a unified empirical framework remains limited, particularly in developing countries. This study develops a multidimensional Smart Development Index (SDI) for Azerbaijan by integrating six dimensions: Smart Economy, Smart Governance, Smart People, Smart Mobility, Smart Environment, and Smart Living. Using data from the World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators, UNESCO, and other international databases for 2000–2025, a two-stage Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is applied to construct dimension-specific sub-indices and the overall SDI. KMO and Bartlett’s test assess PCA suitability, while Monte Carlo and Bootstrap PSS procedures provide additional robustness for the subsequent cointegration analysis. The results indicate substantial progress in Azerbaijan’s smart development, particularly in digital infrastructure, governance, human capital, research capacity, and quality of life, although development remains uneven across dimensions. The study contributes an integrated and replicable framework for measuring smart development and provides a basis for monitoring sustainable transformation and supporting evidence-based policy at national and, where data permit, regional levels.

Keywords: Smart Development, Smart City, Smart Village, Smart Development Index, Digital Transformation, Sustainable Development

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BECOME ECONOMICALLY SELF-RELIANT: PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Youth economic empowerment is essential for achieving sustainable development, reducing poverty, and promoting social inclusion. Despite representing a significant proportion of the global population, many young people continue to face barriers such as unemployment, limited access to quality education, inadequate vocational training, and restricted financial opportunities. This study examines effective approaches to enabling young people to become economically self-reliant through entrepreneurship, skills development, digital innovation, and public-private partnerships.

The research objectives are to identify the key factors influencing youth economic empowerment, evaluate the effectiveness of entrepreneurship and skills development programmes, and recommend practical strategies for improving employment and income-generation opportunities for young people. The research questions include: (1) What are the primary challenges preventing young people from achieving economic independence? (2) How do education, vocational training, and entrepreneurship contribute to youth economic empowerment? (3) What policies and partnerships can enhance sustainable livelihoods for young people? The study adopts a mixed-methodology approach, combining a review of academic literature, international policy documents, government reports, and case studies with qualitative interviews and community-based observations involving youth participants. Data are analysed to identify successful practices and policy gaps related to youth employment and entrepreneurship. The main findings indicate that access to quality education, market-oriented skills training,

digital literacy, entrepreneurship support, and affordable financial services significantly improve young people's economic opportunities. Strong collaboration among governments, civil society organisations, the private sector, and international development partners further enhances employment prospects and sustainable livelihoods. The study concludes that investing in youth empowerment not only strengthens individual economic resilience but also contributes to inclusive economic growth, innovation, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Through coordinated policy action and inclusive investment, young people can become key drivers of sustainable economic development and social transformation.

Keywords: Youth economic empowerment; Entrepreneurship; Skills development; Employment; Sustainable development

MULTIPLE CRISES - DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONTEMPORARY ECONOMY

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The concept of crisis is one of the oldest and most complex concepts used in economic and social sciences. Over time, its meaning has changed depending on economic, political and social transformations, reflecting the change in the way imbalances and the mechanisms through which they influence the functioning of the economy are interpreted. If in the classical sense the term designated a moment of rupture followed by a return to a state of equilibrium, in contemporary literature the crisis is understood as a complex process, characterized by the interaction between multiple vulnerabilities and by effects that go beyond the boundaries of a single sector or a single economy. In economic terms, the concept of crisis has been interpreted differently depending on the dominant theoretical paradigm. Classical and neoclassical economics considered crises as temporary market imbalances. In traditional economic literature, crises were predominantly analyzed as distinct events, generated by macroeconomic imbalances, market dysfunctions or financial shocks. The focus was on identifying the specific causes of each crisis and on the policies needed to restore economic balance. However, the transformations brought about by globalization, economic integration, digitalization and the intensification of interdependencies between economies have profoundly changed this perspective. Currently, the analysis has progressively shifted from identifying the individual causes of a crisis to understanding the relationships between shocks and the mechanisms by which they amplify each other, and the concept of polycrisis marks a paradigm shift, as it explains economic instability through the simultaneous interaction of financial, health, energy, geopolitical and climatic disturbances, the effects of which can no longer be assessed independently.

Keywords: crisis, balance, imbalance, globalization, economic integration.

CIRCULAR BUSINESS MODELS AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR COMPETITIVENESS AND RESILIENCE

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The shift from linear to circular business models is increasingly framed as a competitiveness question rather than a purely environmental one, yet firms across the Danube Region — and particularly in emerging economies such as the Republic of Moldova — still treat circularity largely as a compliance cost. This paper examines how digital instruments mediate the implementation of circular economy business models (CEBMs) and what this implies for firm-level competitiveness and resilience.

Methodologically, the paper builds on a qualitative multiple-case design developed within the Interreg Danube Region project DECIDE. Thirty circular business models from ten countries — Germany, Austria, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Republic of Moldova — were documented across five sectors (food, second-life batteries, smart cities, textiles, packaging) using a standardised Business Model Canvas and a twenty-dimension analytical framework aligned with the UNCTAD circular economy framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. Cross-case comparison was complemented by a structured questionnaire and interviews with Moldovan public authorities, NGOs, business support organisations and SMEs, and by BPMN process modelling of a second-life battery case (Renergy, Moldova) used to map circular material and information flows.

Findings indicate that digital instruments — traceability and monitoring systems, data analytics, IoT and process-modelling tools — act less as sources of direct efficiency gains and more as preconditions for making circular

value propositions verifiable, and therefore commercially defensible. In Moldova, adoption is constrained less by technology cost than by inconsistent legislation, weak collection infrastructure and limited internal competences. The paper closes with implications for firm strategy and for circular economy policy design in EU candidate countries.

Keywords: Circular economy business models; digital transformation; competitiveness; SMEs; Danube Region

ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH CLUSTERS IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW EUROPEAN PRIORITIES

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The current European competitiveness compass is centered on three interrelated priorities: closing the innovation gap, balancing decarbonization with competitiveness, and reducing strategic dependencies. In this context, clusters take on particular significance as a form of cooperation among businesses, research organizations, educational institutions, and public authorities, creating the conditions for jointly addressing economic and technological challenges.

The purpose of this article is to determine the role of clusters in accelerating sustainable competitiveness and to assess Moldova's cluster growth strategies in relation to current European goals. The study questions intend to determine how cluster strategy might help the Republic of Moldova become more competitive as well as how clusters support innovative growth, economic decarbonization, and the eradication of economic reliance. A comparison of European cluster development practices forms the basis of the research methodology. European strategic documents, resources from the European Cluster Collaboration Platform, and recent Republic of Moldovan public policy documents on competitiveness and entrepreneurship serve as the foundation for the study. The study finds ways to adopt a cluster method to improve the Republic of Moldova's sustainable competitiveness by contrasting national priorities with European practices.

The main findings of the study revealed a correlation between the key functions of clusters and the three priorities of the new European competitiveness agenda. Reducing economic dependencies is linked to the development of cooperation, the strengthening of supply chains, and the expansion of enterprises' participation in regional and European value chains. The cluster approach enables the integration of various sectors within a model of sustainable competitiveness, according to a comparative examination of European experiences. In the framework of coordinating national competitiveness policy with European goals, this strategy is useful for the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: Cluster, strategy, competitiveness, sustainable, growth

ADAPTING A GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP CURRICULUM TO INCLUDE TOPICS OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

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The current project paper is tasked with adapting a Green Entrepreneurship Program Curriculum to include Global Citizenship Education (GCE) goals and learning outcomes. The author's starting point is the occupation as a business mentor at an educational NGO based in Bulgaria, wherein addition of topics and their removal is permitted, as long as the final curriculum does not deviate from the Republic of Bulgaria's normative requirements, but also from the principles of The European Skills Agenda (2024), and the EC's Entrepreneurship Competence Framework - EntreComp (2016). These principles are centred around competencies, such as motivation, persistence, proactiveness, teamwork, ethical and sustainable thinking, creativity, and opportunity-seeking. The adapted curriculum will seek to introduce notions like global citizenship, global commons, and common good, in concert with the aforementioned competencies.

Keywords: green entrepreneurship; global citizenship; global commons; educational curriculum;

TERRITORIAL TYPOLOGY OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: A CLUSTER ANALYSIS APPROACH

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The Moldovan economy is characterized by regional disparities, but economic growth requires stability and resilience to increasingly frequent economic and energy shocks. The primary objective of the study is to cluster Moldova's 35 administrative-territorial units based on three standardized indicators: enterprise density, employees per 1,000 inhabitants, and average enterprise size. The study provides answers to the following questions: How pronounced are the territorial differences in enterprise density and employees per 1,000 inhabitants? What homogeneous groups of territories are formed based on the combination of the three indicators? Does high enterprise density coincide with a high concentration of employment and a larger average enterprise size? Ward's hierarchical method based on Euclidean distance was used together with the K-means algorithm. Before clustering, the data were standardized using z-scores. To assess clustering quality, cross-method agreement, and cluster stability, several tests were performed: the silhouette coefficient, the Calinski–Harabasz index, the Davies–Bouldin index, and the Adjusted Rand Index. The results show that Moldova's business sector exhibits pronounced territorial heterogeneity. According to the statistical criteria, the six-cluster solution is better supported and generally more stable. A coarser typology with $k = 4$ is less stable but avoids singleton clusters. A comparative analysis of the $k = 4$ and $k = 6$ solutions revealed that $k = 6$ performs better according to six of the seven validation and stability criteria considered. The six resulting clusters can be characterized as follows: the capital entrepreneurial pole; the northern municipal entrepreneurial pole; territories with comparatively large enterprises and high employment concentration; employment-intensive regional centers; low-density territories with comparatively large enterprises; and territories dominated by small enterprises and low employment concentration. This survey was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101, "Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union."

Keywords: entrepreneurship sector, territorial typology, cluster analysis, Ward's method, k-means method, regional disparities.

THE INTEREST AND INVESTMENT CAPACITY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

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The Republic of Moldova faces significant energy security challenges due to high dependence on energy imports and price volatility. This study aims to assess the interest and investment capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions, while identifying key barriers and policy measures to support their adoption.

Using a mixed-method approach based on SME survey data, semi-structured interviews, and consultations with public institutions, the research finds strong business interest in reducing energy costs and improving energy independence. However, implementation is limited by restricted access to finance, high capital costs, complex administrative procedures, infrastructure constraints, and regulatory uncertainty. Women-led enterprises face additional financial and administrative barriers.

The study concludes that targeted financial instruments, simplified procedures, institutional support, skills development, and gender-sensitive measures are needed to convert SME interest into concrete investments, contributing to competitiveness, energy security, and sustainable development in Moldova.

Keywords: energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, SMEs, energy transition

ASSESSING THE READINESS OF THE ECONOMY OF THE CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT REGION IN LIGHT OF MOLDOVA'S INTEGRATION INTO THE EU: REALITIES AND PROSPECTS

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The process of European integration requires regional economies to meet high standards of competitiveness, regulatory compliance, and structural resilience. This paper aims to assess the readiness of the economy of the Central Development Region (RDC) in the Republic of Moldova for accession to the EU's single market, identifying both existing competitive advantages and critical vulnerabilities.

The methodology combines the analysis of official statistical data, the evaluation of public policy documents, and a sectorial assessment of the main economic sectors. The reference framework consists of the requirements of the Association Agreement and the EU acquis in the economic and environmental fields.

This study aims to develop a set of recommendations focused on regional public policies, designed to accelerate convergence and prevent the risk of dual-track integration.

The research was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101, "Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union."

Keywords: European integration, Central Development Region, regional competitiveness, infrastructure, cohesion policies

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY TO A PRE-ENLARGEMENT INSTRUMENT

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The aim of this study is to examine the transformation of the European Union's Eastern Partnership (EaP) from a neighbourhood policy framework into an instrument increasingly performing pre-enlargement functions for countries pursuing EU membership. The study applies qualitative policy analysis based on EU strategic documents, enlargement-related decisions and relevant academic literature, with particular attention to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The analysis shows that this transformation began before the geopolitical changes of 2022. Association Agreements, Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas (DCFTAs), regulatory approximation and sectoral cooperation had already created a model of "integration without membership", progressively reducing the institutional and economic distance between the EU and its most integration-oriented eastern partners. Candidate status and the opening of accession negotiations subsequently gave these mechanisms an additional function in supporting enlargement preparedness. The study argues that the transformation of the EaP lies less in the creation of new instruments than in the changing function of existing ones. This emerging pre-enlargement function is country-specific, while the EaP continues to provide a broader framework for regional and differentiated cooperation.

Keywords: Eastern Partnership; European Union enlargement; European Neighbourhood Policy; pre-enlargement policy; European integration, differentiated integration; Republic of Moldova

EXPORT STIMULATION POLICIES IN SMALL-ECONOMY COUNTRIES IN THE CONTEXT OF OVERLAPPING REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CRISES

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At the current stage of global economic instability, the economies of small open countries, being very vulnerable to external shocks, are forced to radically change their traditional export promotion and stimulation strategies, relying on new instruments that would help the rapid reorientation and diversification of export markets.

The article analyzes and argues the need to move from traditional export stimulation policies (subsidies, direct fiscal support) to resilient policies, adapting to conditions of overlapping crises (global supply chains, energy crises, inflation, geopolitical instability).

The following international trade indicators are used as a diagnostic tool: Revealed Comparative Advantage Indices (RCA / NRCA); Degree of concentration/diversification of markets and products (Herfindahl-Hirschman Index); Measurement of integration into Global Value Chains.

The results of the analysis of these indicators provide practical recommendations regarding export support and can become the basis for trade reforms in small economies. And studying the experience of other countries allowed us to identify successful models in rapid policy adjustment.

Keywords: Export competitiveness, adaptive trade policies, international trade, trade policy, external competitiveness

PRODUCT-TO-BRAND TRANSFORMATION AS A STRATEGIC MARKETING PROCESS

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In saturated and highly competitive markets, functional product differentiation is increasingly difficult to sustain. To address this challenge, the primary objective of this study is to conceptualize and formalize the product-to-brand transformation as a structured strategic marketing process, establishing the exact causal mechanisms of brand equity accumulation. Methodologically, the research integrates quantitative and qualitative secondary and primary data—including corporate financial evaluations, international and national brand equity rankings (Interbrand, MPP Consulting, Promarketing Agency), expert interviews, and consumer focus group surveys across European, Ukrainian, and Moldovan markets (2013–2026)—processed through statistical and visual structural modeling software (Excel, CorelDRAW). The main findings establish a theoretical four-tier evolutionary pyramid (Product → Registered Trademark → Marketed Trademark → Brand) and demonstrate that sustainable brand equity is strictly the result of deliberate strategic governance embedded in corporate planning rather than spontaneous market evolution. Continuous strategic brand investments decrease price elasticity, foster psychological commitment, and generate brand capital accounting for 50% to 90% of total enterprise market value, whereas raw legal registration provides mere latent legal protection without enhancing market competitiveness. Ultimately, this study offers a generalized operational framework for long-term strategic brand management.

Keywords: brand equity, branding, durable advantage, strategic marketing, trademark, value creation

THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT FUND AS A COMPONENT OF THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AT THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC LEVEL (THE CASE OF GAGAUZIA)

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The current development of small and medium-sized enterprises is one of the key factors in the economic development of countries and certain regions. Supporting entrepreneurship is critically important for economy of Gagauzia region, as it promotes economic diversification, reduces population migration, ensures the technological modernization of enterprises, and strengthens the regional and local tax base. The Entrepreneurship Support Fund of Gagauzia is a specialized financial instrument of the autonomous region's executive authorities designed to finance programs and projects aimed at supporting small and medium-sized businesses. The purpose of this study is to analyze the legal framework governing the operations, organizational and institutional structure, and decision-making process, main areas of activity, support tools, and priorities of the Entrepreneurship Support Fund of Gagauzia for 2016–2025, as well as to assess its contribution to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in the region. The use of quantitative analysis methods enabled the calculation and research of statistical indicators, key performance indicators for the use of financial resources. In the process of the study, the author identified key problems and challenges in the functioning of the Entrepreneurship Support Fund. An integral part of the study was identifying gaps in order to examine them in detail and propose ways to improve the fund's operations. At the conclusion of the study, the author makes conclusions and proposes suggestions/recommendations aimed at improving the implementation of financial support programs for business development in the region.

Keywords: entrepreneurship support fund, regional development, business development infrastructure, small and medium enterprises, Gagauzia.

ECONOMIC GROWTH UNDER GLOBAL CHALLENGES: THE ROLE OF OPEN-SOURCE INTELLIGENCE IN PREVENTING AND COMBATING FINANCIAL CRIME

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The increasing complexity of financial crime, accelerated by digitalization, globalization, and technological innovation, poses significant threats to economic stability, financial integrity, and sustainable development. In this context, Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) has emerged as an important tool for identifying, assessing, and mitigating financial crime risks. OSINT is increasingly used by financial institutions, supervisory authorities, and law enforcement agencies to strengthen anti-money laundering (AML), counter-terrorist financing (CFT), fraud prevention, customer due diligence, and beneficial ownership investigations. This study aims to examine the role of OSINT in preventing and combating financial crime and to assess its contribution to strengthening economic security, financial system integrity, and sustainable economic growth in the face of global challenges. The research addresses the following questions: the contribution of OSINT in detection and prevention of financial crime, the value which OSINT provides in AML/CFT compliance, fraud prevention, and due diligence processes, how can OSINT support economic resilience and financial stability under increasingly complex global conditions, what are the main challenges and limitations associated with the effective use of OSINT in financial investigations. The study was conducted using the following research methods: analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, graph method. The analysis is complemented by a comparative assessment of OSINT applications in anti-money laundering, fraud investigations, enhanced due diligence, and beneficial ownership identification. Additionally, in the research study are analyzed case studies to illustrate the practical contribution of OSINT to financial crime detection and risk mitigation. The results are expected to present that OSINT improves risk identification capabilities, enhances transparency and strengthens financial crime prevention frameworks, thereby contributing to a more resilient and sustainable economic environment.

Keywords: OSINT, AML/CFT, Anti-Fraud, financial crime, economic security, economic growth

SMART BORDERS AND CONNECTED LOGISTICS CORRIDORS: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN THE AGE OF DIGITIZATION

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The relevance of this study stems from the instability of the current geo-economic environment, frequent changes in customs tariffs, and the expansion of sanctions regimes. Digitalization of customs administration allows for the prompt consideration of such changes and the timely adaptation of control and clearance procedures. Changes in global supply chains require a change in the interaction between customs authorities and logistics operators. Simultaneously, digitalization is the backbone that supports the resilience, transparency, and speed of cross-border trade. The aim of this study is to analyze the strategic convergence between emerging technologies, customs procedures, and logistics optimization. This scientific article investigates the applicability of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence algorithms used in risk management analysis and blockchain technology for securing documentation and data of national importance. This research also examines the balance between strengthening state border security and enabling rapid international trade by reducing administrative barriers and wait times. In this paper, legislative challenges and changes in the legislative framework that directly accompany the digital transformation of border crossing points were identified. The author examined relevant case studies from other countries. International good practices and innovative economic models were applied to the Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova. This was done in order to identify clear strategic directions for the development of intelligent logistics corridors and to improve the operational activity of the customs administration. This research was developed within the framework of the Subprogram 030101, "Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union."

Keywords: customs digitalization; logistics management; artificial intelligence; customs risk management; blockchain technology; trade facilitation

REGIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS IN CHIȘINĂU MUNICIPALITY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Enterprise competitiveness is shaped not only by firms' own resources and strategies but also, to a significant extent, by the characteristics of the region in which they operate. In the Republic of Moldova, the concentration of a substantial share of economic activity in Chișinău municipality highlights the need to examine the advantages and constraints associated with this regional environment. The study aims to analyse a set of regional economic factors that may influence enterprise competitiveness in Chișinău, focusing on the concentration of entrepreneurial activity, employment, and economic performance.

The research addresses two questions: To what extent does the concentration of resources and economic activity create advantages for enterprises in Chișinău municipality? What advantages and challenges affecting enterprise competitiveness can be identified based on the indicators analysed?

The methodology combines a review of the literature on regional competitiveness and agglomeration economies with descriptive and comparative analyses of secondary data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova. The indicators cover the number of enterprises, average number of employees, sales revenue, regional gross domestic product, and average gross monthly earnings.

Preliminary results indicate a pronounced concentration of economic activity in Chișinău municipality. In 2025, the municipality accounted for nearly 60% of the enterprises covered by statistics based on financial statements, 62.0% of their average number of employees, and 74.5% of their sales revenue. In addition, Chișinău generated 61.2% of the country's gross domestic product in 2023, while average gross monthly earnings in the municipality exceeded the national average by approximately 20% in 2025. This concentration may create favourable conditions for business activity, while the higher level of remuneration may also place pressure on enterprises' labour costs.

The research was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101, "Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union."

Keywords: regional competitiveness; enterprise competitiveness; regional factors; economic concentration; entrepreneurial activity; Chișinău municipality.

THE COMPOSITION-BASED VIEW OF COMPETITIVE ADAPTATION: MODELING THE MULTI-PATH EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS ON REGIONAL ENTERPRISES

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This paper investigates the non-linear empirical mechanisms through which macro-environmental institutional barriers affect the financial performance, innovation activity, and operational risks of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in peripheral regions. Drawing upon the Composition-Based View (CBV) and regional innovation systems (RIS) literature, we construct a comprehensive conditional process model testing 12 distinct hypotheses. Moving beyond traditional linear regression approaches, this study utilizes Andrew F. Hayes' moderated mediation architecture (PROCESS, Model 15) to analyze primary empirical data collected from 150 manufacturing and service SMEs operating within the Autonomous Territorial Unit (ATU) of Gagauzia, Republic of Moldova. The empirical results demonstrate that institutional barriers do not exert a direct destructive linear effect on enterprise performance. Instead, their impact is fully transmitted through the strategic flexibility of corporate management, while the localized regulatory framework, operationalized as the Regional Risk Damper, acts as a critical external moderator. The conditional analysis shows that a denser local sub-regime strengthens the link between strategic flexibility and both outcome variables. Because institutional barriers reduce strategic flexibility, this stronger link also means that the indirect transmission of those barriers becomes larger in absolute terms as the sub-regime becomes denser. A dense local regime therefore raises the return on managerial flexibility, but it does not neutralise the underlying macro-environmental shock. These findings provide a granular, managerially focused framework for regional public authorities to shift from passive subsidization to dynamic, platform-based intervention tools by 2030.

Keywords: Composition-Based View, Strategic Flexibility, Institutional Barriers, Moderated Mediation, Regional Innovation Systems, Structural Path Modeling.

CROSS-BORDER E-COMMERCE AS A DRIVER OF ECONOMIC RESILIENCE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR BUSINESSES IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

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The COVID-19 pandemic profoundly transformed the global business environment, accelerating the adoption of digital technologies and increasing the importance of cross-border e-commerce as a strategic instrument for maintaining economic activity. Restrictions on physical mobility, disruptions in supply chains, and changing consumer behavior compelled businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to adopt digital business models and expand into international online markets. This study aims to examine the role of cross-border e-commerce in strengthening economic resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular attention to the opportunities and challenges faced by businesses operating in the digital economy. The research addresses the following questions: (1) How did SMEs adapt to cross-border e-commerce during the COVID-19 pandemic? (2) To what extent did digital trade facilitate access to international markets and support business continuity during the crisis? (3) What were the main barriers and challenges affecting cross-border online trade, including logistics, regulatory compliance, cybersecurity, and digital infrastructure? The study applies a qualitative research methodology based on comparative legal and economic analysis, supported by a review of international reports, policy documents, and academic literature published by the European Commission, OECD, UNCTAD, the World Trade Organization, and the World Bank. The research evaluates the impact of digital transformation on international trade while considering the regulatory and technological factors influencing cross-border e-commerce. The findings indicate that cross-border e-commerce significantly enhanced the resilience of businesses by enabling continued market access, reducing transaction costs, expanding customer reach, and accelerating the adoption of digital payment systems and online business processes. At the same time, enterprises encountered persistent challenges related to fragmented legal frameworks, cybersecurity risks, logistics disruptions, unequal digital infrastructure, and limited digital capabilities, particularly among SMEs in developing and transition economies. The study concludes that strengthening digital infrastructure, improving regulatory harmonization, and supporting SME digitalization are essential for building a resilient and competitive digital economy capable of responding effectively to future global crises.

Keywords: cross-border e-commerce; COVID-19 pandemic; SMEs; digital transformation; economic resilience.

THE EVOLUTION OF MOLDOVA'S COUNTRY BRAND: EVIDENCE FROM BLOOM CONSULTING RANKINGS AND NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

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Country branding has become an increasingly important instrument through which countries seek to strengthen their international visibility, attractiveness and positioning. This study examines the evolution of the Republic of Moldova's Country Brand through its performance in the Bloom Consulting Country Brand Rankings, focusing on the Tourism and Trade dimensions. Using a longitudinal approach, the research traces changes in Moldova's position across successive editions of the Bloom Consulting Tourism and Trade rankings and places these developments alongside the annual evolution of selected national indicators related to tourism, trade and foreign direct investment. The analysis considers the number of foreign tourists accommodated in collective tourist establishments, export performance and foreign direct investment as complementary indicators reflecting the broader economic and tourism context in which Moldova's Country Brand has evolved. The study does not seek to establish a causal or statistical relationship between Bloom Consulting rankings and national performance indicators. Instead, it employs a comparative approach to identify patterns of convergence and divergence, major turning points and differences between the tourism-oriented and trade-oriented dimensions of Moldova's Country Brand. Particular attention is given to significant periods of disruption and transformation, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the geopolitical changes following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The analysis highlights the distinct trajectories of Moldova's Tourism and Trade Country Brand positioning and compares them with changes in the country's tourism activity, exports and foreign direct investment. By combining international Country Brand rankings with official national statistics, the study provides a broader longitudinal perspective on the development of Moldova's international positioning. The research contributes to the empirical literature on nation branding by offering a focused case study of a small European economy and by demonstrating the relevance of examining Country Brand evolution alongside observable changes in the national economic and tourism environment.

Keywords: nation branding, trade, tourism, FDI

ORGANIZATION OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION AND DIRECTIONS FOR MODERNIZATION

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The modernization of public administration and the increasing emphasis on transparency, managerial accountability, efficient use of public resources and institutional performance have strengthened the strategic importance of internal audit in the public sector. In the Republic of Moldova, internal audit represents an essential component of public internal financial control and contributes to the effectiveness of governance, risk management and internal control processes. The purpose of this research is to comparatively evaluate the organization and functioning of the internal audit function in selected public institutions of the Republic of Moldova and to identify practical directions for its modernization. The research objectives include assessing the organizational arrangements and institutional capacity of internal audit units, examining the availability of key governance and planning documents, evaluating institutional transparency and identifying good practices and organizational constraints. The study applies qualitative, documentary, descriptive and comparative research methods. The empirical analysis is based on publicly available information from the official websites of selected central public authorities and other public institutions, including organizational structures, internal regulations, internal audit charters, annual plans, activity reports, quality assurance documents and information related to public internal financial control. The results reveal that, although the internal audit function is formally established in most institutions examined, considerable differences persist in staffing capacity, organizational maturity, transparency and the availability of governance documents. Institutions demonstrating more advanced practices provide broader access to internal audit documentation and implement additional quality assurance mechanisms. Based on the comparative findings, the study proposes standardizing minimum transparency requirements, introducing institutional benchmarking, strengthening audit capacity, promoting continuous professional development, expanding the digitalization of audit processes and developing a national register of internal audit functions. The implementation of these measures could contribute to strengthening institutional accountability, improving internal audit effectiveness and supporting the modernization of public governance in the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: internal audit, public institutions, public internal financial control, public governance, transparency, institutional capacity, modernization, Republic of Moldova

THE IMPACT OF HUMAN-CENTRICITY IN INDUSTRY 5.0 ON ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY PARAMETERS

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The modern development of Industry 5.0 is shaping a new paradigm of industrial production that combines technological efficiency with principles of human-centricity, sustainability, and circular resource use; this underscores the importance of quantitatively assessing the impact of collaborative robotization on the economic and resource-related performance of production systems. The study aims to develop a comprehensive method for evaluating the impact of human-centric collaborative robotic systems (Industry 5.0) on economic efficiency and circular economy parameters. The proposed method relies on a system of interconnected mathematical models accounting for human-cobot interaction efficiency, human-centricity, productivity, operating costs, specific energy consumption, material circularity, waste reduction, component recovery efficiency, the economic value of circular flows, and investment efficiency; these factors are aggregated using an integrated Human-Centric Circular Economy Impact Index (HCEI). To validate the method, numerical modeling and 5,000 Monte Carlo iterations were performed; the results demonstrated that as the level of HRC implementation increases, the human-cobot interaction efficiency coefficient rises by approximately 22%, HCI increases from 0.53 to 0.93, MCI from 0.45 to 0.82, and RCE from 0.30 to 0.66; WRI reaches 0.42, and the integrated HCEI rises from approximately 0.18 to 0.77. The obtained results confirm the internal consistency and computational stability of the proposed method, as well as its applicability for the comparative assessment of human-centric manufacturing transformation scenarios within the context of Industry 5.0.

Keywords: Industry 5.0, human-centricity, collaborative robotics, human-cobot interaction, circular economy, economic efficiency, material circularity, HCEI.

THE GLOBAL DOMINANT TRENDS OF SUSTAINABLE FINANCE

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The process of incorporating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors into financial and investment choices is known as global sustainable finance. Its objective is to direct public and private resources toward long-term, sustainable economic endeavors that promote social justice, reduce climate change, and strengthen systemic economic resilience. The purpose of the study was to examine the basic trends in the field of sustainable finance at a global level. Bibliometric analysis and systematic literature review were used as research methods. Sustainable finance is maturing into a core driver of the global economic system. Sustainable finance evaluates investments based on three core components: environmental, social, and governance. Instead of being a mere ethical preference, it is now deeply integrated into risk management, focusing on three main pillars: climate mitigation, regulatory standardization, and technological convergence. Global sustainable finance instruments mobilize capital toward ESG priorities. Specialized bonds (green, social, sustainability, blue) can be considered as the main instrument. Likewise, specialized sustainable loans are important, alongside green equities, sustainability-linked derivatives, and debt-for-nature swaps. Stricter regulations, growing investor and consumer demand for ESG standards, technical developments in data analytics, and the pressing need to reduce socioeconomic and climate risks are driving the global emergence of sustainable finance. Global sustainable finance faces four critical hurdles: a massive financing gap, widespread greenwashing risks, inconsistent ESG data, and the lack of globally unified regulatory standards. The inequality in the distribution of global sustainable finance remains a structural problem, as the regions most vulnerable to climate change—primarily developing and emerging economies—receive the least funding.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: finance, sustainability, instrument, trend, impact, challenge

FISCAL GOVERNANCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: A MULTI-METHOD ANALYSIS OF POLICY DECISIONS (2014–2024)

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This paper introduces a comprehensive, open-access database of fiscal and budgetary policy decisions adopted in the Republic of Moldova between 2014 and 2024. Amidst institutional transformations and systemic shocks – ranging from banking fraud to the Covid-19 pandemic – this research identifies the key levers of economic governance toward EU integration. By providing granular empirical evidence where previously only political narratives or aggregate data existed, the study offers a precise mapping of the legislative landscape. Utilizing a multi-methodological approach, the study reveals a significant legislative asymmetry between these two policy decisions. The results demonstrate a high level of budgetary rigidity focused on social and wage expenditure. Crucially, the econometric analysis dates the strategic reorientation toward tax administration and digitalization to 2019, positioning the pandemic as a catalyst rather than a primary driver. Furthermore, the findings highlight a normative upgrading from 2019 onwards, as fiscal decisions became significantly more likely to be enacted through primary legislation, signaling institutional maturation in the EU accession process.

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Keywords: Republic of Moldova, fiscal policy, budgetary decisions, European integration, legal approximation, database.

THE VALUE-ACTION GAP IN SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION: EMPIRICAL STUDY BASED ON HOUSEHOLDS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Sustainability policies in the European Union, and increasingly in candidate countries such as the Republic of Moldova, start from the premise that citizens who value environmental protection will act accordingly. This premise is contradicted by the phenomenon, widely documented in the literature on sustainable consumption, of the „value-action” or „attitude-behavior” gap. The purpose of this study is to examine the extent and structural determinants of this gap among households in Moldova, in a context in which the country is aligning its environmental legislation with the European Green Deal, as part of the EU accession process. The objectives pursued were: (1) to describe self-reported environmental attitudes and behaviors; (2) to test the extent to which participation in recycling and willingness to pay for environmentally friendly products are systematically associated with income, education and residential environment; and (3) to identify the barriers that respondents report as limiting sustainable behavior. The study is based on a cross-sectional survey applied to a sample of 1,419 respondents from urban and rural localities in Moldova, covering demographic characteristics, environmental behaviors and attitudes towards EU sustainability initiatives. Associations were tested with chi-square tests of independence and Cramér's V effect size. The results show that although the majority

of respondents consider environmental protection to be at least moderately important for the future of Moldova, actual behavior lags far behind: the majority recycles rarely or not at all, and the majority are not willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products. Both recycling participation and willingness to pay are strongly and significantly associated with residential environment, education and income ($p < .001$), while cost and lack of recycling infrastructure are indicated as the main behavioral barriers. The findings support the idea of a structurally constrained value-action gap and suggest that Moldova's green transition policies should prioritize infrastructure and financial accessibility, alongside awareness campaigns.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: value-action gap, sustainable consumption, willingness to pay, recycling behavior, environmental policies, Republic of Moldova.

FINANCING THE TRANSITION TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY: GLOBAL TRENDS AND STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS FACING BULGARIA

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The transition to a circular economy requires investments on a scale that exceeds the capacity of public funding. At the same time, global data show a reverse trend: the share of secondary materials in global consumption is declining, and the European Union remains far from its goal of doubling the circular use of materials. A central but under-researched aspect of this problem is access to market-based instruments for financing the sustainable transition - green bonds, ESG-linked lending, and taxonomy-compliant financing.

The aim of this study is to determine why, in Bulgaria, the transition to a circular economy remains almost entirely dependent on grant funding and what structural constraints hinder the development of market-based mechanisms for its financing. The object of the study is the financing of the transition to a circular economy in Bulgaria, while its analytical focus is the structural constraints on access to market-based instruments for green and circular financing. A combined methodology is applied: a critical literature review of academic publications and institutional reports; an analysis of secondary statistical data from Eurostat, the European Environment Agency, and the Climate Bond Initiative; and a comparative analysis of issuance practices in Central and Eastern European countries.

The results show that the barrier facing Bulgaria is not economic. Countries with comparable or smaller economic scales - Lithuania, Latvia, and Slovenia - have issued sovereign green bonds; Poland carried out the world's first issuance in an energy mix dominated by coal. Bulgaria does not appear among issuers at either the sovereign or corporate level, despite existing institutional and regulatory readiness. A structural dependency has been identified: the country receives green financing through foreign issuers but does not generate its own. The conclusion is that this limitation is institutional and political in nature, rather than a matter of capacity - a circumstance that is directly applicable to other catching-up economies in the region.

Keywords: circular economy, sustainable finance, green bonds, catching-up economies, sovereign issuance, Bulgaria.

ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE RISKS ON THE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL EQUILIBRIUM INDICATORS OF THE ENTITY

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In the context of accelerating global warming and intensifying environmental regulations, climate risks have ceased to be merely an ecological concern, becoming a determining factor of the entity's financial stability. The main objective of this article consists in the multidimensional analysis of the impact of climate risks – classified into physical risks and transition risks – on performance and financial equilibrium indicators at the economic entity level. The results of the study highlight a significant inverse correlation between climate risk exposure and the entity's profitability rates, driven by rising operational expenditures and the depreciation of assets exposed to natural hazards. Furthermore, the analysis reveals that transition risks directly affect long-term financial equilibrium, exerting pressure on solvency, increasing the cost of capital, and altering liquidity indicators due to the necessity of massive investments in technological adaptation. In conclusion, it is emphasized that integrating climate factors into the entity's risk management represents a fundamental condition for ensuring the financial resilience and sustainability of the entity within the green economic paradigm.

Keywords: climate change; climate risks; financial performance; financial equilibrium; solvency.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE BANKING SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA UNDER ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

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Digital transformation in banking is not a technological phenomenon but a systemic reconfiguration of the business model, affecting customer interaction, internal processes, organisational design, risk management and the very logic of financial intermediation. Artificial intelligence is the technology that, more than any other, drives the transition from digitalisation to genuine transformation: it moves financial institutions from rule-based automation toward data-driven, adaptive decision-making.

For the Republic of Moldova, this transformation is not an abstract external trend. Three factors make it directly relevant. First, the country entered in 2025 a formal accession process with the EU, which brings with it the obligation to transpose and apply European rules on artificial intelligence. Second, the Moldovan banking sector has itself reached a level of digital maturity that makes AI integration both possible and necessary. Third, the launch of the MIA instant-payments system by the NBM created, for the first time, a national payments infrastructure capable of generating the high-frequency, granular data needed to support AI-based customer analytics and supervisory intelligence.

The binding constraints on AI adoption in Moldovan banking are no longer infrastructural but human, regulatory and strategic. The pool of AI-literate banking professionals is limited; the domestic legal framework for artificial intelligence is still at the level of strategic documents rather than operational rules; and the coordination between the National Bank of Moldova, the banks and the central-government institutions responsible for the digital agenda is still largely informal.

The subject of the article is to integrate the international experience of AI implementation in banking with a detailed analysis of the specific conditions of the RM, and, on this basis, to elaborate an evidence-based policy and strategy roadmap for the integration of AI into the Moldovan banking sector.

Research objectives include: to assess the state of the Moldovan banking sector, the digital maturity of the largest banks, and the national strategic framework; to elaborate a three-stage implementation roadmap for AI integration; to formulate policy recommendations for the National Bank of Moldova, for banks, and for national decision-makers.

Methodology. The research employs a mixed qualitative-quantitative methodology: a systematic review of recent academic literature on artificial intelligence in finance; analysis of the international regulatory framework applicable to AI in banking; a cross-regional comparative analysis of AI adoption patterns in the European Union, the United States, Asia and the Middle East; statistical analysis of the indicators published by the National Bank of Moldova triangulated with European benchmarks and with Moldovan academic studies.

The research was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: banking sector, bank digitalization, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, national payments infrastructure, digital agenda, digital maturity, implementation roadmap for AI integration, etc.

THE RUSSIAN FINANCIAL SYSTEM: FROM ADAPTIVE RESILIENCE TO SYSTEMIC ISOLATION

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This paper examines the structural transformation of the Russian financial system during the 2025-2026 period, characterized by a transition from initial commercial shocks to systemic isolation. It analyzes the impact of recent EU sanctions packages (16 through 21) and the enforcement of US secondary sanctions, which triggered a chilling effect across global financial hubs. The study highlights the forced yuanization of the economy and the integration of Russia's SPFS with China's CIPS as a survival mechanism. However, this pivot has come at a high cost, as liquid assets in the National Wealth Fund plummeted to a critical level. The research further identifies the emergence of a "dual economy," where the banking sector maintains artificial profitability by monetizing military expenditures and high-risk transaction fees. Utilizing official data from the Bank of Russia and Rosstat, the analysis confirms a GDP contraction in Q1 2026 and a spike in non-performing loans. Ultimately, the findings suggest that the Russian financial system has reached its limits of adaptive resilience, entering a phase of administrative management where stability depends solely on rapidly depleting state subsidies and emergency central bank interventions.

Keywords: Russian Federation, economic sanctions, financial stability, secondary sanctions, banking sector, dual economy, fiscal sustainability, National Wealth Fund.

THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL TAXES IN THE TRANSITION TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

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The application of economic instruments is becoming a fundamental prerequisite for the transition to a circular economy. Environmental taxes constitute one such instrument, as they discourage the intensive use of natural resources and the generation of waste. In this context, the study focuses on the policies and legislative framework of the European Union, the practices of Member States regarding the use of environmental taxes, and the development of the regulatory and institutional framework in the Republic of Moldova. The research is based on an analysis of strategic documents, European and national legislation, studies, reports and relevant academic literature.

The findings show that environmental taxes can contribute to the internalisation of pollution-related costs, the reduction of pressure on natural resources, the prevention of waste generation, and the promotion of reuse, recycling, and eco-innovation. The comparative analysis indicates that EU Member States apply a variety of fiscal instruments adapted to their specific economic and institutional contexts, including taxes on waste landfilling and incineration, taxes on packaging and single-use plastic products, as well as mechanisms associated with extended producer responsibility.

In the Republic of Moldova, policy documents and the regulatory framework include objectives and provisions relating to the circular economy, waste management, extended producer responsibility, and environmental payments and taxes. However, the effectiveness of the existing instruments is limited by the relatively low rates of environmental payments and taxes, as well as by their inconsistent application.

The study concludes that the national environmental taxation system should be strengthened and more closely aligned with waste prevention, recovery, and recycling objectives. It recommends revising the rates of environmental payments and taxes, extending taxation for failure to meet collection and recycling targets to all product streams subject to extended producer responsibility, improving reporting mechanisms, and allocating revenues to collection, recycling,

and eco-innovation infrastructure. Continued alignment with the EU acquis, strengthened institutional capacity, and greater transparency in tax administration are necessary to establish a coherent, predictable, and incentive-based system capable of influencing economic behaviour and supporting competitiveness, innovation, and the efficient use of resources for the benefit of the economy and society.

Keywords: circular economy, environmental taxes, natural resources, waste, extended producer responsibility.

REFRAMING MATERIALITY: DOUBLE MATERIALITY AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

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Double materiality has emerged as one of the most consequential conceptual developments in sustainability reporting. Yet, its theoretical foundations remain fragmented relative to its rapidly expanding regulatory and practical application. This article examines double materiality as an epistemic, normative, and procedural innovation. It traces the concept's development within the European regulatory framework, analyses its departure from the exclusively investor-oriented materiality logic historically associated with financial reporting, and considers its implications for corporate accountability. Drawing on an integrative review of regulatory documents, standard-setting frameworks, and academic literature, the article argues that double materiality does more than expand the range of reportable information. It changes the criteria through which reporting relevance is determined by recognising both the effects of sustainability matters on the undertaking and the undertaking's impacts on people and the environment as independently valid dimensions of materiality. The resulting architecture preserves investor-oriented financial materiality while introducing an impact perspective that is not conditional on immediate financial consequences. The article develops propositions concerning the epistemic duality, normative independence, procedural construction, and accountability implications of double materiality. It also identifies unresolved tensions concerning stakeholder representation, threshold-setting, aggregation, organisational boundaries, and the integration of qualitative and quantitative evidence. These tensions are not merely technical. They influence which impacts become visible, whose perspectives are recognised, and how corporate accountability is translated into reporting practice. The article concludes that further theoretical and empirical development is necessary to support the legitimacy, consistency, and integrity of double materiality assessments.

Keywords: double materiality; sustainability reporting; impact materiality; financial materiality; corporate accountability.

ALIGNING WITH EU REQUIREMENTS FOR FINANCIAL REPORTING: ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

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As part of its European Union accession process, the Republic of Moldova has implemented major structural reforms to align financial reporting with European standards. Local companies faced new requirements for business classification, financial statement preparation, and data reporting. Subsequently, financial reporting in alignment with EU requirements increased transparency and facilitated access for local companies to international financing or partnerships. This paper evaluates Moldova's achievements in aligning financial reporting with EU standards, highlighting also the remaining challenges for the business environment. The research used European Commission reports, the World Bank reports, official statistics data and framework. The recent amendments to the Law on Accounting and Financial Reporting No. 287/2017, introduced by Law No. 86 of May 21, 2026, primarily aim to harmonize the legislation of the Republic of Moldova with European standards.

The most significant change is a 25% increase in the financial thresholds. Due to these increased thresholds, a large number of companies will be automatically downgraded to a lower size category. Many medium-sized companies will move into the "small" or "micro" category, becoming eligible to prepare abridged or simplified financial statements.

Accordingly, micro and small entities are exempt from preparing the management report, thereby saving considerable time on the analysis of non-financial indicators. Moreover, companies that will migrate from “medium-sized” to the “small” category will no longer be legally required to pay for external annual audit services, which will contribute to cost reduction as well.

However, key challenges remain, including the costly transition to IFRS, a shortage of qualified personnel, and adapting to new European ESG sustainability directives. Consequently, preparing national companies for closer EU integration requires Moldova to foster investor trust and upskill accounting professionals to meet international frameworks.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: financial reporting; EU harmonization; SMEs.

THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN ESG AND FINANCIAL STABILITY, MODERATING EFFECT OF FIRM CHARACTERISTICS

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The study examines the relationship between Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices and firms' financial stability and the moderating effect of firm characteristics. The relationship is empirically examined based on a sample of 280 listed companies from six ASEAN countries over the period from 2020 to 2024. Panel regression was used to analyse the data. ESG scores are derived from LSEG Data and Analytics. Financial stability is measured by Z-score. The study reveals that ESG practices help increase Z-score, thereby increasing financial stability. Firm characteristics moderate the impact of ESG on financial stability. Firms with smaller size benefit more from engagement in ESG activities as a support to financial stability.

Keywords: ESG, financial stability, ASEAN.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY TRANSFORMATION IN BUSINESSES: THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

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Increased consumption and decreased use, along with a circular economy system designed to incorporate recycling and reuse, contribute to the sustainability of growth as well as economic performance. For these anticipated developments to not remain solely at the production level, the concept of storage needs to be reshaped, and sustainable finance practices must be effectively utilized. Therefore, the relationships between particles, these fundamental elements, and the interactions between them must be re-evaluated.

The aim of this study is to highlight the importance of the circular economy approach for businesses, to evaluate the role of strategic management in this transformation process, and to examine the contributions of circular economy practices to financial sustainability.

This research is designed as a conceptual study based on a review of national and international literature. A holistic assessment is made by analyzing current academic studies on circular economy, strategic management, and financial sustainability.

Circular economy practices reduce costs and provide a competitive advantage by increasing resource efficiency. However, high investment costs and financing difficulties pose significant obstacles. Therefore, the success of the transformation depends on effective and integrated strategic management and sustainable finance practices.

Circular economy, strategic management, and financial sustainability are complementary elements that support the long-term competitiveness of businesses. For businesses to achieve sustainable success, they need to integrate circular economy principles into their financial decision-making processes by integrating them with a strategic management approach.

Keywords: circular economy, strategic management, financial sustainability.

PUBLIC POLICY GOVERNANCE AND ITS IMPACT ON SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA (1991–2022)

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This study critically examines the relationship between public policy governance and sustainable economic development in the Republic of Moldova during the period 1991–2022. The research is based on the hypothesis that structural deficiencies in governance—reflected in institutional instability, limited administrative capacity, inconsistent policy implementation, and the politicization of decision-making processes—have significantly constrained the country's economic performance and the sustainability of its development trajectory.

The research adopts a qualitative research design supported by documentary analysis of national public policy documents, strategic development frameworks, legislative acts, reports of international organizations, and governance indicators. The analytical framework integrates concepts from governance theory, institutionalism, and sustainable development, enabling a comprehensive assessment of the interaction between institutional quality and economic outcomes. Comparative and historical analyses are employed to identify the evolution of governance practices and their implications for economic development across different stages of Moldova's post-independence transition.

The findings demonstrate a persistent relationship between weak governance structures and economic volatility. Institutional fragmentation, frequent policy discontinuity, insufficient administrative effectiveness, and limited accountability have reduced the capacity of public institutions to formulate and implement coherent long-term development policies. Although successive reform initiatives have sought to strengthen democratic governance, align national policies with European standards, and improve institutional performance, their impact has often been constrained by inconsistent implementation and political instability.

The study concludes that the quality of public policy governance constitutes a fundamental determinant of sustainable economic development in the Republic of Moldova. Addressing the structural governance deficit requires strengthening institutional capacity, enhancing transparency and accountability, ensuring policy continuity, and reinforcing evidence-based decision-making. The research contributes to the academic literature by providing a political science perspective on the governance–development nexus in post-socialist transition states and offers policy-relevant recommendations for improving governance mechanisms that support sustainable and resilient economic development.

Keywords: governance, public policy, sustainable economic development, Republic of Moldova.

THE FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF REVERSE LOGISTICS

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Reverse logistics refers to the management of product movement in the opposite direction of the traditional supply chain, starting from the end user or retailer. Instead of moving goods toward customers, this process involves sending products back through the chain for purposes such as returns, replacements, repairs, recycling, or proper disposal. Due to its substantial importance within the circular economy, this article aims to explore the financial aspects of reverse logistics operation. The study relies on a bibliometric analysis of publicly available data, concentrating specifically on financial mechanisms within circular logistics to synthesize and consolidate existing knowledge in this area. The picture of the financial aspects of reverse logistics is complex. Effective approaches include analyzing specific cost drivers like collection, processing, and transportation while evaluating how this affect profitability. Due to high handling, processing, restocking, and disposal costs, high return rates significantly reduce profit margins, especially in e-commerce. To assess and improve these impacts, organizations need to examine several major financial factors and cost areas: transportation and shipping; processing and handling; inventory depreciation; restocking and remarketing; disposal and waste; as well as less visible or indirect expenses. Transportation represents the largest expense in reverse logistics, often making up as much as 60% of total return costs. To safeguard profit margins, companies need to improve freight routing, negotiate better terms with carriers, and consolidate processing operations to reduce the significant

distribution costs associated with returns. To safeguard profit margins, companies need to improve freight routing, negotiate better terms with carriers, and consolidate processing operations to reduce the significant distribution costs associated with returns. Implementing efficient reverse logistics systems requires high initial investments in technology and infrastructure. Complicated international customs laws, and possible fraud are additional expenses. Keywords: reverse logistics, supply chain, cost, investment, profitability

TRANSFORMATION OF BULGARIA'S BANKING SECTOR IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COUNTRY'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROZONE

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The scientific report clarifies the specifics of banking activities and the role of commercial banks in the development of the economy. The risks and challenges faced by credit institutions in modern market conditions are characterized. The main indicators for assessing the financial condition of the banking sector are systematized. A dynamic analysis of its development in Bulgaria during the period 2016-2025 is carried out. The possibilities for increasing its efficiency and competitiveness in the context of the country's membership in the Eurozone are presented.

Keywords: banks; banking sector; banking analysis

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AS A PATHWAY TO SUSTAINABILITY: AN INTEGRATED INDICATOR FRAMEWORK AND SECTORAL APPLICATIONS

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Growing environmental pressures have increased the urgency of transforming prevailing production and consumption systems. Climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, population growth and intensive resource extraction continue to place increasing pressure on ecosystems. Under these conditions, economic models based on continuous extraction and disposal are increasingly incompatible with long-term sustainable development. Sustainability therefore requires approaches that combine economic development with environmental protection, resource efficiency, social well-being and preservation of natural capital for future generations. The circular economy (CE) has emerged as an important framework for supporting the transition towards sustainability by reconsidering how economic value is created, maintained and recovered while reducing dependence on primary resources. Unlike the conventional linear “take–make–use–dispose” model, CE seeks to maintain the value of products, components and materials for as long as technically and economically possible and to reconnect economic activity with regenerative natural systems. Circular strategies include durability-oriented design, maintenance, repair, reuse, sharing, remanufacturing, recycling, biological regeneration and improved utilization of existing assets. These practices can contribute to sustainability by reducing resource consumption and waste, limiting environmental impacts, improving economic efficiency and supporting innovation. The transition begins at the design stage, where decisions influence material intensity, durability, repairability, reuse and end-of-life recovery. Business-model innovation can further reinforce circularity and sustainability through product-as-a-service, leasing, take-back schemes, resale, maintenance services and reverse logistics. However, circularity should not automatically be considered equivalent to sustainability. Circular solutions must also be assessed in terms of their environmental, economic and social impacts to ensure that they genuinely contribute to sustainable development and do not simply shift negative impacts from one stage of the value chain to another.

Keywords: circular economy; sustainability; sustainable development; circular economy indicators; resource efficiency; environmental performance; circular business models.

THE ROLE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE AND CO₂ EMISSIONS IN ROMANIA

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The paper analyzes the role of renewable energy in the relationship between industrial structure and CO₂ emissions in Romania, using an ARDL econometric model applied to annual series for the period 1996-2024. The main objective is to test whether renewable energy mitigates the effect of industry's share of GDP on CO₂ emissions. The estimated model includes CO₂ emissions as a dependent variable, and as explanatory variables the share of renewable energy, industry's share of GDP, domestic credit granted to the private sector, the inflation rate and an interaction term between renewable energy and industry. This specification allows the assessment of the moderating role of the energy transition in the relationship between productive structure and environmental pressure. The results indicate that industry has a positive and significant effect on CO₂ emissions, and domestic credit to the private sector also supports a dynamic associated with the increase in emissions. In contrast, the interaction term between renewable energy and industry is statistically significant, which shows that renewable energy modifies the relationship between industrial structure and CO₂ emissions. The model passes the diagnostic tests regarding the absence of autocorrelation, the absence of heteroscedasticity, functional specification and parameter stability, supporting the robustness of the results. The main conclusion is that reducing emissions in Romania does not depend only on reducing the share of industry, but especially on transforming the energy base of productive activities by increasing the share of renewable sources.

Keywords: renewable energy, CO₂ emissions, industrial structure, ARDL, energetic transition

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF CIRCULAR FINANCE

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The psychological dimensions of circular finance focus on how human behavior, cognitive biases, organizational culture and societal values impact the transition to circular economy. Psychology helps explain why people often prefer conventional linear supply chains and examines the changes in mindset necessary to support financing for closed-loop systems. Effectively funding and managing circular models involves addressing ingrained mental barriers, transitioning from ownership-oriented to access-oriented mindsets, and ensuring financial incentives are aligned with long-term environmental renewal objectives. The primary aim of the research was to explore the psychological dimensions underlying circular finance. To achieve this, the study analyzed and synthesized perspectives gathered from experts and specialized firms as presented in international sources. The core elements of the psychological aspects of circular finance revolve around how human biases, perceptions of ownership, risk aversion, and cognitive friction impact capital allocation and consumer participation in a closed-loop economy. The implementation of circular finance faces a number of psychological problems. Although consumers and investors often voice strong support for environmental causes, these attitudes rarely lead to corresponding financial decisions. Simply being aware of environmental issues does not strongly influence sustainable behavior, as practical factors like accessibility and perceived expense tend to have greater influence. Both individuals and corporate decision-makers commonly show mental and emotional resistance toward circular economy initiatives. At the same time, shifting to a circular model requires deep behavioral, cultural, and cognitive transformations from both investors and consumers. An important direction for strengthening the positive perception of the circular economy is overcoming a complex of cognitive, behavioral, emotional and structural biases. Alternative approaches and strategies to enhance the psychology of financial choices within a circular framework involve: changing perceptions of social status; reducing resistance to change; cultivating trust in the system simplifying circular behavior; optimizing choice architecture; leveraging psychological incentives; improving risk models in financial institutions.

Keywords: circularity, finance, psychology, bias, behavior, perception

GREEN FINANCE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN EMERGING ECONOMIES: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF GREEN INNOVATION AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY

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With the progress of sustainable development, green finance has become increasingly important to realize economic development in a sustainable way and solve environmental problems at the same time. This paper explores the effects of green finance on sustainable economic growth for emerging economies through the effects of green innovation and institutional quality in an integrated empirical model. This study is based on the Sustainable Development Theory, the Endogenous Growth Theory, and the Institutional Theory, and uses panel data of the emerging economies from the years 2010 to 2025. The empirical analysis employs descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, diagnostic tests, the Cross-Sectionally Augmented Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) model, Common Correlated Effects Mean Group (CCEMG) and Augmented Mean Group (AMG) estimators to overcome the problems of CCDE, heterogeneity, and endogeneity.

The results indicate that green finance has a significant impact on sustainable economic growth. Technological innovation and institutional quality also have strong positive impacts, highlighting the importance of institutional quality and technology for sustainable development. GDP, trade openness, renewable energy consumption, and foreign direct investment all have a positive impact on sustainable economic growth among the control variables, while CO₂ emissions have an important negative impact. The short-run CS-ARDL results support positive short-run impacts and a sturdy error-correction mechanism, which indicates convergence towards long-run equilibrium. In addition, the robustness checks conducted using the CCEMG, AMG, and System GMM all reaffirm the overall results of the baseline analysis, pointing to overall stability and reliability of the estimated relationships.

The study advances the sustainable finance literature by offering wide-ranging cross-country evidence from emerging economies and underscoring the need to consider the financial, technological, and institutional aspects to ensure sustainable economic development. The results have policy implications for governments and financial institutions keen on improving green financial systems, fostering green innovation, establishing high-quality institutions, and speeding up the transition to sustainable development.

Keywords: Green finance; Sustainable economic growth; Green innovation; Institutional quality; Emerging economies; CS-ARDL.

EFFICIENT INSTRUMENTS FOR FINANCING THE TRANSITION TOWARDS A CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY

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The transition towards a circular bioeconomy is increasingly recognized as a key pathway for addressing global challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, food insecurity, and energy dependence. By promoting the sustainable use of renewable biological resources, the recovery of biomass residues, and the development of bio-based products and circular value chains, the circular bioeconomy contributes to economic resilience while reducing environmental pressures. Nevertheless, the successful implementation and large-scale adoption of circular bioeconomy practices depend on adequate financial support capable of stimulating innovation, reducing investment risks,

and accelerating the commercialization of sustainable solutions. This paper examines the relationship between finance and the circular bioeconomy, highlighting the role of public and private financial instruments in supporting the transition towards more sustainable production and consumption systems. Particular attention is given to European policy initiatives, including the European Green Deal, the Circular Economy Action Plan, Horizon Europe, the Common Agricultural Policy, and the Sustainable Finance Framework, which collectively provide strategic direction and financial incentives for bio-based innovation. The analysis also explores the growing importance of green finance, impact investing, environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria, and public-private partnerships in mobilizing capital for circular bioeconomy projects. Despite significant policy progress, several financial and institutional barriers continue to limit the expansion of circular bioeconomy initiatives. Limited access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises, high initial investment costs, technological uncertainty, fragmented value chains, and insufficient collaboration among stakeholders remain critical challenges. The paper argues that integrating innovative financing mechanisms with coherent policy frameworks and cross-sectoral cooperation can enhance the scalability and long-term viability of circular bioeconomy solutions. Strengthening financial ecosystems that support sustainable innovation will not only improve resource efficiency and competitiveness but also contribute to achieving the European Union's climate neutrality objectives, rural development priorities, and the Sustainable Development Goals, fostering a more resilient and inclusive economy.

Keywords: Circular bioeconomy, Sustainable finance, Green investment, Resource efficiency, PNRR

THE ROLE OF BANKS IN PROMOTING AND DEVELOPING ESG PRACTICES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The banking sector plays a role in promoting environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles by integrating them into its operations and influencing the enterprises it finances. In the Republic of Moldova, this role is becoming increasingly relevant as the national sustainable finance framework develops and the financial sector gradually aligns with European practices.

This study aims to identify the role of banks in advancing ESG practices and examine the conditions that facilitate or constrain this process. An analysis of the regulatory framework, strategic documents, and recent developments in the banking sector indicates that foundations are in place for the incorporation of ESG criteria into lending decisions, risk assessment, and project selection. The adoption of the national sustainable finance framework and the sustainable finance taxonomy constitute important progress in this direction. However, the effective implementation of ESG principles remains at an early stage and is constrained by the limited availability of ESG-related expertise, the insufficient availability of comparable non-financial data, the costs associated with adapting to new requirements, and the varying levels of preparedness among enterprises.

In this context, the role of banks in the Republic of Moldova extends beyond financing projects classified as sustainable. Through their lending policies, risk-assessment practices, and financing conditions, banks can encourage enterprises to pay greater attention to their environmental impact, social performance, and corporate governance. This role may be particularly important for small and medium-sized enterprises, for which bank financing remains one of the main sources of external funding.

Cooperation among the National Bank of Moldova, commercial banks, and the business community, together with the development of sustainable financing instruments and improvements in the quality of ESG-related information, could facilitate the transition from establishing the regulatory framework to the effective application of ESG principles in the financing of the economy.

Keywords: green finance, sustainable development instruments, green banking, banks, financing instruments

CIRCULAR FINANCE AS A NEW ARCHITECTURE FOR FINANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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The article substantiates the conceptual foundations for the emergence of circular finance as a direction for transforming the financial framework of sustainable development. The relevance of the study is determined by the need to shift from a linear model of resource use towards a model focused on preserving resource value, promoting reuse, and extending product life cycles. Circular finance is defined as a system of financial relations, mechanisms, and instruments aimed at supporting projects and business models based on the principles of the circular economy. Its distinctive feature lies in combining financial efficiency criteria with the assessment of resource productivity, environmental impact, and the potential for material reuse. The key financial instruments for supporting circular projects are systematized, including bank lending, debt and investment financing, green and sustainability bonds, grants, government guarantees, public-private support mechanisms, and risk-sharing instruments. The necessity of improving approaches to the assessment of such projects is substantiated, taking into account their long-term economic, resource-related, and environmental outcomes. The study applies a qualitative narrative literature review based on three research questions: (1) What theoretical approaches define the relationship between finance, sustainable development, and the principles of the circular economy? (2) Which financial instruments and mechanisms are most suitable for financing circular business models and projects? (3) Which institutional, regulatory, and financial factors influence the formation and development of the circular finance architecture? The practical significance of the findings lies in their potential application to improving public policy in the field of sustainable finance, developing criteria for the selection of circular projects, and designing mechanisms to support their implementation.

Keywords: circular finance, circular economy, sustainable development, sustainable finance, green finance, financial instruments, resource efficiency, investment, financial architecture.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF LOCAL PUBLIC AUTHORITIES: TRENDS AND TERRITORIAL DISPARITIES IN THE SOUTH REGION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Administrative capacity of local administrative-territorial units represents the totality of institutional, human, material, and financial resources required for the effective exercise of responsibilities established by the legal framework. According to Government Decision No. 308/2023, administrative capacity is considered adequate when administrative expenditures do not exceed 50% of the total amount of own-source revenues, shared revenues from state taxes and duties, and general-purpose transfers.

The purpose of this study is to assess the evolution of the administrative capacity of first-level administrative-territorial units in the South Development Region of the Republic of Moldova and the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia during the period 2022–2025. The research addresses three main questions: (1) How did the administrative capacity of local public authorities evolve during the analyzed period? (2) To what extent did changes in own-source revenues, shared revenues from taxes and duties, general-purpose transfers, and administrative expenditures influence this capacity? and (3) What territorial disparities in administrative capacity persisted among the analyzed districts?

The methodological approach combines quantitative, comparative, and structural analyses of budget execution data for first-level ATUs. The analysis focuses on administrative expenditures, total expenditures, own-source revenues, revenues from shared state taxes and duties, general-purpose transfers, and the ratio between administrative expenditures and the financial resources available to cover them. Administrative capacity is assessed through the share of administrative expenditures in the relevant revenue base, using the 50% threshold to identify ATUs with adequate administrative capacity. Interannual comparisons and territorial analyses are also employed to identify trends and disparities among districts.

The results indicate a substantial improvement in the overall administrative capacity of the analyzed ATUs. The number of units classified as having adequate administrative capacity increased from 34 in 2022 to 115 in 2025, while their share rose from 16.2% to 55.6%. This improvement was accompanied by a significant increase in revenues from

shared taxes and duties and in general-purpose transfers, which strengthened the financial resources available to local administrations.

Nevertheless, considerable territorial disparities persist. In 2025, the highest share of ATUs with adequate administrative capacity was recorded in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, whereas significantly lower levels were observed in some districts, particularly Cantemir. The findings demonstrate that administrative capacity is a dynamic phenomenon, strongly influenced by the structure and availability of local financial resources, highlighting the need for differentiated policies aimed at strengthening local financial autonomy, improving expenditure efficiency, and fostering inter-municipal cooperation.

The research findings presented in this abstract were obtained within the framework of the Institutional Project No. 010801, “Enhancing Ecological Security and the Resilience of Geo-Ecosystems to Current Environmental Changes.”

Keywords: administrative capacity; intergovernmental transfers; territorial disparities

ISSUES OF REGULATORY REGULATION OF ACCOUNTING PROCESSES IN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

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For the first time in the scientific information space, an important regulatory act—the Chart of Accounts for the financial and economic activities of organizations in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova—is presented in a detailed and comprehensive manner. Its individual shortcomings are indicated and justified and ways to eliminate them are proposed. This will help improve the labor efficiency of various users and the reliability of financial reporting, and improve the information support for managing subjects of a market economy.

Keywords: Information, tables, significance, definition, and comparative analysis of accounting charts of accounts.

GEOPOLITICAL RISKS, ENERGY SHOCKS AND FINANCIAL STABILITY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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The war in Ukraine and the energy crisis of 2021-2023 generated a complex set of geopolitical and price shocks that put pressure on the financial stability of Eastern European countries. The article analyzes the transmission of these shocks to the banking and financial systems of the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Romania and the Baltic states, using the European Union as a comparison point. The main goal is to identify the channels through which geopolitical risks and energy shocks affect financial stability indicators and to assess the effectiveness of public policy responses adopted by national and European authorities. The theoretical framework starts from the literature on systemic risk, the interaction between monetary and macroprudential policy, as well as the transmission mechanisms of external shocks to the banking sector. The policy analysis focuses on the measures adopted by central banks and supervisory authorities in the region: capital buffers, liquidity requirements, foreign exchange market interventions and coordination with European instruments. The empirical component is based on open data from the National Bank of Moldova, the World Bank, Eurostat, the International Monetary Fund and other public sources, covering the period 2015-2025. The approach combines an event-study focused on the moment of the February 2022 invasion with regional comparisons and descriptive analyses of the evolution of the main financial stability indicators. The results suggest that the intensity of shock transmission varies significantly depending on the degree of energy exposure, import dependence and institutional response capacity. Countries with better-calibrated macroprudential instruments and access to European support mechanisms have experienced a more moderate deterioration in stability indicators. The findings provide policy implications for strengthening the resilience of financial systems in the region and highlight the need for closer coordination between monetary, macroprudential and energy security policies.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: financial stability; geopolitical risks; energy shocks; macroprudential policy; Eastern Europe

QUALITY OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE MANAGEMENT AND RESPECT FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS: IMPACT TRANSMISSION MECHANISMS

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This paper explores the intrinsic link between the quality of public expenditure management and the degree of respect for citizens' fundamental rights. Although public finance management is frequently assessed exclusively through technical indicators of macroeconomic efficiency and fiscal discipline, the article argues that it represents, in reality, a fundamental pillar for the practical guarantee of human rights, especially socio-economic (right to health, education, work and social protection) and civil (equitable access to justice and security) rights. The main objective of the article is to identify and analyze the transmission mechanisms through which the performance of budgetary decisions influences the quality of life and the effective exercise of citizens' rights. Using an interdisciplinary methodology, which combines legal-institutional analysis, a review of specialized economic literature and the assessment of good governance indicators, the research highlights three main channels of impact: the direct allocative channel: the prioritization and strategic distribution of funds to essential public services that guarantee a decent standard of living; the institutional quality channel: ensuring transparency, rigorous budget execution and combating corruption, thus preventing the waste of public resources in procurement processes; the redistributive and equity channel: reducing socio-economic disparities by effectively targeting spending on vulnerable or marginalized groups. The research findings demonstrate that the volume of allocated financial resources is insufficient if it is not accompanied by quality fiscal governance, oriented towards results, integrity and social accountability. The article emphasizes the need for fundamental integration of human rights standards directly into the cycle of public budget preparation, approval and execution. The paper provides practical recommendations for policymakers, highlighting that ethical and efficient budget management is an essential precondition for strengthening the rule of law and social cohesion.

Keywords: public spending; good governance; fundamental rights; budget transparency; transmission mechanisms

FEATURES OF SHORT-TERM LENDING IN NON-OIL SECTOR OF AZERBAIJAN

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The article covers the specifics of bank lending to the economy. Important elements of credit are forms of loan accounts, methods of loan debt settlement, forms and types of loans, rules of their use, etc., which are considered by the author as methods and means of credit.

The article notes negative trends in the economy during the economic crisis in Azerbaijan for 2014-2016 and shows ways to solve these trends.

The conditions that create the need for short-term lending are justified, and its advantages and disadvantages are explained. The article also defines the directions for the elimination of credit risks on the basis of the priorities and goals set out in the Strategic Road Map adopted for implementation by the Government of the country.

Keywords: short-term lending, consumer lending, non-oil sector, devaluation, economic crisis.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR INTEGRATING RURAL COMMUNITIES OF THE DNIESTER AND BLACK SEA BASINS INTO THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA: A TERRITORIAL BIOECONOMY PLATFORM MODEL BASED ON THE VALORISATION OF JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE

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*The transition towards circular and bio-based economies creates opportunities for rural territories to participate in research, innovation and sustainable development. This study develops a conceptual model of a territorial circular bioeconomy platform for rural communities in the Dniester and Black Sea basins. It integrates European biomass-flow approaches, sustainable supply-chain principles, cascading valorisation, Smart Villages and the Quintuple Helix model. Jerusalem artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus* L.) is used as a demonstrator because its tubers, above-ground biomass and residual streams can support interconnected food, feed, bio-based product, bioenergy and soil-related pathways. The proposed Territorial Topinambur Bioeconomy Platform connects producers, processors, public authorities, research and educational organizations, communities and consumers. Its digital layer—territorial biomass intelligence - combines biomass mapping, GIS, logistics, technology assessment and decision support. The study's conceptual contribution lies in integrating these elements within an architecture adapted to Moldova, rather than proposing a new conversion technology. The platform is intended as a pilot module for a resource-neutral Territorial Biomass Intelligence Platform that can support circular value chains, Smart Specialisation and participation in European research and innovation networks. Empirical validation through territorial mapping, stakeholder engagement, life-cycle assessment and techno-economic analysis is identified as the next research stage.*

Keywords: circular bioeconomy, territorial innovation ecosystems, biomass valorisation, Smart Villages, Quintuple Helix

LOCAL BANKS, CREDIT, AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A HISTORICAL-ECONOMIC INTERPRETATION

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This paper traces, from the perspective of the history of economic thought, the evolution of interpretations regarding the role of local banks in the development of regional production systems. The Italian case is particularly significant, as the national banking structure has historically developed in close connection with the country's political and geographical fragmentation and with the prevalence of micro-enterprises, craft businesses and small and medium-sized enterprises. This structure reflects a conception of the banking system in which the function of credit cannot be separated from the social and institutional context in which it is provided. Direct knowledge of customers, geographical proximity and the continuity of relationships enable the bank to gather qualitative information that is difficult to translate into standardised indicators. From this perspective, banking is not merely a matter of the impersonal allocation of resources, but also a bridge between savings, investment and local development, emphasising the enduring importance of trust and personal connections.

Since the 1990s, European integration, privatisation and consolidation have profoundly transformed this model. The reduction in the number of banks and branches, together with the shift of decision-making centres towards economically stronger areas, has fostered a vision of the banking system that is more focused on efficiency, competitiveness and the standardisation of procedures. This transformation raises a central theme in the history of economic thought: the relationship between market efficiency and the specific nature of institutions. Whilst, on the one

hand, banking consolidation has been seen as a means of enhancing stability and competitiveness, on the other, it may undermine the mechanisms of local knowledge on which the financing of smaller businesses is based.

The literature shows that the closure of branch offices and the increase in decision-making distance can reduce credit to small businesses, hinder the creation of new businesses and weaken the resilience of local areas. Digitalisation enhances the efficiency of day-to-day operations, but it does not negate the economic value of first-hand knowledge, trust and qualitative information. However, empirical evidence on how digitalisation affects the qualitative functions of local banks remains limited, highlighting the need for further research. The local bank, therefore, continues to play a significant role in interpreting credit as both a social institution and a tool for financial intermediation.

This paper aims to clarify how the evolution from territorial and relational banking to centralised, standardised, and digitised models has influenced regional development.

The analysis adopts a historical-critical approach, based on an examination of the economic literature on local banks, relationship banking, credit and economic development. A comparison of theoretical contributions and empirical evidence highlights the persistence of an institutional conception of credit.

Keywords: local banks; regional development; relationship banking; bank consolidation.

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE AND ESG INTEGRATION IN THE BANKING SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The banking sector occupies a central position in the transition process of the Republic of Moldova's economy towards sustainable development models, its role as a financial intermediary being directly influenced by the capacity of credit institutions to integrate environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles into their current activity. The institutional capacity required for this integration is still in an early stage of configuration, the current stage being marked by the adoption of the National Bank of Moldova's Roadmap for Sustainable Finance (2024–2028) and the regulatory projects on ESG risks in the banking sector, in contrast to the framework already applied in the EU. The paper aims to analyze this stage of institutional capacities, the extent to which the adopted regulatory framework has been reflected so far in the concrete practices of banks being one of the benchmarks pursued.

This process is conditioned, in parallel, by a series of structural constraints specific to the Moldovan context: the small size of the banking market, dependence on external financing and exposure to systemic climate risks, the effects of which on lending activity remain insufficiently documented at the system level. In order to clarify these aspects, the paper aims to analyze the extent to which climate risks are already reflected in banks' lending behavior, the role of digital transformation as a potential factor in accelerating the adoption of ESG practices in the banking sector, as well as the gap between the demand and supply of green financing in the relationship between banks and the small and medium-sized enterprise sector. The analysis is complemented by an exploratory section, based on public data from the National Bank of Moldova, which aims to capture, at an indicative level, the evolution of the banking sector's exposure to economic sectors more sensitive to climate risks, with the exact selection of indicators to be finalized during the research.

Methodologically, the research combines a synthesis of the specialized literature and public policy documents with a descriptive quantitative analysis of the available data, without collecting new empirical data. The intended result is an integrated analytical framework, useful for assessing the current state of banking institutional capacities and for formulating directions for reflection on the policy implications relevant for the current stage of the European Union accession process.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: sustainable finance, ESG integration, banking sector, climate risks, green finance, institutional capacity, Republic of Moldova

COMBATING GREENWASHING IN THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK

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The increasing use of environmental and sustainability claims in the agri-food sector creates new opportunities for promoting sustainable consumption, but also increases the risk of greenwashing and misleading consumers. This study aims to develop a policy-oriented framework for preventing and reducing greenwashing in the agri-food sector of the Republic of Moldova, with particular emphasis on monitoring mechanisms and alignment with relevant European Union approaches. The research addresses the following questions: (1) What regulatory and institutional gaps facilitate the occurrence of greenwashing in the Republic of Moldova? (2) Which indicators can be used to identify and monitor potentially misleading environmental claims in the agri-food sector? (3) What policy and practical measures could strengthen transparency, consumer protection and the credibility of sustainability-related claims? The research applies a qualitative and comparative methodology combining analysis of the national regulatory and institutional framework, review of relevant European Union legislation and policy initiatives, and comparative assessment of international practices for preventing greenwashing.

The findings indicate that the effective prevention of greenwashing requires an integrated approach combining clearer rules for environmental claims, stronger verification and monitoring mechanisms, improved coordination among responsible institutions and increased business accountability. Based on these findings, the study proposes a set of policy recommendations aimed at strengthening regulatory oversight, institutional capacity, transparency of environmental communication and consumer awareness. The proposed framework may support Moldova's gradual alignment with European sustainability and consumer-protection practices while contributing to greater trust and integrity in the transition towards sustainable agri-food systems.

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Keywords: greenwashing, agri-food sector, environmental claims, monitoring indicators, consumer protection, public policy, sustainability, Republic of Moldova.

SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES AND BEHAVIORS IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE FINANCE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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This article examines the skills and knowledge required for adopting sustainable lifestyles and behaviors, focusing on how these competencies extend into sustainable finance, an area where individual pro-environmental values do not always translate into corresponding financial choices. Research questions: The analysis is guided by four questions: (1) How has the concept of sustainable lifestyle and its associated competencies been reconceptualized in the recent literature? (2) How does general sustainability literacy, as codified in frameworks such as the European Commission's GreenComp, relate to sustainable finance literacy? (3) What mechanisms explain the gap between sustainability-related knowledge and actual financial behavior? (4) How do these dynamics manifest in the Republic of Moldova? Methodology: the article adopts a theoretical, narrative literature synthesis, organized thematically rather than chronologically. The analysis draws on 28 sources. Sources were selected for direct relevance to the knowledge-behavior relationship, recency, and methodological rigor. Findings: The synthesis shows that the relationship between knowledge and sustainable behavior is non-linear, mediated by attitudes, social norms, perceived behavioral control, institutional trust, and digital access. Sustainability literacy and sustainable finance literacy share a common conceptual

architecture but remain poorly integrated in research and practice. Republic of Moldova displays a paradox of favorable financial attitudes and behavior scores alongside low actual investment activity, suggesting that knowledge–action gaps require country-specific diagnosis rather than uniform policy transfer.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: sustainable lifestyles; sustainable behavior; sustainable literacy; green competencies; financial education

GREENWASHING IN THE AGRO-FOOD SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRACTICAL MEASURES TO COMBAT IT

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The phenomenon of greenwashing is becoming increasingly pronounced in the agri-food sector, where vague and uncertified ecological claims directly affect consumers' ability to make informed purchasing decisions. In the context of the accession negotiations of the Republic of Moldova to the European Union and the harmonization process with the community acquis, including Directive (EU) 2024/825 on strengthening the position of consumers for the green transition, understanding the level of training of future specialists in identifying deceptive practices becomes a condition for the foundation of effective public policies.

The results of the research carried out within the project 25.80012.5107.10 SE showed that, unlike the defensive mechanisms documented in the general literature, the awareness of greenwashing does not discourage, but rather stimulates the intention to buy green products, and the perceived benefits remain the strongest predictor of sustainable consumption behavior. A metacognitive paradox was also identified: only 2.1% of respondents correctly classify all tested commercial labels, while 61.7% reject at least one legitimate certification as misleading, the deficit being more in the calibration between perception and actual performance than lack of knowledge.

Based on these findings, the paper formulates a set of public policy recommendations and practical measures, structured in two directions: the transversal integration of anti-greenwashing skills in university economics curricula and the strengthening of consumer confidence in verified certification systems, through dedicated campaigns of the regulatory authorities.

This article was developed within the framework of Project 25.80012.5107.10 SE, “The phenomenon of greenwashing in the context of food security of the Republic of Moldova: good practices and alignment with the EU”, funded by the National Agency for Research and Development (ANCD/NARD), Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: greenwashing, agro-food sector, sustainability, consumer behavior, certification, public policy, Republic of Moldova

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE AS A DRIVER OF SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES: SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

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The growing importance of sustainability in economic development has increased the need to understand how financial decisions can contribute to more responsible ways of living. This paper explores sustainable finance as a tool for encouraging sustainable lifestyles, emphasizing the influence of financial knowledge, practical skills, and behavioural attitudes on consumption, saving, and investment choices. The research discusses how improved awareness of environmental and social impacts can support the adoption of greener financial practices and more conscious everyday decisions. At the same time, it underlines the role of education, institutional support, and public policies in shaping competencies that enable individuals and communities to participate actively in the transition towards a more sustainable economy. The paper therefore contributes to the broader debate on sustainability by connecting financial behaviour with lifestyle transformation and long-term socio-economic resilience.

The research was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: sustainable finance; sustainable lifestyles; financial behaviour; green financial practices; sustainability awareness; responsible consumption; socio-economic resilience.

FINANCING THE ENERGY TRANSITION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: FROM RENEWABLE ENERGY POTENTIAL TO BANKABLE PROJECTS

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This study evaluates the investment potential and bankability of renewable energy projects in the Republic of Moldova in the context of the country's energy transition and the emerging architecture of the electricity market. The research addresses the following questions: To what extent can the country's renewable energy potential be transformed into economically viable, grid-connectable, commercially exploitable and bankable projects? How do market mechanisms, financing instruments and energy storage affect the financial performance and risk profile of renewable energy investments?

The research employs a multidisciplinary methodology combining statistical, regulatory, market and financial analysis. The study examines the evolution and structure of installed renewable energy capacity, the indicative degree of renewable potential utilization, the regulatory and support framework, the operation of the Day-Ahead Market and Intraday Market, and the role of grants, concessional loans, guarantees and blended finance. Particular attention is given to Capture Price, Capture Rate and imbalance costs as determinants of the revenues of market-exposed renewable energy projects. The applied component includes a financial model of a hypothetical 1 MW photovoltaic plant, comparing support-based, merchant and self-consumption business models and assessing the impact of grant financing on NPV, IRR and payback period.

The findings indicate a rapid expansion of renewable energy capacity, from 77.37 MW in 2020 to 1,074.74 MW at the end of June 2026, while the estimated renewable potential remains substantially higher than the installed capacity. The analysis demonstrates that technical potential alone does not ensure investment viability: grid connection, market access, revenue predictability, imbalance exposure and the cost of capital are critical determinants of bankability. The case study shows that a grant covering 20% of CAPEX can increase IRR from approximately 10.1% to 13.8% and reduce the simple payback period from 8.0 to 6.4 years. The study concludes that blended finance, energy storage, improved forecasting, self-consumption, long-term contracts and market integration can facilitate the transformation of renewable energy potential into bankable investments and contribute to Moldova's energy security and green economic modernization.

Keywords: Renewable energy; investment bankability; electricity market; blended finance; energy storage.

FISCAL POLICY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY: AN ANALYSIS OF PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Plastic waste management represents one of the major challenges of contemporary environmental policy, with fiscal instruments playing a central role in correcting the negative externalities generated by plastic pollution. This article analyzes how fiscal policy in the Republic of Moldova contributes to reducing plastic waste and promoting a circular economy, within a context shaped by the commitments assumed through the country's status as a candidate for European Union accession.

The research examines the current framework of environmental taxes and fees applied to plastic products and packaging – including the packaging tax, environmental pollution charges, and existing fiscal facilities (VAT exemptions for recycling equipment, exemptions for certain packaging categories) – assessing their effectiveness in encouraging responsible behavior among economic operators and consumers. The study highlights that, although the Republic of Moldova has a relatively well-developed legal framework, the level of environmental taxes remains insignificant compared to the actual costs of environmental damage, and the revenues generated are not correlated with the recycling

targets established in national policy documents.

Based on a comparative analysis with practices in the European Union – particularly extended producer responsibility schemes and deposit-refund system (DRS) mechanisms – the article identifies concrete directions for reform: shifting from taxation based on the value of goods to taxation based on the quantity of waste generated, indexing taxes to inflation, and introducing differentiated fiscal incentives for operators that achieve recycling targets.

The research findings suggest that the effectiveness of environmental fiscal policy depends not only on the level of taxation, but also on institutional capacity for monitoring and enforcement, as well as on aligning these instruments with public awareness campaigns. The article contributes to the specialized literature by offering an empirical perspective on the interaction between fiscal instruments and the behavior of economic actors within the specific context of an emerging economy undergoing alignment with European standards.

Keywords: plastic waste management, environmental fiscal policy, circular economy, environmental taxes, extended producer responsibility, Republic of Moldova

NAVIGATING THROUGH UNCERTAINTY: FINANCIAL RISK ANALYSIS AS A PILLAR OF BUSINESS GROWTH

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In the context of a dynamic and unpredictable global economy, the ability of enterprises to manage volatility becomes a decisive factor for their survival and market expansion. This paper analyzes financial risk management not merely as a defensive and protective mechanism, but as a fundamental strategic pillar for driving sustainable business growth. The study examines the main types of financial risks — market, credit, liquidity, and operational — and their impact on decision-making processes. The research is conducted based on the case study of a successful company operating in the insurance sector, analyzing its best practices, actuarial models, and investment strategies. Through quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods, the paper demonstrates how transforming uncertainty into calculated risks allowed this enterprise to identify new investment opportunities, optimize capital structure, and strengthen resilience against external shocks. The findings provide an applicable framework and practical recommendations for managers, emphasizing that a robust risk culture is essential for long-term innovation and competitiveness within the financial sector.

Keywords: financial risk management, economic uncertainty, business growth, financial resilience, strategic decisions, capital optimization, insurance sector, case study.

THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF DOUBLE MATERIALITY ASSESSMENT FOR SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING IN AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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In the context of global economic, environmental and social challenges, sustainability information has become essential for supporting responsible decision-making in agriculture, agri-food value chains and rural development. Modern agriculture is increasingly affected by climate change, resource scarcity, biodiversity loss, food security pressures, labour conditions and changing expectations from regulators, markets and local communities. In this context, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the Double Materiality Assessment (DMA) provide an important framework for identifying, prioritising and reporting the sustainability matters that influence both companies and society. This paper aims to analyse the strategic value of double materiality assessment for sustainability reporting in agri-food systems and rural development. The main research objectives are to clarify the meaning of sustainability information, examine the role of CSRD in strengthening corporate sustainability reporting, explain the logic of double materiality and highlight how DMA can support credible, evidence-based and decision-useful reporting. The paper addresses the following research questions: What does sustainability information mean for companies operating in agriculture and rural value chains? Why is double materiality important for identifying relevant sustainability matters? How can impact materiality and financial materiality support better decisions in agri-food businesses and rural communities? How do stakeholder engagement and data quality contribute to the credibility of sustainability reporting? The methodology is based on conceptual and regulatory analysis, supported by the synthesis of relevant discussion points on CSRD, ESRS and DMA. The paper connects the logic of sustainability reporting with key challenges in agriculture and rural development, including environmental impacts, climate-related risks, supply chain vulnerabilities, community expectations and the need for reliable sustainability data. The main findings show that sustainability information is not only a compliance requirement, but also a strategic resource for sustainable transformation. Double materiality helps organisations identify relevant impacts, risks and opportunities, while stakeholder engagement strengthens reporting credibility. For agri-food systems and rural territories, CSRD and DMA can support transparency, resilience, risk management and long-term value creation.

Keywords: sustainability information, sustainability reporting, CSRD, double materiality assessment, modern agriculture, agri-food and rural development

NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL–GREEN TRANSITION IN AGRICULTURE: POLICY INSIGHTS FOR MOLDOVA AND ARMENIA

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How can agricultural modernisation reconcile productivity objectives with the demands of the digital–green transition? This presentation draws on previously published research to discuss policy implications for Moldova and Armenia within a wider comparative framework. Its empirical foundation comprises panel data for six transition economies over 2000–2024, analysed using fixed- and random-effects models with Driscoll–Kraay robustness checks. At the panel level, digitalisation and financial access are positively associated with agricultural labour productivity, while the green transformation indicator exhibits a negative contemporaneous association. This pattern is consistent with adjustment and compliance costs, but does not establish their duration or the long-term returns to environmental investment. Institutional relationships differ across panel and exploratory country-specific specifications, underlining the need for context-sensitive interpretation. Building on these findings, the presentation focuses on how digital capabilities, financing mechanisms and environmental upgrading can be coordinated within agricultural modernisation strategies. Moldova and Armenia provide illustrative contexts for discussing the sequencing of support, the alignment of finance with productive transformation, and institutional capacity for implementation. Rather than assuming that digital and green investments automatically reinforce one another, the discussion distinguishes observed productivity relationships from policy objectives requiring further evaluation. The proposed perspective connects existing empirical evidence with an agenda for differentiated transition policies and future research on the conditions under which productivity and environmental performance can advance together.

Keywords: digital–green transition, agricultural labour productivity, agricultural modernisation, transition policies, Moldova, Armenia.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VITICULTURE AND WINE PRODUCTION IN BULGARIA - REGIONAL PROJECTIONS

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Vine growing and wine production are traditional for Bulgaria. In the context of the country's membership in the European Union, the topic is relevant and poses a number of questions to the researcher, including those related to regional projections in the development of the sector. In this study, the authors set themselves the goal of revealing the main sustainable regional trends in the development of viticulture and wine production in Bulgaria. To achieve the goal, a characterization and corresponding analysis of indicators such as vineyard area, territorial concentration, yield, etc. were made. The study is based on official data from the National Statistical Institute, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Executive Agency for Vine and Wine. Relevant conclusions and generalizations were made.

Keywords: agriculture, viticulture, region, wine, production

ROMANIAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE ALONG THE MEAT VALUE CHAINS

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At the time of EU accession, the Romanian agri-food products entered the European Single Market without customs duties or export quotas. However, various types of restrictions related to product quality and sanitary-veterinary issues remained. For animal products, these types of restrictions have determined the increase in live animal exports at the expense of meat and meat products exports. This paper is exploring the evolution and trends of the Romanian international trade in live animals, meat and meat products in the post-accession period, in terms of exports, imports, trade balance and geographical orientation of the trade flows. The analysis shows mixed results for the different types of meat value chains: negative trade balance for pig meat, positive trade balance for poultry, eggs, sheep and goats, and mixed results in the beef value chain.

Keywords: international trade, live animals, meat, meat products, Romania

SHORT-TERM FINANCIAL RESILIENCE OF MOLDOVAN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES: EVIDENCE FROM ASSET PROFITABILITY AND LIQUIDITY

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This study analyses the short-term financial resilience of agricultural cooperatives in the Republic of Moldova, focusing on two complementary dimensions: return on assets and current liquidity. The analysis covers 69 cooperatives active during the period 2020–2023, whose financial statement data were extracted from Orbis Europe. The enterprises were divided into three size clusters based on turnover using the k-means clustering method. For each cluster, return on assets (ROA) and the current ratio were examined using descriptive statistics, analysis of variance and Tukey–Kramer

post hoc comparisons. The results highlight distinct trajectories. ROA exhibits greater temporal variability and shows no statistically significant differences between the clusters. The current ratio, on the other hand, clearly distinguishes Cluster 2, which is characterised by consistently higher liquidity levels than the other groups; the differences are statistically significant compared with Clusters 1 and 3. However, greater liquidity does not necessarily correspond to greater profitability stability: Cluster 2, in fact, records a negative ROA in 2023, whilst Cluster 3 maintains a consistently positive ROA despite lower liquidity. The study, therefore, shows that financial resilience cannot be attributed to a single indicator but requires a combined assessment of profitability and liquidity. The findings contribute to the literature on the resilience of agricultural cooperatives and suggest implications for management, financial intermediaries and policy-makers, highlighting the need for tailored interventions based on different economic and financial profiles.

Keywords: agricultural cooperatives, Moldova, financial resilience, ROA, current ratio,, rural development, cluster analysis

FROM MARGINALIZATION TO EMPOWERMENT: ASSESSING GENDER DISPARITIES IN RURAL ROMANIA

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Gender equality is a fundamental driver of agricultural productivity, food security, and sustainable rural development. Resolving systemic gender disparities is essential to create inclusive socioeconomic environments and maximize the human potential within rural communities. Our study aims to analyze the current state of gender inequality within the European Union, with a specific focus on the disparities present in rural communities in Romania. The primary objective is to identify structural gaps in leadership, resource access, and economic representation, while evaluating the specific socio-economic barriers that hinder female entrepreneurship. The study utilizes a quantitative and comparative statistical analysis based on data from the Global Gender Gap Index and the Gender Equality Index, examining domain-specific scores across EU member states, focusing on Romania. Furthermore, it incorporates data for 246 Local Action Groups from Romania and a regional case study analyzing over 400 agricultural associative structures in North-East Romania to measure female representation in legal leadership roles, in a longitudinal study focusing on data for 2017 and 2024. Although a large number of EU female farmers are concentrated in Romania, they remain highly underrepresented in decision-making positions, particularly in agriculture, where most managers are men and females predominantly occupy unpaid familial roles. In the analyzed North-East Region of Romania, only 13% of associative structures and 18% of the Local Action Groups have female legal representatives. Additionally, rural women face compounding vulnerabilities in post-pandemic food insecurity and severe barriers to entrepreneurship, such as limited financing, educational segregation, and the double burden of domestic and professional responsibilities.

Keywords: gender equality, Global Gender Gap Index, Gender Equality Index, rural development, female entrepreneurship, associative structures, Local Action Group (LAG).

OPTIMISING THE FOOD SAFETY REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF AGRI-FOOD PRODUCERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Agri-food sector is one of the pillars of the Moldovan economy, and the alignment of the national regulatory framework with the European Union acquis in the field of food safety is an essential condition for increasing the competitiveness of local producers, facilitating access to foreign markets and strengthening consumer confidence. However, the process of compliance with legislative requirements involves administrative costs, technological investments and procedural obligations that differentially affect agri-food enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. In this context, the optimization of the regulatory framework must aim to achieve a balance between ensuring a high level of public health protection and reducing the administrative burden on the business environment. The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of food safety regulations on the competitiveness of agri-food producers in the Republic of Moldova and to formulate recommendations for optimizing administrative procedures, reducing compliance costs and improving the efficiency of regulatory mechanisms. The results highlight that the high level of complexity of administrative procedures, overlapping documentary requirements and costs associated with the implementation of food safety standards are factors that reduce the competitiveness of producers, especially SMEs. Based on the results obtained, recommendations are formulated regarding the improvement of public policies by simplifying administrative processes, strengthening institutional cooperation between control authorities and the business environment, expanding the use of digital tools and developing support mechanisms for small and medium-sized enterprises in the implementation of modern food safety management systems. The conclusions of the study argue that the optimization of the regulatory framework must go beyond the traditional approach based exclusively on formal control and compliance, moving towards a smart governance model, based on risk assessment, proportionality of interventions and partnership between competent authorities and economic operators.

Keywords: food safety, competitiveness, regulation, compliance costs

RISK TRENDS IN AGRICULTURE BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND STRATEGIC SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Risk management issues in agriculture are becoming increasingly important with the amplification of the consequences of global warming. Although the resilience of the agricultural sector is supported by national, regional and European Union policies, however, to ensure an optimal level of risks, the involvement of all categories of stakeholders is necessary. In this regard, risks in agriculture were analyzed starting from the macroeconomic perspective followed by the microeconomic one. The common agricultural policies at the level of the European Union have the role of supporting member countries in the transition to a sustainable agricultural sector oriented towards improving biodiversity, ecosystems and ensuring long-term food security. The process of implementing these policies is the target of our research, and for the sake of completeness, the practice of developed countries in the European Union was used in comparison with the experience of Romania and the Republic of Moldova. The problem is common and concerns both economic entities in the rural sector and the population as consumers. At the microeconomic level, the inventory of risks is diversifying, and management policies combine economic risks with climatic, biological and social risks. As a result of the fact that economic entities in the agricultural sector are less profitable, a large part of its activities are financed through various state budget programs, thus financial risks have an important weight in our study, establishing a connection with systemic risks. The analysis of climatic, biological, environmental and social risks is based on the European Green Deal for rural areas, and their assessment takes into account the multitude of factors with negative impact and high probability of occurrence. Finally, it was demonstrated that risks in agriculture are a systemic magnitude influenced by a multitude of factors, but in order to ensure a reduced level of risks, permanent collaboration between the structures of the European Union, the involvement of state structures in this regard, the training of small entrepreneurs and the education of the population as consumers and people directly involved in the conservation of biodiversity is necessary.

Keywords: Risk management, Climate change, European Union Common Agricultural Policy, Romania and the Republic of Moldova

ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SIZE OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS AND THE LEVEL OF DIGITALISATION OF EUROPEAN FARMS

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The level of adoption of digital technologies by European farms varies significantly depending on their economic scale. In this context, this paper aims to analyse the relationship between the economic size of agricultural holdings and the degree of digital technology adoption in the Member States of the European Union. The analysis uses Eurostat statistical data for agricultural holdings classified as 'Above threshold' (holdings that exceed the economic reporting threshold). The economic size of farms is assessed using Standard Output (SO) classes, whilst the level of digitalisation is analysed through five components: the use of precision farming technologies, agricultural robotics, digital equipment for livestock management, internet access and the use of computerised management systems. To ensure comparability across countries and economic size classes, the indicators are expressed as adoption rates and an aggregate index of

agricultural digitalisation, constructed on the basis of the five components analysed. The preliminary results obtained reveal a positive relationship between the economic size of agricultural holdings and the level of adoption of digital technologies. This research contributes to an understanding of the digital divides that exist in European agriculture and provides relevant information for the development of public policies aimed at accelerating the process of digitalisation and reducing disparities between different categories of agricultural holdings.

Keywords: agricultural digitalisation, digital technologies, farms, EUROSTAT.

STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES AND SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS FOR RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ROMANIA: THE ROLE OF VALUE CREATION, COOPERATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL

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Romanian agriculture holds a peculiar position in the European Union: first by number of holdings, fifth by agricultural area, persistently modest in value added per unit of resource employed. The paper asks why this asymmetry survives two decades of European funding. Three constraints are examined jointly rather than separately - fragmentation of holdings, an eroded stock of agricultural human capital, and the limited capacity of rural territories to retain value generated downstream of the field. Data come from Eurostat, the National Institute of Statistics and recent policy reviews; the analysis is descriptive and comparative, and it covers the national level throughout. Results show a fourfold gap in average holding size against the European average, a share of farm managers with complete agricultural training of 0.7% against 10.2% at Union level, and an agri-food trade deficit that widened by half in one year, reaching about 4.9 billion euro in 2024. The composition of the cultivated area reinforces the reading: cereals and oilseeds occupied 85.8% of the sown area in 2025, while the whole horticultural complex - vegetables, potatoes, orchards, melons and minor crops - accounted for 4.9%, and protected vegetable cultivation for 0.08%. The evidence supports, with moderate confidence, a displacement of the diagnosis from production capacity towards value capture and organisational density. The institutional implications for producer cooperation and for Local Action Groups are discussed, and the limits of the conclusions are stated explicitly.

Keywords: rural development, value capture, agricultural cooperation, human capital, territorial specialization, Romania

AN ECOSYSTEM PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROMANIAN RURAL FAMILY: SUSTAINABILITY, DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

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The rural family represents a central element of Romanian society, given that approximately half of the country's population lives in rural areas. Studying it is essential for understanding economic development, demographic phenomena and mechanisms for transmitting cultural values. Although rural space is traditionally associated with stability and continuity, it is undergoing important transformations generated by migration, modernization, digitalization and demographic changes, which influence the structure and functioning of the family. The paper approaches the rural family from the perspective of a sustainability ecosystem, highlighting its adaptable and resilient character. Like a natural ecosystem, the family functions as an interdependent system in which social relations, economic resources, cultural values and the environment influence each other. This perspective allows for an integrated analysis of the role of the family in

maintaining community balance and supporting sustainable development. The analysis is structured on four main dimensions: social, through the role of the family in transmitting values and norms; economic, through the functions of production, consumption and self-management; ecological, by contributing to the conservation of the environment and biodiversity; and cultural, by preserving the heritage and community identity. At the same time, the paper aims to examine, from a sociological and statistical perspective, how the social, economic and demographic context influences the structure and functions of the rural family, following both the objective indicators of change and the social processes that underlie them, such as the transformation of gender roles and adaptation to new work models.

Keywords: demographic indicators, household structure, rural-urban disparities, sustainable development

FROM TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS TO SOCIAL INNOVATION IN LOCAL MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES

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The proposed work is carried out within the ADER 21.1.1.- 3.1. a. project – INCE/CE-MONT:-phase III: "Identification of institutions generating and promoting technical and technological progress in agriculture (animal sector)"; - phase IV: "Promotion of partnership models between PPP institutions in the agricultural knowledge market". The mechanism of assimilating technological innovation and translating it, at the local level, into social innovation is a complex one, being influenced by a complex of cultural and social factors. Supportive culture regarding technical progress and social trust represent important premises for the assimilation of technical progress at the community level. The data collected in a series of case studies that I have conducted in recent years in mountainous and sub-mountainous areas reveal, rather, a deficit of social trust and a weak supportive culture of technical progress. In particular, relevant for this analysis is the fragmentary and rather formal assimilation of European regulations in the field of animal husbandry. specific types in a typology of the assimilation of modernity and progress in local communities in Romania. The theoretical perspective of the analysis that I propose is that of social innovation. Starting from a more general typology, of the assimilation of modernity and progress in local communities in Romania, I propose to identify a typology of the differentiated impact of technical progress on some rural communities in mountainous and sub-mountainous areas, where animal husbandry continues to represent an important economic activity at the local level. In addition to the data collected in the case studies carried out in mountainous and sub-mountainous areas, another important source of data is the data collected within the ADER 21.1.1. project, mentioned above through the questionnaire addressed to representatives of institutions providing technological innovation in the agro-zootechnical field. The premise of the proposed research is that the assimilation of technological innovation into specific community forms of social innovation can increase the efficiency of animal husbandry, without leading to the loss of local identity.

Keywords: technical progress, technological innovation, social innovation, local community, social development

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES OF THE EUROPEAN AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

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The expansion of agri-food production is indispensable for food security; however, this objective is constrained by the negative environmental effects of agriculture. This paper analyzes how agricultural, demographic, and sustainability-related factors shape agri-food production and environmental outcomes in the European Union. The study focuses on the period 2011–2022 and applies econometric methods. The findings reveal that agri-food production results from a complex interaction among agricultural land use, population dynamics, and environmental policies. Agricultural land contributes positively to production but exerts negative indirect effects on the environment, particularly through the intensive use of chemical inputs. The GMM system confirms the negative impact of food production and cultivated land on environmental quality, as well as the indirect role of population. Although the European agri-food sector demonstrates a gradual move toward sustainability, the results indicate the need to accelerate this process. Forecasts suggest a decline in total emissions accompanied by an increase in agricultural emissions. The study offers policy recommendations focused on innovation, efficiency, and sustainability.

Keywords: agri-food production, growth, sustainability, EU27

SHAPING RURAL DEVELOPMENT AFTER 2027: THE FUTURE OF THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY BETWEEN FOOD SECURITY AND GREEN AMBITIONS**Andreea - Emanuela DRAGOI**

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The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the oldest, most debated, and one of the most heavily funded policies of the European Union (EU). Over the last six decades, the CAP has undergone multiple reforms within successive Multiannual Financial Frameworks, demonstrating a remarkable capacity to respond to evolving economic, environmental, and geopolitical challenges while supporting both the European agricultural sector and farmers across the Member States. This paper examines how the post-2027 CAP can reconcile food security with sustainability and the green transition by comparing the current financing framework with the budgetary architecture proposed for the next programming period, using Romania as a case study. The research employs a comparative analysis of the institutional architecture, policy objectives, and financial allocations underpinning the current CAP and the proposed post-2027 framework. The findings suggest that National and Regional Partnerships are expected to introduce a more integrated and coordinated governance framework for EU funding. By bringing together financial instruments supporting food security, rural development, cohesion, and social policies within a single policy framework, this tool has the potential to strengthen policy coherence, enhance complementarities among funding instruments, and contribute to more resilient rural development while safeguarding food security.

Keywords: Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), National and Regional Partnerships (NRPs), food security, sustainable rural development, EU funding, green transition, Romania

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ROMANIA'S AGRICULTURE**Marie Jacqueline Cosette LEONTE**

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The paper addresses two interrelated aspects: 1. It examines the challenges posed by climate change to Romanian agriculture, and 2. It analyses the overall carbon footprint at the farm gate in Romania as the principal indicator of the Romanian agriculture environmental impact. In brief, the study explores both the impact of climate change on agricultural farms and the impact of agricultural farming on the environment within the context of Romanian agriculture. Within this complex and dynamic context, Romania faces a dual challenge: (1) adapting the agricultural sector to a changing climate by reducing vulnerabilities and enhancing resilience; and (2) reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated by agriculture through technological innovation, optimized resource use, and the transition toward sustainable agricultural practices. The study provides both a solid theoretical foundation and a strong empirical basis grounded in official data and up-to-date institutional perspectives. The research adopts an interdisciplinary approach, integrating perspectives from environmental economics, agricultural economics, public policy, applied climatology, and climate risk management. This interdisciplinary approach enables the development of a coherent perspective on the interdependence between climate change and Romanian agriculture, highlighting its economic, institutional, and strategic implications.

Keywords: climate change, environment, Romanian agriculture, GHG emissions, Carbon Footprint

THE FOOD CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR: A DYNAMIC ANALYSIS OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

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Current patterns of economic development reflect the characteristics of a consumer society, marked by increasing consumption across a wide range of goods. Over time, consumption has often been regarded as an important driver of economic growth. Food consumption represents a fundamental component of human needs and has undergone a complex evolution, characterized by both periods of expansion and crisis. Changes in food consumption are reflected not only in the quantity consumed, but also in the quality of food and in broader consumption behaviour shaped by population characteristics and preferences. This paper analyses food consumption patterns in Romania in comparison with selected highly developed and less developed countries. The main objective is to examine the dynamics of food consumption in quantitative and qualitative terms and to assess its contribution to economic growth, while also considering the role of related economic sectors and social factors. Statistical data from the last five years indicate a slight decline in food consumption and changes in the composition of the consumption basket. In caloric terms, average consumption decreased from 3,533 calories per person per day in 2023 to 3,528 calories in 2024. In 2024, the average daily quantity of food consumed per person was 2,250 grams, 16 grams less than in 2023. Food accounts for approximately 25% of the Romanian consumer basket. The study addresses two research questions: What factors determine the dynamics of food consumption, and how do food consumption behaviour models contribute to economic growth? The results indicate an oscillating pattern of food consumption, with qualitative compromises often influenced by well-being, accessibility, attractive prices, and other consumption-related factors. Cross-country comparisons highlight differences in food consumption models. The findings suggest that quantitative consumption patterns continue to play a stronger role than quality-oriented models in shaping the contribution of food consumption to economic growth.

Keywords: food consumption; models; behaviours; economic growth; contribution

ANALYSIS OF THE EVOLUTION OF PEA CULTIVATION AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL 2018-2024

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The main aim of this paper is to analyze the development of pea cultivation in Romania compared to the main European Union member states during the period 2018–2024, by evaluating the key economic and statistical indicators specific to this agricultural sector. In this regard, the cultivated areas, the production obtained, consumption, as well as the evolution of foreign trade, including imports, exports, and the trade balance, were analyzed. The analysis carried out for the 2018–2024 period highlights that Romania ranks among the last in the European Union when it comes to pea cultivation area and production, showing a sharp decrease in cultivated areas and significant fluctuations in production. In contrast, France maintains its position as a European leader both in terms of cultivated area and production, while countries like Sweden and the Netherlands are seeing positive developments.

Keywords: Analysis, peas, climate changes, evolution

TERRITORIAL DISTRIBUTION OF CERTIFIED MOUNTAIN HONEY IN ROMANIA: ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES

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In Romania, honey certified as a mountain product is one of the most important agri-food products obtained in mountain areas, contributing to rural economic development and the valorisation of biodiversity and beekeeping traditions. This paper analyses the territorial distribution of certified apicultural products recorded in the National Register of Mountain Products (RNPM) and identifies the main counties involved in mountain beekeeping. The research draws on official RNPM data and uses descriptive statistical methods and cartographic representations to assess product distribution at county level. The results indicate 608 certified products, with registrations in mountain counties with beekeeping traditions, including Vâlcea, Maramureș, Neamț, Caraș-Severin, Cluj, Harghita and Sibiu. The territorial analysis reveals an uneven distribution influenced by nectar and pollen resources, wild flora and the level of development of the beekeeping sector. Mountain product certification contributes to increasing the added value of apicultural products and promoting sustainable development in Romanian mountain areas.

Keywords: honey, mountain product, mountain beekeeping, National Register of Mountain Products, rural development, Romania

SMALL FARMS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE IRPINIA CASE

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Small farms represent a key component of European agriculture and play an important role in promoting sustainable rural development, particularly in peripheral and inner areas facing structural economic challenges. This paper investigates the contribution of small farms to sustainable development through the case of Irpinia, an inland area of Southern Italy characterised by demographic decline, fragmented agricultural structures, and valuable natural and cultural resources. Adopting a territorial economics perspective, the study examines how small farms contribute to the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of rural areas. The analysis focuses on their multifunctional role in supporting local employment, preserving biodiversity and traditional landscapes, enhancing high-quality agrifood production, and strengthening territorial resilience. At the same time, it identifies the main constraints affecting their competitiveness, including limited investment capacity, farm fragmentation, population ageing, and restricted access to markets and innovation. The findings suggest that the value of small farms extends beyond conventional productivity measures, as they generate significant environmental and social public goods while supporting the long-term viability of rural communities. The paper argues that targeted place-based policies, stronger local value chains, greater cooperation among producers, and improved access to innovation and financial support are essential to enhance the economic sustainability of small farms. The Irpinia case provides useful insights for designing rural development strategies consistent with the objectives of the Common Agricultural Policy, the European Green Deal, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Keywords: Small farms, Economic sustainability, Rural development, Farm performance, Place-based policies

DIGITALIZATION, GREEN INNOVATION AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN AZERBAIJAN: ECONOMETRIC EVIDENCE FROM ARDL AND COINTEGRATION APPROACHES

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Agricultural productivity plays a fundamental role in ensuring food security, promoting rural development, and supporting sustainable economic growth. As agriculture becomes increasingly influenced by digital transformation, innovation, and environmental sustainability, identifying the factors that improve productivity has become an important research priority. Although Azerbaijan has implemented several policies promoting digital agriculture, technological innovation, and sustainable resource management, empirical evidence regarding their combined effects on agricultural productivity remains limited. The main objective of this study is to investigate the short-run and long-run impacts of foreign direct investment (FDI), information and communication technology (ICT), human capital, research and development (R&D), trade openness, and renewable energy consumption on agricultural productivity in Azerbaijan. The study addresses two research questions: (1) Does a stable long-run equilibrium relationship exist between agricultural productivity and its major economic, technological, and environmental determinants? (2) Which explanatory variables exert the strongest influence on agricultural productivity in both the short and long run? The empirical analysis employs annual data covering the period 2000–2025, obtained primarily from the World Bank database. Agricultural productivity is represented by agricultural value added, while all explanatory variables are transformed into natural logarithms to improve estimation efficiency and reduce heteroscedasticity. The methodological framework combines the Augmented Dickey–Fuller (ADF), Phillips–Perron (PP), and KPSS unit root tests, the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) Bounds testing approach, and the Error Correction Model (ECM) to estimate both long-run and short-run relationships. The robustness and validity of the estimated model are evaluated using Breusch–Godfrey, Breusch–Pagan–Godfrey, ARCH, Jarque–Bera, Ramsey RESET, CUSUM/CUSUMSQ diagnostic tests. The empirical findings confirm a stable long-run relationship among the variables. ICT development, human capital, and agricultural land positively influence agricultural productivity, whereas renewable energy consumption and R&D expenditure exhibit weak or negative effects during the sample period. FDI and trade openness have limited direct effects. Diagnostic and stability tests indicate that the estimated model is statistically reliable, robust, and structurally stable, providing valuable policy implications for sustainable agricultural development in Azerbaijan.

Keywords: Agricultural productivity, ARDL, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Human capital, Azerbaijan

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE HORTICULTURAL SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The horticultural sector represents one of the most important components of the agri-food economy of the Republic of Moldova, contributing significantly to agricultural output, export revenues, rural employment, and regional development. In the context of increasing market volatility, climate-related risks, geopolitical uncertainties, and the European Union accession process, enhancing the economic resilience and sustainable competitiveness of horticultural

value chains has become a strategic priority. The purpose of this study is to assess the relationships between production costs, value-added creation, and profit distribution along horticultural value chains and to identify the main factors influencing their resilience and competitiveness. The research is based on a qualitative and quantitative analytical approach, combining comparative analysis, economic interpretation, and synthesis of statistical and sectoral information. The study examines cost structures and profit margins across the main stages of the value chain, including primary production, post-harvest handling, storage, processing, logistics, wholesale distribution, and retail trade. The results reveal significant asymmetries in value distribution, with primary producers bearing the highest production risks and operational costs while obtaining relatively limited profit margins compared to downstream actors. The findings also indicate that insufficient access to modern storage facilities, post-harvest infrastructure, and integrated marketing channels constrains producers' capacity to capture higher value added. Investments in logistics, cold-chain systems, product standardization, and producer cooperation are identified as key determinants for strengthening economic resilience, improving market integration, and increasing the long-term competitiveness of the horticultural sector in the Republic of Moldova.

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Keywords: horticultural value chains, economic resilience, sustainable competitiveness, value-added distribution, production costs, post-harvest infrastructure, market integration, Republic of Moldova

THE AGRICULTURAL LAND MARKET IN BULGARIA IN THE CONTEXT OF ECONOMIC AND GEOPOLITICAL UNCERTAINTY

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Agricultural land represents one of the most valuable natural and economic resources, which simultaneously performs production, investment, social and environmental functions. In the context of growing global economic instability and intensifying geopolitical conflicts, its importance as a strategic asset is increasing. In recent years, the development of the agricultural land market in Bulgaria has been determined by the influence of a number of factors – inflationary processes, changes in interest rates, energy crisis, disrupted supply chains, the war in Ukraine and the transformations in European agricultural policy. The purpose of this study is to analyze the main trends in the development of the agricultural land market in Bulgaria in the context of economic and geopolitical uncertainty and to assess the prospects for its future development. A complex of quantitative and qualitative methods are applied in the study, including statistical analysis of the dynamics of agricultural land prices and lease payments, comparative and structural analysis of regional differences, documentary analysis of official statistical sources and SWOT analysis to assess the main factors influencing the market. The results show that the agricultural land market in Bulgaria remains relatively stable despite the increasing economic and geopolitical uncertainty. A persistent trend towards an increase in the value of quality arable land is established, driven by limited supply, European support, investment interest and the role of land as a protected real asset. The analysis shows significant regional differences, with the highest investment attractiveness being possessed by areas with fertile soils, good infrastructure and developed agricultural production. On this basis, recommendations have been formulated to increase the sustainability of the market through the development of irrigation infrastructure, the implementation of sustainable agricultural practices and stimulation of investments in innovation and digitalization.

Keywords: agricultural land market, agricultural land prices, economic uncertainty, geopolitical risks, agricultural investments, sustainable development, real estate market

INNOVATION, DIGITALIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL MARKET COMPETITIVENESS IN AZERBAIJAN: CONSTRUCTION OF A COMPOSITE INDEX AND ECONOMETRIC EVIDENCE

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This study investigates the effects of innovation and digitalization on sustainable agricultural market competitiveness in Azerbaijan by developing a novel Sustainable Agricultural Market Competitiveness Index (SAMCI). Unlike previous studies that rely on a single proxy, the proposed composite index integrates economic, environmental and innovation-related dimensions of agricultural competitiveness into a unified measure. Annual data covering the period 2000–2025 are employed. The empirical analysis applies the ARDL bounds testing approach, complemented by Johansen cointegration, FMOLS, DOLS, CCR, and Vector Error Correction Model (VECM) estimators to examine both long-run and short-run relationships. The results reveal a stable long-run equilibrium relationship among the variables. Research and development expenditure, trade openness and the interaction between green development and digitalization (GREENICT) positively affect agricultural market competitiveness in the long run. In contrast, foreign direct investment and the human capital indicator exhibit negative long-run coefficients. The error correction mechanism confirms rapid convergence toward long-run equilibrium following short-run shocks. The robustness of the findings is further supported by alternative cointegration estimators and a comprehensive set of diagnostic and stability tests. The findings highlight the importance of integrating digital technologies, green transformation and innovation policies to strengthen the competitiveness of Azerbaijan's agricultural markets and promote sustainable rural development.

Keywords: Agricultural competitiveness, Sustainable agriculture, Composite index, Digitalization, Innovation, Green ICT, ARDL, FMOLS, DOLS, CCR, VECM, Azerbaijan

THE FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY: AN ANALYSIS OF ACCOUNTING INFORMATION IN AN AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISE

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Financial sustainability has become a strategic priority for agricultural enterprises operating in an increasingly volatile economic environment characterized by market uncertainty, rising production costs, and continuous investment requirements. Within this context, accounting information derived from annual financial statements provides a reliable basis for evaluating financial performance and supporting evidence-based managerial decision-making. This study investigates the relationship between accounting information and financial sustainability through a longitudinal case study of an agricultural enterprise during the 2021 to 2023 period. The research employs financial statement analysis by examining the balance sheet, income statement, and a comprehensive set of financial indicators, including liquidity, solvency, capital structure, working capital, and financial profitability. The objective is to assess the enterprise's financial position while identifying the factors influencing its long-term sustainability. The findings reveal that the company experienced substantial growth in total assets and turnover, primarily driven by significant investments in tangible fixed assets. However, this expansion was accompanied by a continuous decline in net profit, financial profitability, and liquidity, together with a considerable increase in indebtedness. Although the enterprise maintained a positive working capital position and a satisfactory level of solvency, the results indicate a progressive weakening of its financial resilience.

The study argues that accounting information should not be regarded solely as a reporting instrument but also as a strategic management tool capable of identifying emerging financial vulnerabilities before they affect organizational stability. By integrating traditional financial analysis with the concept of financial sustainability, the research demonstrates that sustainable business growth depends not only on expansion but also on maintaining an appropriate balance between investment, profitability, liquidity, and financing structure. The findings provide practical insights for managers seeking to strengthen the long-term financial resilience and sustainable development of agricultural enterprises.

Keywords: financial sustainability, accounting information, agricultural enterprise, financial resilience

THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND MOLDOVAN AGRICULTURE: PROSPECTS FOR CONVERGENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS

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The Republic of Moldova, as a candidate country for accession, is in an accelerated process of harmonizing agricultural policies with the European acquis, especially in the areas of direct payments, rural development, quality standards and environmental measures. The purpose of the article is to analyze the process of aligning the agricultural sector of the Republic of Moldova with the principles and instruments of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union, as well as to identify the main challenges and opportunities that this convergence generates for the competitiveness and sustainability of national agriculture. The methodology used combines documentary analysis of the main European and national normative acts, a synthesis of specialized literature on the CAP and national agricultural policy, as well as a comparative approach to support instruments. The main results highlight that the alignment with the CAP offers important opportunities for infrastructure modernization, productivity growth and integration into the European single market, but faces significant structural obstacles: fragmentation of agricultural holdings, reduced administrative capacity, the absence of a consolidated system of direct payments and the still modest level of absorption of European funds. The conclusions underline the need for a coherent national strategy for preparing for the implementation of CAP instruments, which would combine financial support with institutional reforms and measures to strengthen agricultural value chains.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: Common Agricultural Policy, agricultural sector, Republic of Moldova, EU alignment, competitiveness, rural development, direct payments

CHALLENGES OF THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EU ACCESSION

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The paper presents a review of the main challenges of the agri-food sector at the current stage of the Republic of Moldova's pre-accession to the EU. The problems caused by climate change are mainly taken into account. At the same time, measures to counteract and mitigate their negative consequences are highlighted to increase the resilience of the food sector. The technological, demographic, land and financial aspects are also taken into account to complete the series of problems faced by the agri-food sector of the Republic of Moldova. The analysis was carried out based on the main agricultural food products, that constitute about 70% of the total value of agricultural production in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2020-2025. The regional comparison of the yields for some of the most important crops shows a

significant gap between the yields in the R. of Moldova and those in neighbouring countries.

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Keywords: agricultural production, climate change, EU accession, agri-food sector resilience

AGRI-FOOD EXPORTS – A FACTOR IN THE ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The agricultural sector represents one of the strategic pillars of the Republic of Moldova's economy, making a significant contribution to the formation of gross domestic product, employment, and the development of foreign trade. Thus, the performance of agri-food exports directly influences the competitiveness of the sector, the strengthening of economic resilience, and the prospects for sustainable development, contributing to the valorization of agricultural potential and the integration of the national economy into international markets. In the context of intensifying climate change, disruptions in global supply chains, geopolitical instability, and the acceleration of the European integration process, strengthening export capacity has become an essential element for increasing the resilience of the agricultural sector. The purpose of the research is to evaluate the role of agri-food exports in consolidating economic resilience and promoting the sustainable development of agriculture in the Republic of Moldova, by identifying the main structural trends, opportunities, and vulnerabilities of foreign trade. The research methodology combines quantitative and qualitative analysis of statistical indicators regarding agri-food foreign trade, using comparative methods, analysis of the dynamics and structure of exports, geographical analysis of trade flows, as well as an assessment of the impact of trade agreements on the competitiveness of Moldovan agricultural products. The research draws on official statistical data for the period 2010–2025 and national and European strategic documents concerning the development of agriculture and international trade. The results indicate a clear reconfiguration of exports: a dominant orientation toward the EU market, geographical expansion of deliveries, and a gradual increase in the share of products with a higher degree of processing. At the same time, the main constraints limiting the external competitiveness of agriculture are identified, including dependence on climatic conditions, insufficiently developed logistical infrastructure, market volatility, and the low level of domestic processing. The analysis demonstrates that the diversification of export markets, investments in digitalization, innovation, post-harvest infrastructure, and alignment with EU standards contribute significantly to increasing economic resilience and consolidating the sustainability of the agri-food sector. In conclusion, agri-food exports represent a strategic instrument for the modernization of agriculture in the Republic of Moldova, attracting investments, and ensuring sustainable economic growth in the Republic of Moldova.

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Keywords: agri-food exports, economic resilience, sustainable development, competitiveness, agriculture

DOES CROP PORTFOLIO DIVERSIFICATION LOWER THE COST OF CLIMATE RISK? EVIDENCE FROM MOLDOVA'S SUBSIDIZED AGRICULTURAL INSURANCE SYSTEM

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Moldova's subsidized agricultural insurance system has evolved into a layered climate-risk governance model combining ex ante insurance subsidies with ex post emergency compensation. Crop shares, peril-category shares and loss ratios are usually presented as separate figures. It is not yet known whether the year-to-year mix of the insured portfolio is linked to how costly the system is to run. The research aims to quantify the degree of concentration in Moldova's insured crop portfolio and to test whether years of greater diversification across sunflower, maize, wheat and other crops correspond to a lower loss ratio than years of higher concentration. A second question asks whether reliance on reactive, ex post compensation decisions has itself intensified in the most recent years, independently of the loss ratio, which would point to a governance system drifting toward reactive management despite the formal expansion of insurance coverage. Using official statistics compiled by AIPA and the National Bank of Moldova, together with the inventory of legislative and government acts on agricultural risk support (2004–2025), the analysis constructs a Herfindahl-type concentration index from annual crop-area shares (2020–2024) and relates its movement to the reported loss ratio, while separately counting how often reactive compensation decisions were issued. Calculation of the concentration index from annual crop-area shares gives a value of 0.42 in 2020, falling to 0.29 in 2021 and 2023 and rising again to 0.30 in 2022 and 0.34 in 2024. Over the three years for which a loss ratio is available, the lowest concentration (2023, 0.29) coincides with the lowest loss ratio (42.3%), while the highest concentration among them (2022, 0.30) coincides with the highest loss ratio (58.3%) — a pattern consistent with, though not conclusive proof of, diversification acting as an informal risk-management mechanism. Separately, two of the three reactive compensation decisions identified over 2004–2025 were issued in 2024 and 2025 alone, suggesting a recent shift toward emergency measures even as the loss ratio shows no corresponding deterioration.

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Keywords: agricultural insurance, risk governance, portfolio diversification, loss ratio

MACROECONOMIC PROPORTIONALITY OF SECTORAL INVESTMENT AND LONG-RUN AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT: EVIDENCE FROM AZERBAIJAN

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It should be noted that the study of macroeconomic proportions in a sectoral context allows for an effective analysis of the current state of various sectors of the national economy. The main goal of the study is to characterize the impact of domestic and foreign investments in fixed capital on output in the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors of Azerbaijan and to study intra-sector proportions within the framework of this impact. In the study, a multifactor regression model based on the dynamic least squares method was constructed using the quantitative research method and the intra-sector proportionality coefficients proposed by the author were comparatively analyzed. As a result of the study, it was determined that a 1 percent increase in domestic investments in fixed capital in the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors of Azerbaijan increases output in this sector by 0.24 percent after 6 years. At the same time, a 1 percent increase in foreign investments in fixed capital in the sector in question increases output in the agricultural sector by 0.14 percent after 6 years. The proportionality coefficient of domestic investments was determined as 4.08, and the proportionality coefficient of foreign investments was determined as 7.09, which indicates that there may be disproportion in the sector in question. The main limitation of the study is the lack of monthly indicators that would allow for the expansion of the sample size.

Keywords: macroeconomic proportions, disproportionality, agriculture, lagged investment, Azerbaijan

COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE, COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE AND GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE COMPETITIVENESS OF THE MOLDOVAN HORTICULTURAL SECTOR

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The Moldovan horticultural sector holds a particular importance in the country's economy, marking positive evolutions in the recent years. Although Moldova has a significant comparative advantage in the production and export of fruits, this advantage remains insufficiently exploited in the absence of effective coordination of the value chain and investments oriented towards modernization, quality and added value. Therefore, the aim of the paper is to provide a theoretical foundation for the ways in which investments directed at the development of value chains can contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the horticultural sector in the Republic of Moldova. The used methodology is of theoretical nature, examining four economic theories: the theory of comparative advantage, theory of competitive advantage and value chains, as well as the theory of global value chains. The main results show that the theory of comparative advantage justifies the country's specialization in horticulture, but it is static and insufficient to explain the mechanisms of increasing competitiveness in the long term, while Porter's theory of competitive advantage provides the necessary tools to transform comparative advantage into competitive advantage. The combination of the three theories creates a robust framework that links investments, value chain coordination and competitive advantage, constituting the theoretical basis for further empirical research.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: competitiveness, horticultural sector, comparative advantage, competitive advantage, value chains, investments, Republic of Moldova

SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOLDOVA: ALIGNMENT WITH PILLAR II OF THE EU COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

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In the context of the Republic of Moldova's European integration process, sustainable rural development has become a strategic priority closely connected with the modernization of the agri-food sector and the gradual alignment of national policies with the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy. This study investigates the extent to which the National Agricultural and Rural Development Strategies for 2014–2020 and 2023–2030 contribute to convergence with Pillar II of the CAP and to the strengthening of competitiveness, territorial cohesion, and quality of life in rural communities. The research is guided by two central questions: To what extent has the implementation of rural development policies advanced alignment with Pillar II of the CAP and which institutional, financial, and demographic constraints continue to limit the effectiveness of these policies in the Republic of Moldova? These questions are examined through a mixed-method approach that combines documentary and comparative analysis of strategic documents and legislation with quantitative processing of official statistical data on rural population dynamics, employment, farm structure, agricultural output, and agro-food exports. The results reveal a dual trend. On the one hand, Moldova has achieved visible progress through the implementation of national strategies, LEADER initiatives, IFAD-supported programs, and the gradual integration of European rural development principles into public policy. On the other hand, the overall impact remains constrained by land fragmentation, soil degradation, limited financial resources, administrative weaknesses, and persistent depopulation of rural areas. The study concludes that closer alignment with Pillar II of the CAP can significantly improve rural competitiveness and territorial cohesion, but only if accompanied by stronger governance, more efficient allocation of financial resources, support for small and medium-sized farms, investment in rural infrastructure and services, and continuous adaptation of agricultural policies to climate change. Sustainable rural development therefore depends not only on strategic convergence with the European Union, but also

on the capacity to transform that convergence into tangible economic and social results for rural communities.

The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: Sustainable rural development, Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Pillar II, Republic of Moldova, rural governance

VOLUME AND QUALITY LOSSES AS INDICATORS OF VALUE CHAIN ORGANISATION AND COMPETITIVENESS: THE WHEAT AND APPLE CHAINS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Post-harvest losses represent a structural drag on the export competitiveness of agricultural producers in transition economies. This article analyses volume and quality losses along the wheat and apple value chains of the Republic of Moldova as composite indicators of value chain organisation, and quantifies their opportunity cost for export performance on the EU market. Using the FAO EX-ACT Value Chain tool applied to 2019 reference data, the study identifies total annual losses of 87,3 tonnes in the wheat chain (7.5% of production, valued at USD 21-24 million) and 43,5 tonnes in the apple chain (approximately 7% of production, valued at USD 13-17 million). Loss hotspots are on-farm storage in wheat (3.0%) and transportation in apples (2.0%), both driven by under-investment in post-harvest infrastructure, extreme farm fragmentation (average holding 2.29 ha versus EU-27 average of 17.4 ha), and limited access to refrigerated logistics. Three intervention scenarios for each chain demonstrate that targeted investments could reduce wheat losses by 13,000-41,000 tonnes and apple losses by up to 21,700 tonnes per year, generating additional annual export revenues of USD 0.9-4.5 million for wheat and USD 1.7 million for apples. The findings underline that post-harvest loss reduction is a direct, quantifiable lever for enhancing agri-food export competitiveness under the EU-Moldova Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA), and inform policy design for the EU Growth Plan for Moldova (EUR 1.9 billion, 2025-2027).

Keywords: sectoral competitiveness, value chain, value capture, post-harvest losses, apple, wheat, Republic of Moldova, DCFTA

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF AGRITOURISM MANAGEMENT IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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The expansion of digital technologies is reshaping how rural tourism enterprises communicate with visitors, organise services and make managerial decisions. For the Republic of Moldova, where agritourism can contribute to the economic vitality of rural areas and the valorisation of local resources, digitalisation creates new possibilities but also raises managerial and organisational challenges. This paper aims to examine how digital transformation can support the improvement of agritourism management in the Republic of Moldova and to determine the opportunities and constraints associated with the adoption of digital solutions. The central research question is: In what ways can digital technologies improve managerial practices and contribute to the competitiveness and sustainable development of Moldovan agritourism businesses? The analysis focuses on practical areas of digital adoption, including online visibility and promotion, reservation platforms, communication through social media, digital marketing, and the use of information for managerial decision-making. Methodologically, the study applies a qualitative desk-research approach combining a critical review of recent academic literature with documentary analysis of relevant statistical and institutional sources. Comparative analysis of selected international practices is also used to identify digital solutions and managerial approaches that may be transferable to the Moldovan agritourism context. The preliminary findings indicate that digitalisation can improve the visibility, market access and managerial efficiency of agritourism businesses, while its effective adoption may be constrained by limited digital capabilities, uneven access to appropriate technologies and insufficient integration of digital tools into managerial processes. The comparative analysis also suggests that digital

solutions are most effective when their adoption is accompanied by adequate managerial skills and a clear understanding of business needs. These findings provide a basis for identifying directions to strengthen digital managerial capacity and support more competitive and resilient agritourism enterprises in the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: *agritourism, digital transformation, agritourism management, rural development, digital technologies*

BEYOND MIGRATION: UNDERSTANDING WHY PEOPLE STAY IN RURAL SOUTHEAST EUROPE

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Rural areas across Southeast Europe have undergone profound socio-economic transformation, with out-migration representing one of the most persistent structural challenges. While the economic and institutional drivers of migration such as unemployment, limited opportunities, and inadequate infrastructure are well documented, considerably less attention has been given to the drivers that motivated people to stay in their villages. Exploring these factors is crucial for informing sustainable rural development. Previous research suggests that subjective well-being (SWB) is negatively associated with migration intentions, indicating that individuals who are more satisfied with their lives are generally less inclined to consider moving. At the same time, place attachment has been identified as a central factor shaping rural staying, as emotional bonds, identity, and social rootedness strengthen individuals' desire to remain. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that both well-being and place attachment are relevant for understanding staying.

This study draws on the concepts of place attachment and well-being to explain rural residents' intention to stay. Using cross-sectional data from a rural household survey conducted in Albania, Kosovo, Romania, and Moldova, we apply multiple regression analysis to examine how these two constructs relate to the intention to stay. The intention to stay is the dependent variable, measured on a probability scale ranging from 0 to 100. Well-being is operationalized as a multidimensional construct comprising ten life dimensions drawn from the OECD Better Life Index, and place attachment is captured through a four-dimensional measure.

The results indicate that, among the four dimensions of place attachment, place identity and place dependence are significantly associated with the intention to stay, whereas the remaining two are not. Well-being is also positively associated with staying intentions. These findings underline the importance of emotional and functional bonds in understanding rural immobility. Rather than viewing staying solely as a consequence of limited opportunities, the results suggest that life satisfaction is closely intertwined with relational and place-based factors.

Keywords: staying intentions, place attachment, well-being, household survey, rural Southeast Europe.

INDIVIDUAL IMMOBILITY THROUGH THE LENS OF WELL-BEING IN RURAL AREAS: INSIGHTS FROM FOUR SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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Research on rural depopulation has predominantly examined out-migration and has primarily focused on economic aspects, while overlooking immobility and non-economic reasons. We address this gap by investigating how well-being is associated with individuals' intentions to remain in rural areas rather than migrate. We ground our analysis in Self-Determination Theory, which posits that fulfilling three universal psychological needs, i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness, promotes people's motivation, herein the intention to stay in rural areas. The individual intention to stay is explained by a multidimensional measure of well-being, the Index of Well-being, which accordingly maps its dimensions onto the three psychological needs elaborated in Self-Determination Theory. We use cross-sectional data collected in rural areas across four Southeast European countries, i.e., Moldova, Romania, Kosovo, and Albania. These countries provide a particularly valuable case for studying immobility, as they are among the European countries with the highest out-migration rates, with rural areas most affected by population decline.

Due to the bounded nature of our dependent variable as well as the concentration of observations at the upper bound, we employ fractional logit regression, controlling for socio-demographic and regional characteristics. Results indicate that well-being is positively associated with intentions to stay, in line with our theoretical framework. When examined at a more granular level, our analysis revealed that this relationship is stronger for relatedness, autonomy, and competence respectively.

These findings suggest that enhancing well-being in rural areas, by fostering environments that fulfill the three basic psychological needs may strengthen residents' intentions to stay. Such work has potential to inform rural development policies and strategies aimed at addressing rural depopulation in Southeast Europe.

Keywords: well-being, Index of Well-being (IoW), rural areas, Southeast Europe, Balkans, Albania, Kosovo, Romania, Moldova, rural depopulation, immobility.

PATHWAYS TO LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION AND VULNERABILITY AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE: EMPLOYMENT TRANSITIONS AND NEET DYNAMICS ACROSS TWO GGS WAVES

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This paper examines employment integration and NEET vulnerability among young people in Moldova between the 2020 and 2024 waves of the Generations and Gender Survey. It asks which transitions occurred between education or training, employment, unemployment, and inactivity, and how employment entry, NEET persistence, and NEET entry varied by gender, residence, education, and age.

The longitudinal sample comprises 1,073 respondents aged 14–35 at Wave 1 who participated in both waves and had valid activity-status data. Changes in respondents' activity status between Wave 1 and Wave 2 were analysed using transition matrices. NEET status included respondents neither employed nor in education or training. Bivariate relationships were tested using Pearson's chi-square and Cramer's V. Three binary logistic regressions examined employment entry among respondents not employed at Wave 1 (N = 676), NEET persistence among those initially NEET (N = 514), and NEET entry among those initially non-NEET (N = 559).

Employment increased from 37.0% at Wave 1 to 58.4% at Wave 2, while 78.3% of those already employed remained employed. Employment entry was recorded among 53.1% of respondents initially in education or training, 44.2% of the unemployed, and 44.9% of the inactive. This movement towards employment did not remove the risk of exclusion. Of those classified as NEET at Wave 1, 54.1% remained NEET four years later, while 21.6% of those initially outside NEET status had entered it by Wave 2.

Gender and educational attainment were statistically significant in all three adjusted models. Women had a lower likelihood of entering employment and a higher likelihood of remaining in or entering NEET status. Higher educational attainment was associated with a greater likelihood of employment entry and a lower likelihood of both adverse NEET transitions. Residence was significant at the bivariate level but not after adjustment, while age group was not statistically significant. The findings reveal two simultaneous developments linked to broader employment integration and continued labour-market vulnerability, particularly among women and young people with lower educational attainment.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024-2027).

Keywords: youth transitions; employment; NEET; longitudinal analysis; Generations and Gender Survey.

HOUSEHOLD MONEY MANAGEMENT AND ITS RELATION TO RELATIONSHIP COMMITMENT AND QUALITY

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Financial management by romantic couples depends on many factors, such as income, marital status and attitudes towards money. Important characteristics influencing the choice of the money management system are those related to the broadly defined stability and commitment of the relationship. The decision to pool finances is more often made by married couples than by cohabiting couples, and among cohabiting couples, this decision is more common among those who plan to marry. The lower probability of sharing finances for cohabiting couples is an effect that is obtained systematically and has gained the term “cohabitation gap” in the literature. Most likely, this is the result of cohabiting couples having, on average, a lower commitment to the relationship and a higher sense of its instability.

This study examines some of the findings obtained to date regarding the relationship between relationship commitment, using the latest panel data from the Generations and Gender Programme for Polish respondents (2025–2026). Furthermore, the study set out to examine the relationship between subjectively perceived relationship quality and the way in which financial resources are allocated.

The analysis covered 4,815 heterosexual respondents living with their partner. The survey questions covered the distribution of finances within the joint household (joint pool, partially separated pools, fully separated pools, whole wage system) as well as the structure of household expenditure (one partner pays for everything, partners pay equally, partners pay in proportion to their personal incomes).

Furthermore, cohabitation before marriage was found to reduce the level of financial pooling. Contemplating a break-up and lower relationship satisfaction are associated with a lower level of financial pooling. The results obtained will be discussed and considered in the context of generational changes favouring greater individualisation and independence among romantic partners.

Keywords: household money management; family economy; marriage; relationship quality.

POPULATION AGEING AND DEPOPULATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: REGIONAL PATTERNS AND CHALLENGES FOR DEMOGRAPHIC RESILIENCE

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Population ageing in the Republic of Moldova is unfolding in the context of sustained depopulation, low fertility and persistent migration losses. These demographic processes are transforming the age structure of the population and creating increasingly differentiated challenges for local communities, public services and social protection. This study aims to examine long-term population ageing in Moldova and recent regional disparities, and to assess how fertility, mortality and migration contribute to these patterns and shape the capacity of territories to adapt to demographic change.

The study addresses the following research question: How has population ageing evolved nationally and regionally in Moldova, which demographic mechanisms are associated with territorial differences in ageing, and what do these patterns imply for demographic and social resilience?

The analysis combines population census data for 1959–2024 with official vital statistics, migration data and international demographic databases. Age structure was examined by sex and residence, while district-level patterns were analysed for 2004–2024. Indicators included the share of population aged 65+, median age, an ageing index defined as persons aged 65+ per 100 persons aged 0–19, total fertility rates, net migration rates and life expectancy. Regional associations were assessed descriptively using Spearman rank correlations and non-parametric methods.

The findings highlight the need to move from uniform national responses toward territorially differentiated adaptation strategies, including age-friendly primary care, home-based and long-term care, and stronger service provision in depopulating communities.

Keywords: population ageing; depopulation; regional disparities; fertility; demographic resilience.

MAJOR LIFE TRANSITIONS AND CHANGES IN SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AMONG OLDER EUROPEANS: EVIDENCE FROM SHARE

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In recent decades, growing recognition that traditional economic measures are insufficient to capture social development has increased interest in subjective well-being as a complementary indicator of quality of life. Longitudinal analysis of subjective well-being can provide important insights into how major life events affect individuals' functioning and adaptation over time. This study examines how major life transitions are associated with changes in subjective well-being among adults aged 50 and over. It addresses two research questions: How are changes in health, partnership status, and labour market status associated with changes in subjective well-being? Do the effects of selected transitions, particularly widowhood and retirement, vary by gender, loneliness, and financial situation?

The analysis uses Waves 1–9 (2004–2022) of the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) and includes 24,535 respondents from 18 European countries and Israel. Changes in subjective well-being are measured using the CASP-12 scale and classified as deterioration, stability, or improvement between Waves 7 (2017) and 9 (2022). Generalized ordered logit models with individual-level weights and standard errors clustered across 127 regions are estimated. Additional models examine interaction effects involving gender, income, and loneliness.

The results show that health deterioration is associated with declining well-being, with stronger effects among men. Widowhood and recent spouse loss increase the risk of well-being deterioration primarily among men, partly due to higher loneliness, while these effects weaken over time, suggesting adaptation after bereavement. Retirement is associated with a temporary improvement in well-being compared with remaining employed or being a long-term retiree, although this association varies by gender and financial situation. Overall, the findings highlight that the effects of major life transitions on subjective well-being are heterogeneous and shaped by individual social and economic circumstances.

Keywords: subjective well-being; CASP; SHARE; generalized ordered logistic regression models; resilience.

MITIGATING DEMOGRAPHIC PRESSURES: SOMATIC PRACTICES AS A BIO-STRUCTURAL TOOL FOR ACTIVE AGEING AND HEALTHCARE SUSTAINABILITY

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Population ageing across Europe is generating mounting demographic pressure on healthcare systems, reflected in indicators such as the Active Ageing Index (AAI), Healthy Life Years (HLY), rising old-age dependency ratios, and expanding public health expenditure. While economic-sociology and public-policy literatures have established that secondary prevention can meaningfully reduce this fiscal burden, current active-ageing frameworks remain largely output-oriented, offering limited insight into the embodied mechanisms that sustain functional capacity into later life. This paper addresses that gap by examining somatic practice - specifically, the cultivation of bodily-kinesthetic intelligence through sustained yoga practice - as a potential bio-structural tool linking individual physiological self-regulation to population-level healthcare sustainability, guided by two research questions: (1) how practitioners describe embodied changes in bodily awareness and stress self-regulation through sustained practice, and (2) how these micro-level changes can be connected to macro-structural indicators of active ageing and healthcare sustainability.

The study adopts a mixed-methods, two-tier design. At the macro level, secondary data from Eurostat, the WHO, and UNECE establish the structural context of demographic pressure. At the micro level, twelve semi-structured interviews with long-term yoga practitioners are analyzed thematically, isolating the kinesthetic-intelligence dimension: interoceptive awareness, breath-based regulation, somatization–emotion correlation, and early burnout detection. This paper draws on Gardner's (1983) concept of bodily-kinesthetic intelligence and the WHO's Healthy Ageing model (2021-2030), which centers on functional ability and intrinsic capacity, alongside economic-sociology literature on secondary prevention as a means of reducing healthcare's fiscal burden.

By triangulating structural indicators with lived, embodied accounts, the paper argues that kinesthetic intelligence functions as a plausible micro-mechanism of secondary prevention, offering a novel, sociologically grounded contribution to active-ageing and healthcare-sustainability debates. Mihaela Dragomir

Keywords: Active Ageing, Demographic Resilience, Quality of Life, Healthy Life Years, Yoga.

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL SUPPORT IN REDEFINING PERSONAL FULFILMENT AMONG WOMEN EXPERIENCING INFERTILITY AND INVOLUNTARY CHILDLESSNESS IN ROMANIA

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Persistent sub-replacement fertility in Romania is predominantly addressed through pronatalist financial incentives, leaving the lived experiences of involuntary childlessness marginal to demographic and public health agendas. This study investigates how emotional support contributes to identity reconstruction and the redefinition of personal fulfilment among women navigating infertility and involuntary childlessness, while drawing critical implications for psychosocial services adapting to demographic change.

Adopting a comparative, diachronic qualitative design, the analysis synthesizes two distinct empirical studies: (1) data from the Romanian component of the EU FP7 FamiliesAndSocieties project (2014–2015), comprising 40 in-depth interviews with childless women and 10 expert interviews; and (2) a 2026 dataset featuring six in-depth thematic interviews with infertile women aged 36–44, paired with a pilot psychosocial group intervention. Data were subjected to thematic analysis and interpreted through the theoretical lenses of ambiguous loss, stigma, stress-and-coping, and the biopsychosocial model.

Findings indicate that involuntary childlessness is overwhelmingly experienced as an existential rupture and a socially unvalidated form of grief. This distress is compounded by pervasive pronatalist expectations, reductive medicalisation, severe financial strain, regional healthcare disparities, and fragmented psychosocial support. Across both datasets, emotional support—derived from partners, peer networks, psychotherapists, faith communities, and

creative practices—emerges as a primary catalyst for resilience. Such support enables women to separate self-worth from reproductive outcomes, challenge self-stigmatising narratives, and reconstruct agency and meaning beyond biological motherhood. The 2026 pilot further demonstrates that professionally facilitated, resource-oriented group spaces foster rapid mutual validation and narrative reframing, although its single-session scope limits conclusions regarding longitudinal efficacy.

Ultimately, the study demonstrates that adapting to population change requires moving beyond financial incentives. Public healthcare pathways should systematically integrate social work, psychological counselling, and equitable referral mechanisms. Establishing a person-centred psychosocial infrastructure aligns demographic policy with human dignity, resilience, and evidence-based public health.

Keywords: female infertility; involuntary childlessness; emotional support; public health policy; qualitative research.

CHANGES IN WOMEN’S SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE AUTONOMY IN MOLDOVA: EVIDENCE FROM GGS WAVES 2020 AND 2024

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Women’s ability to make informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use, and health care is a key dimension of sexual and reproductive autonomy and is captured by Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.6.1. This study examines changes in women’s sexual and reproductive autonomy in the Republic of Moldova between 2020 and 2024. It addresses two main questions: how women’s ability to make informed decisions has changed over time, and which socio-demographic characteristics are associated with improvements or deterioration in autonomy.

The analysis uses longitudinal data from the first two waves of the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS-II). We examine changes among approximately 600 panel respondents who were married or cohabiting at both interviews and were aged 16–45 at baseline. Independent decision-making is assessed through the three dimensions underlying SDG 5.6.1: the ability to refuse sexual intercourse, decision-making regarding contraceptive use, and decision-making concerning personal health care. Descriptive longitudinal analysis is complemented by regression models identifying factors associated with transitions in autonomy.

The findings indicate an overall improvement in women’s sexual and reproductive autonomy between the two survey waves. Most women maintained independent decision-making over time, while a substantial minority experienced changes in their autonomy status. Improvements were more frequent than deterioration. Women with tertiary education were more likely to improve their autonomy, whereas important regional differences were observed, with less favourable dynamics in some parts of the country. Deterioration was also more frequently reported among immigrant women. Among women lacking full autonomy, the ability to make independent decisions regarding sexual relations emerged as the main limiting dimension.

Overall, the results show that progress towards SDG 5.6.1 is accompanied by persistent individual, educational, and territorial inequalities. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening sexual autonomy and addressing broader socioeconomic and regional disparities in policies aimed at advancing women’s reproductive empowerment in the Republic of Moldova.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024–2027).

Keywords: sexual and reproductive autonomy; informed decision-making; SDG 5.6.1; women; GGS; longitudinal analysis; Moldova.

DIGITAL AGEISM AND PROCEDURAL ALGORITHMIC FAIRNESS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF OLDER ADULTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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This study examines digital inclusion among older adults in the Republic of Moldova beyond conventional indicators of access and connectivity, proposing the concept of digital ageism — the design of technological and institutional systems on assumptions of homogeneity and decline, rather than on observed actual competence — as an explanatory framework for the persistent gaps in this population's algorithmic autonomy.

The research addresses three questions: (1) To what extent does older adults' technological connectivity in Moldova translate into real capacity to control, understand, and contest AI-based systems? (2) Does chronological age account for this gap, or do other factors — education, prior experience with AI — play a more consistent role? (3) What institutional mechanisms reproduce or mitigate this pattern?

The study follows a mixed-methods design, combining a quantitative survey among older people aged 60+ on critical AI literacy, procedural fairness, and UTAUT2 dimensions, with qualitative survey based on interviews with institutional actors in Moldova's active ageing system.

Results show a population that is highly connected technologically but considerably less autonomous algorithmically: fewer than half of respondents can control personalization, know how to seek redress, or can adjust accessibility settings, with substantial uncertainty on every indicator. Education and prior experience with AI differentiate these capacities more consistently than chronological age — a finding that challenges explanations based solely on age-related decline. The qualitative data converge on the same pattern: the absence of early-warning institutional mechanisms and a design model that treats age as a sufficient proxy for needs and competence.

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Keywords: digital ageism, algorithmic fairness, older adults, Republic of Moldova.

RECONSTRUCTING DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY BESSARABIA USING REVISION LISTS AND PARISH REGISTERS

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Revision lists and parish registers represent valuable but still underutilised sources for reconstructing the population dynamics of rural localities in 19th-century Bessarabia. As population-recording instruments of the tsarist period, the revision lists of 1835, 1850, and 1858 provide information on household composition, age, sex, relationship to the head of the household, deaths, disabilities, and migration, while parish registers document major vital events, such as births, marriages, and deaths. This study aims to reconstruct the population of the village of Jevreni, Criuleni, between 1835 and 1858 by linking information from three revisions with events recorded in parish registers. It examines changes in household composition between revision dates and traces the life trajectories of the village's inhabitants, with particular attention to their contributions to changes in the population structure and dynamics. The methodological approach combines historical-demographic and genealogical methods, in which individuals are identified and linked across all three revisions using all available demographic characteristics. The resulting longitudinal records are complemented by events documented in parish registers, allowing the reconstruction of individual life courses and providing a basis for assessing population change between successive revision dates. The study demonstrates how the systematic integration of revision lists and parish registers can provide a basis for extending the reconstruction of population dynamics and family change in other rural localities across 19th-century Bessarabia. Ultimately, the results provide an opportunity to analyse the main components of population dynamics, such as natality, nuptiality, mortality, and longevity, as well as to identify the effects of historical events on demographic change.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024-2027).

Keywords: historical demography, 19-th century Bessarabia, revision lists, parish registers.

MOLDOVAN LOCATIONS AND DISTANCES DATASET: DESCRIPTION AND POTENTIAL APPLICATION IN SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH

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Road connectivity is one of the most important factors influencing social and economic processes. Such infrastructure is particularly important in predominantly rural countries with underdeveloped railway networks. Moldova is a small Eastern European country, and the majority of its population lives in rural areas. However, data on distances between localities are not readily available.

This dataset addresses this gap by providing calculated travel times and distances between Moldovan localities. It is based on administrative data and open-source data from OpenStreetMap. These calculations are used to conduct an exploratory analysis of spatial inequalities in Moldova. The rural accessibility index (RAI) is calculated, providing a benchmark that had not been established for Moldova since 2006. The analysis suggests that the results depend strongly on how paved roads are defined. Depending on the operationalization used, the RAI ranges from 87% to 99%, representing a significant improvement compared with previous measurements. The size of the Chişinău agglomeration is estimated based on commuting time, with estimates ranging from 750,000 to 920,000 people.

The study also examines the associations between the rural population and key demographic indicators, including the total population and the pension-age population. Finally, the limitations of the dataset and possible directions for future research are discussed.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024-2027).

Keywords: road connectivity; rural accessibility; spatial inequalities; OpenStreetMap.

INNOVATION AND HISTORICAL EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE IN MOLDOVA'S OLD-AGE INCOME SUPPORT: COMPARATIVE EVIDENCE, 2013–2025

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This study compares three factors that may be related to the composition of old-age income support in Moldova: the relative size of pension and social-allowance payments, innovation intensity, and earlier employment structure. The outcome examined is the number of old-age pensioners relative to the number of social-allowance recipients who have reached retirement age. Particular attention is given to whether innovation indicators produce more consistent econometric results than measures of past employment structure.

The analysis covers 2013–2025. Data on recipient numbers and average pension and social-allowance amounts come from the National Bureau of Statistics of Moldova. National Bank of Moldova inflation data are used to express benefit amounts at the price level of 1 January 2026. World Bank data provide the indicators of innovation and employment structure. The relative benefit level is measured by the average old-age pension divided by the average old-age social allowance. Innovation is represented by averages of high-technology exports and ICT goods exports over earlier multi-year periods. Employment structure is measured by the percentage of wage and salaried workers in total employment, using fixed lags of 10–15 years.

Among the innovation specifications, two OLS models based on five- and six-year averages of high-technology exports satisfy the applied coefficient and diagnostic criteria. Both show positive and statistically significant coefficients for the relative benefit level and high-technology exports, with adjusted R^2 values of 0.981 and 0.990. Instrumental-variable estimation also yields positive high-technology-export coefficients with $p < 0.001$. Earlier wage and salaried employment is positively related to the outcome in level models for every lag from 10 to 15 years, although the relative benefit level is not statistically significant in these models; moreover, the employment relationship is not statistically significant in alternative trend and dynamic specifications.

Within the specifications considered, high-technology export intensity shows a more consistent relationship with the composition of old-age income support than historical employment structure.

The study was developed within the Research Subprogram: 030102 „Demographic transition in the Republic of Moldova: particularities, socioeconomic implications and strengthening demographic resilience” (TDRM, 2024-2027).

Keywords: old-age pensions; social allowances; high-technology exports; employment structure; Moldova.

CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: TRANSFORMATIONS AND EMERGING PATTERNS

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Contemporary transformations of the family—manifested through the diversification of couple arrangements, changes in family behaviors, and the rise of single-parent households—constitute a subject of major importance for demographic and social analysis. Understanding the family structure of the population is essential for formulating public policies regarding social protection, reproductive health, education, housing, and work-life balance. In this context, data from the 2024 census offer the opportunity to assess the distribution of the population living in households in the Republic of Moldova according to family status. The aim of this research is to analyze the family structure of the population living in households in the Republic of Moldova, highlighting the proportions of individuals in married and consensual unions, single parents, and children living with both parents or with a single parent.

The research is based on a secondary analysis of data from the 2024 population and housing census regarding the distribution of the household population by family status. The data are interpreted in light of contemporary family transformations, social norms, population mobility, and the economic vulnerability of single-parent households. The analysis of census data highlights the predominance of married couples within the family structure of the household population in the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, other forms of family organization are present, including consensual unions and single-parent households. A comparison between areas of residence indicates a higher proportion of individuals in married couples in rural areas than in urban areas. This difference may be attributed to the persistence of traditional family norms, the population's distinct age structure, and the effects of migration.

The results confirm the predominance of marriage as the form of partnership in the Republic of Moldova, while also highlighting the existence of alternative family forms, such as consensual unions and single-parent households.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024-2027).

Keywords: family, household, married couple, consensual union, single parent, children, family structure.

NATURALISATION AS AN INDICATOR OF MIGRATION SETTLEMENT: THE CASE OF EMIGRANTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Over recent decades, the Republic of Moldova has experienced continuous population decline and accelerated demographic ageing, driven by falling birth rates and persistent long-term emigration. Compared with other Central and Eastern European countries, Moldova ranks among the states most severely affected by depopulation. The intensity of emigration contributes to labour shortages, exacerbates imbalances within social protection systems, and constrains the country's prospects for sustainable economic development. Against this background, the study assesses the extent to which emigrants from the Republic of Moldova have settled and integrated in their principal destination countries and examines the transformation of temporary migration into long-term or permanent settlement.

The research draws on statistical and administrative data provided by destination countries and analyses the conditions governing access to permanent residence and citizenship through naturalisation, socioeconomic rights and social protection, as well as family reunification mechanisms. The findings point to the increasing integration of Moldovan emigrants into destination societies and the intensification of family reunification. The growing proportion of children and persons outside working age within the emigrant population indicates a transition from predominantly individual, labour-oriented migration towards family migration and long-term settlement. These developments may reduce the likelihood of return despite government policies aimed at maintaining cultural, economic, and social ties with the diaspora.

The study highlights the need to update Moldova's diaspora policies and develop differentiated measures to prevent emigration, with particular attention to children and families, students, and highly qualified professionals.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024-2027).

Keywords: emigration; naturalisation; family migration; long-term settlement; diaspora policies.

FACTORS, ASPIRATIONS AND MIGRATION RISKS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Youth emigration represents a major demographic and socioeconomic challenge for the Republic of Moldova, with important consequences for population structure, labour supply and long-term human resource potential. The aim of this study is to identify and analyse the demographic, socioeconomic and behavioural factors associated with migration intentions among young people in Moldova and to assess how migration aspirations are transformed into concrete intentions to leave the country. The study addresses two research questions: Which individual, socioeconomic and behavioural characteristics are associated with migration intentions? How do aspirations, available resources and migration-related networks influence the transformation of migration aspirations into concrete intentions?

The conceptual framework integrates Lee's push-pull theory, social network theory and the aspirations-capabilities approach, which considers migration as the outcome of both the desire and the capacity to migrate. The empirical analysis is based on a survey of approximately 500 young people aged 15–34 in the Republic of Moldova. A two-stage sampling strategy was applied, including stratification by region, sex and place of residence, followed by quota sampling across four age groups. Multivariate econometric methods are used to identify factors associated with migration intentions.

Preliminary findings suggest that migration intentions are shaped not only by economic considerations, but also by expectations related to professional fulfilment, social mobility and self-realisation. These factors differ across age groups, indicating distinct migration profiles among adolescents and young adults. Migration networks and available resources also appear to facilitate the transformation of aspirations into concrete intentions.

The study contributes to understanding youth migration risks and provides an empirical basis for policies aimed at reducing youth emigration and strengthening Moldova's long-term demographic and socioeconomic resilience.

This research is conducted within the project "Mechanisms for Mitigating Mass Youth Emigration to Strengthen Sociodemographic Sustainability in the Republic of Moldova" implemented in 2025–2026 by the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova and funded by the National Agency for Research and Development.

Keywords: youth migration; migration intentions; migration aspirations; migration risks; Republic of Moldova.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND EDUCATIONAL MOBILITY INTENTIONS: RESPONSES TO INFORMATION ON DOUBLE-DEGREE PROGRAMMES

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Educational migration is a major issue in the Republic of Moldova, with Romania an important destination. Shared language, geographical proximity and the recognition of Romanian diplomas across Europe shape this mobility. This study examines whether information about double-degree programmes influences educational mobility intentions and whether responses vary by academic performance, distinguishing stated application destinations from aspirations to study abroad.

We use a randomised survey experiment conducted among twelfth-grade students in Chișinău during March–May 2026. The analysis focuses on 972 students from 17 Romanian-language schools. Participants were randomly assigned to control or treatment groups. The treatment described opportunities to obtain a Romanian qualification through double-degree partnerships between Moldovan and Romanian universities while studying in Moldova. Outcomes include stated university application destinations, the desire and perceived likelihood of studying abroad, and longer-term intentions to remain in the Republic of Moldova. We estimate average treatment effects and differences across academic profiles, accounting for socioeconomic background and family migration experience.

Results show no statistically significant average effect on stated application destinations. However, the intervention reduces students’ desire to study abroad and their self-assessed likelihood of doing so within two years. Responses vary by academic performance: students with lower grades favour Moldova-only applications and express intentions to remain, whereas higher-achieving students show no detectable response. Treatment effects do not differ significantly by academic track or family migration history. The findings suggest that information can influence educational aspirations without changing stated application plans. Sustained campaigns may help translate attitudes into behaviour. For higher-achieving students, scholarships and research opportunities in Moldova warrant consideration alongside information on qualifications.

This paper was prepared within the bilateral Romania–Republic of Moldova research project “Education-Migration Nexus: Exploring the Youth Brain Drain Phenomenon in Romania and the Republic of Moldova” (MIGRoM), project code PN-IV-PCB-RO-MD-2024-0479, funded by UEFISCDI (Romania) and ANCD (Republic of Moldova).

Keywords: educational migration; mobility intentions; double-degree programmes; informational interventions; randomised survey experiment.

ENSURING CENSUS ACCURACY IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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This article evaluates the accuracy of the 2024 Population and Housing Census of the Republic of Moldova as a property of the entire statistical production chain rather than the apparent precision of a single population total. The study combines official methodological documents and final results, descriptive calculations, institutional comparison, and an original 2025 survey of 511 persons who worked as enumerators in the 2014 and/or 2024 censuses. The final usual resident population of 2,409,207 includes a net coverage adjustment of 86,114 persons relative to 2,323,093 directly enumerated usual residents. The adjustment equals 3.57% of the final estimate but cannot be interpreted as a gross undercoverage rate because it combines undercoverage and overcoverage. Among survey respondents, 77.5% worked only in 2024 and 20.9% in both rounds. Of 135 substantive open-ended responses, 25.9% mentioned distrust, refusal, or difficult interaction with the public, while 23.0% mentioned the facilitating effect of digitalization. These survey results are exploratory because the sample was self-selected and territorially incomplete. International evidence shows that digital collection and administrative-data integration can improve completeness while leaving variable-specific quality uneven. Artificial intelligence adds value in anomaly detection, text coding, record linkage, geospatial verification, and system testing only when compared with a benchmark, validated across subgroups, and subject to human oversight. The article proposes a risk-ordered implementation sequence, a model decision gate, and product-level quality provenance.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024-2027).

Keywords: census, accuracy, coverage error, usual residence, post-enumeration survey, artificial intelligence, public policy, Moldova.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EVERYDAY CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING

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The article examines the role of artificial intelligence in everyday consumer decision-making, with particular attention to its use in the selection and purchase of goods and services. The study is based on the results of a sociological survey conducted among the population of the Republic of Moldova in August–September 2026 and explores the prevalence, purposes, and perceived usefulness of AI tools in consumer behaviour. The questionnaire addresses several dimensions of AI use, including searching for information about products and services, comparing alternatives, obtaining recommendations, assessing prices and characteristics, planning purchases, and supporting final purchasing decisions. The analysis also considers respondents' level of trust in AI-generated recommendations, perceived advantages and risks, and the extent to which AI complements or substitutes traditional sources of consumer information such as search engines, social networks, reviews, advertising, and advice from family or friends. Particular attention is paid to differences in AI use across socio-demographic groups and to the relationship between frequency of use, digital experience, and reliance on AI in consumer choices. The study contributes to the emerging literature on AI-mediated consumer behaviour by providing empirical evidence on how artificial intelligence is becoming embedded in routine decision-making practices. The findings may also be relevant for businesses, policymakers, and consumer protection institutions seeking to understand the opportunities and challenges associated with the growing use of AI in consumer markets.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, consumer behaviour, consumer decision-making, purchasing decisions, goods and services, digital technologies, sociological survey.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT

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This article systematizes the capabilities and limitations of digital technologies in personnel recruitment and selection for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Based on a structured review of publications from 2015–2025, the study examines digital candidate sourcing channels, applicant tracking systems, online assessment, chatbots, HR analytics, and artificial intelligence tools. It demonstrates that for SMEs, the primary value of digitalization lies in reducing the labor intensity of hiring, standardizing procedures, and accumulating candidate data. However, technology does not guarantee improved hiring decisions; outcomes depend on process formalization, digital competencies, data quality, and the retention of substantive oversight by managers or HR specialists. For the Republic of Moldova, a phased implementation model is the most realistic approach: progressing from digital channels and a unified candidate database to analytics and selective automation. The article concludes that digital solutions should be evaluated not by their level of technological complexity, but by their alignment with the enterprise's scale, hiring frequency, and workforce-related risks.

Keywords: digital recruiting, personnel recruitment, personnel selection, small and medium-sized enterprises, e-HRM, HR analytics, artificial intelligence.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT BASED ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The integration of sustainable development principles into project management has become increasingly important, as project success is no longer evaluated solely in terms of time, cost and technical outputs, but also through economic, social and environmental effects after implementation. This issue is particularly relevant for the Republic of Moldova, where modernization, energy efficiency, financing and alignment with European standards influence the quality and long-term impact of investment projects. The aim of this study is to analyse how sustainable development principles are incorporated into project management practices in the Republic of Moldova and to assess whether implemented projects generate lasting benefits. The study addresses two main research questions: How are economic, social and environmental sustainability dimensions reflected in public and private project management? Which management practices and post-implementation conditions contribute to the continuity of project benefits?

The research applies a mixed qualitative-quantitative approach based on literature review, documentary analysis, comparative analysis and interpretation of programme- and intervention-level indicators. The empirical analysis covers four case studies: the Căușeni biomass and solar energy intervention; the Energy Management Information System (EMIS), initially implemented in 17 public buildings in Chișinău; and two private-sector projects implemented by Memilit SRL and WT Agroprom SRL. A common analytical framework assesses project objectives, sustainability dimensions, management practices, indicators and continuity of results after project completion.

The findings indicate that sustainable development principles are present in all analysed projects, although integration and documentation vary by sector and project type. Sustainability is demonstrated more convincingly where measurable indicators, post-implementation monitoring and evidence of continued use are available. The study concludes that project sustainability cannot be inferred from financing or technical completion alone and proposes a post-implementation assessment matrix for evaluating the continuity of project benefits.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024-2027).

Keywords: sustainable development; project management; sustainability indicators; post-implementation monitoring; Republic of Moldova.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE AS A DRIVER OF AI-ENABLED LABOUR MARKET TRANSFORMATION: A MECHANISM-ORIENTED SCIENTOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF THE EMERGING KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE

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Demographic trends – in the form of aging, declining population, and labor force – shape the context in which labor markets and organizations evolve. At the same time, advances in artificial intelligence, automation, and other digital technologies increase the scope of opportunities to adapt to these changes. On this basis, the proposed study seeks to examine how demographic change has reshaped the knowledge structure associated with the transformation of the labor market enabled by artificial intelligence and the organizational mechanisms underlying the relationship explained in the literature.

In particular, the research suggests conducting a longitudinal scientometric analysis of the literature published in Google Scholar between 2000 and 2026 using the data extracted with Publish or Perish and processed in R statistical software. A distinguishing feature of the proposed methodology design is the shift of focus from measuring the frequency and co-occurrence of separate keywords to studying the structural relationships between different semantic fields and recreating the mechanism underlying the scientific literature.

Methodologically, the research is structured into five steps. First, a semantic dictionary will be developed where the relevant concepts will be divided into four domains: demographic change, labor market pressures, artificial intelligence-based adaptation, and organizational and workforce transformation. Second, the publications will be categorized based on the presence of domains in their metadata to create an article-domain semantic matrix. Third, using this matrix, the co-occurrence of the domains, the strength of the connection, the structural position, and the mediating role of the components in the knowledge architecture will be measured. Longitudinal analysis will help identify how these relations evolve during the analyzed period and reveal the process of integration of demographic, technological, organizational, and occupational dimensions.

The proposed contribution will, therefore, be both thematic and methodological. From the thematic point of view, the study departs from the dominant logic in the existing literature about the relationship between artificial intelligence and labor market by analyzing demographic change as the starting point of the adaptation process. Methodologically, scientometrics serves both for mapping the research field and empirically recreating the relations that underpin the mechanism of adaptation to the demographic change as described in the literature.

Keywords: demographic change; artificial intelligence; labor market; scientometric analysis; workforce transformation.

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF POLICIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN ROMANIA

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Population ageing has led to a growing need for long-term care in Romania, while responsibility for organising social services has been transferred primarily to local authorities. However, local authorities have unequal administrative and financial capacities, with direct consequences for access to services and the quality of care provided.

This paper examines the evolution of policies for older people in post-communist Romania and the transformation of the public response from a residual model of protection, based predominantly on family care and institutionalisation, towards active ageing, the development of community-based services, and the establishment of an integrated long-term care system.

The study addresses two research questions: How did social policies adapt to population ageing between 1990 and 2025? To what extent did the expansion of the regulatory framework lead to equitable territorial access to long-term care services? The research employs a longitudinal historical and documentary analysis of legislation, national strategies, and institutional regulations. It reconstructs changes in institutional responsibilities, service organisation, quality standards, support for informal care, and the relationship between central-level policy design and local implementation.

The analysis identifies four stages: the reconstruction of the social assistance system between 1990 and 2000; legislative development, decentralisation, and the introduction of service standards between 2000 and 2014; the adoption of the active ageing paradigm between 2014 and 2022; and, from 2022 onwards, the explicit development of a long-term care framework.

The findings indicate substantial regulatory progress, including the recognition of community needs assessment, case management, home care, day services, and support for maintaining older people's autonomy. However, the expansion of the regulatory framework has not been accompanied by an equivalent territorial development of services, resulting in an uneven geography of care. Adapting to demographic change requires stable funding, national coordination, stronger local professional capacity, and mechanisms ensuring that access to care does not depend primarily on where an older person lives.

Keywords: older people; public policy; social services; long-term care; territorial inequalities.

CURRENT DEMOGRAPHIC DECLINE IN THE CONTEXT OF CITIZENS' PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Taking into account the 27 countries of the European Union, we first analyzed the responses of European populations to the question Q1: "How optimistic are the citizens of the Member States regarding the future of Europe?". The data were extracted from the results of a Eurobarometer that was completed in September 2025. The statistical study results are based on the responses of 25,880 people interviewed in different EU countries. We specify that the variable Q1 is of categorical ordinal type, which requires specific statistical analysis procedures. We mention in this regard: the partial stochastic order relationship "<="; the proposal of a TREND indicator for measuring the trend of an ordinal variable; defining an indicator W that will allow the operation of ranking in a set of ordinal categorical variables; applying statistical tests of homogeneity for the distributions of ordinal variables belonging to a certain group. Using the listed statistical methods, the EU countries were ranked respecting the Q1 criterion, the diversity of Q1 opinions in the Member States was highlighted and a division of the EU states in relation to the Q1 option became possible. In the second stage of the research, the Q5 priorities proposed by citizens regarding the future of Europe are analyzed separately for each EU state. The 11 Q5 priorities that were taken into account are: risks arising from new technologies; climate change and environmental issues; irregular migration; conflicts in the world; terrorism; cyber and hybrid threats and new forms of conflicts; organised crime; breakdown in global relations between countries; decline of the proportion of the European

population in the world; risk that the EU will lose its economic independence; risk that the EU will lose its voice and influence in the world. For each EU state separately and also at the European level, the hierarchy of priorities Q5 has been determined. Surprisingly, the majority of European populations pay less attention to the risk generated by the evolution of new technologies, organized crime or demographic decline. Some nuances are commented on.

Keywords: demographic decline, European Union, priorities, ordinal data, future of Europe, demography.

PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO DESIRED FERTILITY IN ROMANIA: A TEN-YEAR COMPARISON, 2014–2024

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Romania's demographic decline is debated in terms of two competing causal factors: economic, centred on material constraints, and socio-cultural. This study examines whether public perceptions of barriers to achieving desired fertility changed between 2014 and 2024, a decade marked by income growth, demographic contraction, the COVID-19 pandemic, persistent housing pressures, especially in large urban areas, and uncertainty. The research question asks what Romanians identify as the main obstacles to having the number of children they want and whether the structure of these explanations has changed over time.

The analysis compares two nationwide, representative surveys of the adult population, using the same sample design and data collection method (CATI). The first was conducted in October 2014 (N=1,212), and the second in November 2024 (N=1,200). Both employed an indirect, open-ended item asking what prevents people from having the number of children they want. This wording was intended to reduce socially desirable answers and allow respondents to project their own experiences onto a generalised social situation. In 2014, answers were recorded verbatim and coded afterwards. In 2024, answers remained spontaneous but were classified by interviewers using categories derived from the 2014 survey. Respondents could still spontaneously generate novel answers outside the 2014 framework. The breakdown of responses included economic, socio-cultural, and health-related categories, which were identical for both surveys.

Preliminary comparative results indicate strong overall continuity. Economic constraints remain by far the most frequently perceived barrier. In 2024, they are followed by socio-cultural factors and infertility. Despite extensive economic and social transformation, public understandings of barriers to childbearing remain organised primarily around material insecurity, while lifestyle choices, time pressures, couple relationships, career priorities, and biological constraints occupy secondary positions.

The persistence of this hierarchy suggests that Romania's fertility decline continues to differ from the Western pattern described by the second demographic transition and the increasing prevalence of socio-cultural factors. In Romania, low fertility coexists with strong family values. The problem seems to be not a retreat from family life, but material barriers to achieving desired fertility.

Keywords: Romania; desired fertility; barriers to childbearing; material constraints; demographic decline; second demographic transition; public perceptions.

OVERSHOOTING: A NEW HYPOTHESIS ON MIGRANT COMPLETED FERTILITY OUTSIDE THE ORIGIN-DESTINATION CORRIDOR

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The study of migrant fertility has relied for decades on five established hypotheses: disruption, interrelation of events, adaptation, socialization, and selectivity. These hypotheses share an unstated assumption that migrant completed fertility remains within the range bounded by the origin-country level and the destination-country level. We call this range the origin-destination corridor and argue that the corridor assumption is more restrictive than it is recognized in the literature.

This paper proposes the overshooting hypothesis, which predicts two scenarios in which migrant completed fertility can exit the corridor. Origin-side overshooting occurs when completed fertility falls below the origin level, produced by a gap between the origin-specific supports for childbearing that the migrant loses and the destination-specific supports to which she does not yet have full access. Destination-side overshooting occurs when completed fertility exceeds the destination level, produced for the 1.5 generation by the combination of full access to destination-side supports with a retained origin-country disposition toward slightly larger family sizes.

We test the hypothesis in the case of Sweden using completed cohort fertility data for fourteen origin groups of immigrants to Sweden from the study by Mussino, Wilson and Andersson (2021), combined with origin-country completed cohort fertility data from the Human Fertility Database.

Of the twelve origin groups with matched origin-country data, eleven adult-migrant cohorts exit the corridor, with ten on the origin side; nine child-migrant cohorts exit, with seven on the origin side and two on the destination side. None of the adult- or child-migrant groups completes fertility within the confines of the corridor. The corridor exit is found to be the dominant pattern, not an exception.

The overshooting hypothesis addresses a class of fertility trajectories that are ignored in the existing theoretical framework and proposes explanatory mechanisms behind the two scenarios.

Keywords: migrant fertility; overshooting hypothesis; completed cohort fertility; origin-destination corridor; second generation; 1.5 generation; Sweden; theoretical demography.

FROM FORMAL EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS TO DATA-DRIVEN PRACTICE: AN EXPLORATORY CASE OF SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC POLICY MANAGEMENT IN MOLDOVA

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Moldova's demographic decline, population ageing, migration, and ongoing local-government amalgamation reform are increasing pressure on public institutions to connect evidence more systematically with policy choices, budgeting, implementation, and review. This paper examines that relationship through an exploratory case study of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, which is responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of demographic policies. The analysis draws on field notes from a one-day institutional engagement conducted in early May 2026, including participant observation and an individual interview. The material was organized using a preliminary Data-Driven Policy Management Maturity Model (DDPMM). The case indicates that the Ministry operates within a set of relevant legal, institutional, and digital arrangements that support evidence use, while also showing that the existence of such arrangements does not in itself demonstrate how consistently evidence informs specific policy and management decisions. The study uses the DDPMM to identify where evidence enters the decision-making process, where links remain weak or insufficiently documented, and where further institutional development may be needed. The paper contributes to

the discussion on data-driven public management in demographically constrained settings and offers a practical framework for examining how public institutions translate available data and analytical capacity into concrete decisions.

Keywords: socio-demographic policy management, data-driven decision-making, institutional maturity, digitalization, evidence use, public administration, Moldova.

CHANGES IN POPULATION STRUCTURE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF HEALTHCARE DEMAND

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Ukraine is undergoing profound demographic changes driven by persistently low fertility, population ageing, large-scale forced migration, rising mortality, and the growing number of persons with disabilities, all of which have reached unprecedented levels under the conditions of war. These processes are substantially reshaping the country's population structure and generating new patterns of healthcare demand. However, the impact of changes in population structure on the transformation of healthcare demand remains insufficiently explored.

The aim of the study is to identify how changes in Ukraine's population structure influence the transformation of healthcare demand. To achieve this aim, the study pursues the following objectives: to identify the structural changes in the population that have the greatest impact on healthcare demand; to assess their effects on the demand for different types of healthcare services; and to determine the demographic trends that should be considered in the strategic planning of the healthcare system.

The study employs demographic, statistical, structural, and comparative analyses complemented by population projections. The empirical basis includes official data from Ukrainian government institutions, international organisations, and the authors' own calculations.

Preliminary findings indicate that the transformation of healthcare demand is driven primarily by changes in population structure rather than by population decline alone. The total fertility rate decreased from 1.14 children per woman in 2021 to an estimated 0.8–0.9 in 2025, reducing the potential demand for selected maternity and paediatric services. At the same time, population ageing, the growing number of persons with disabilities, and the territorial redistribution of the population caused by forced migration are generating sustained growth in demand for rehabilitation, geriatric, palliative, and chronic disease care. The findings confirm that projected changes in population structure should become an integral component of healthcare planning, including health workforce planning, healthcare infrastructure, and resource allocation.

Keywords: population structure; demographic changes; healthcare demand; healthcare system; demographic forecasting.

DOES THE NUMBER OF OLDER ADULTS IN A HOUSEHOLD MATTER? AGE STRUCTURE AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES IN UKRAINE

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Population ageing is transforming household structures, particularly amid economic instability and social upheaval. Although extensive research has focused on the well-being of older adults, less is known about how the presence and number of older household members shape household-level socioeconomic conditions, material resources, and access to services.

The study aims to analyse differences and statistical associations between household age composition and indicators of material well-being, housing satisfaction, access to transport, car ownership, and digital inclusion in Ukraine. The analysis uses microdata from the Socio-Economic Status of Households in Ukraine survey, covering 8,023 households. Associations are evaluated using the Rao–Scott adjusted chi-square test, while the strength of associations is quantified using Cramér's V .

Statistically significant associations were identified between household composition and the distribution of several indicators of well-being and access to resources, including self-assessed current income, overall self-rated material well-being, satisfaction with housing conditions, affordability of regular leisure for each household member, accessibility of public transport, car ownership, and Internet access.

Households with older members, particularly those with only one older person, experience greater material deprivation, lower levels of housing satisfaction, and more limited access to transport, digital services, and leisure opportunities in Ukraine. Overall, households with older members remain disadvantaged relative to households without older members, highlighting age-related inequalities.

Households with one older person were more likely to report a persistent inability to afford basic necessities (39.1% compared with 25.9% among households without older members) and to assess their income as “below average” (62.3% compared with 36.7%). Households with one older person are in the most vulnerable position in terms of current income, material well-being, housing satisfaction, car ownership, digital inclusion, and opportunities for regular leisure activities. Households with two older members tend to have a relatively better material situation than single-person pensioner households due to two independent sources of income and economies of scale in consumption. However, for most indicators, they remain in a worse situation than households without older members.

Keywords: household composition; number of older adults in the household; material well-being; infrastructure access; digital inclusion.

DEMOGRAPHIC RESILIENCE AND FISCAL CAPACITY OF THE TERRITORIAL UNITS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AS INTERRELATED INSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES

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This paper investigates how demographic contraction relates to the fiscal capacity of first-tier local public authorities in the Republic of Moldova, and clarifies the mediating role of institutions in local governments' adaptation to population decline. Its central claim is that fiscal capacity is determined less by demographic size than by the institutions that shape revenue mobilisation and service provision.

The study asks: (1) whether the demographic-fiscal link is linear or size-dependent; (2) how large returns to scale in local administration actually are; (3) to what extent the transfer system offsets territorial disparities and what incentives it creates; and (4) which institutional mechanisms strengthen local capacity.

The paper combines five-year trend analysis. The demographic shock is highly asymmetric: municipalities below 3,000 inhabitants lost 32.7% of their population between 2014 and 2024, compared with a 13.9% national average, while

municipalities with populations above 10,000 grew by 26.0%. Only 14.1% of intergovernmental transfers are discretionary. Scale elasticities are modest, placing the administrative self-financing threshold near 20,000 inhabitants, far above the statutory target of 3,000 inhabitants. Territorial consolidation is therefore necessary but insufficient; equalisation design ultimately determines whether an identical demographic shock produces adaptation or an institutional trap.

Keywords: demographic resilience; local fiscal autonomy; financial capacity; intergovernmental transfers.

FROM BRAIN DRAIN TO BRAIN GAIN: THE ROLE OF MIGRATION, DIASPORA AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ALBANIA

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Migration has long been one of the main drivers of economic and social transformation in contemporary economies, affecting human capital mobility, skills distribution, and territorial development trajectories. Albania represents a particularly significant case, as its transition to a market economy has been accompanied by intense migration flows, the formation of a large diaspora, and the development of transnational economic relations. Remittances, return migration, and knowledge transfer have therefore become increasingly relevant to the country's development dynamics.

This study examines the relationship between migration and economic development in Albania, focusing on the role of the diaspora, remittances, return migration, and human capital. It addresses the following research question: how do migration, diaspora networks, remittances, and return migration contribute to economic development and territorial growth in Albania? The aim is to understand how these factors support economic growth and generate new opportunities for territorial development.

To address this objective, a qualitative review of the scientific literature indexed in Scopus was conducted. Fifteen studies published between 2014 and 2026 were selected and analysed, with particular attention to the links between migration, entrepreneurship, innovation, human capital, and economic development in the Albanian context.

The findings show that migration produces effects extending beyond population mobility by facilitating the circulation of financial resources, professional skills, entrepreneurial capabilities, and international relational networks. Remittances emerge as an important source of economic support and local development, while return migration is closely associated with the transfer of knowledge, managerial experience, and innovative practices acquired abroad. The growing role of entrepreneurship and digital innovation further highlights the strategic contribution of human capital to economic growth.

Overall, the evidence suggests that diaspora communities, human capital, and transnational networks can strengthen Albania's competitiveness and economic resilience, underlining the importance of policies that enhance skills, support innovation, and reinforce ties between migrant communities and their country of origin.

Keywords: migration; diaspora; remittances; human capital; economic development; Albania.

THE ADOPTION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO ADAPT TO A DECLINING WORKING-AGE POPULATION

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The study examines the widespread adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) as a potential means for developed countries to adapt to shrinking working-age populations. Falling birth rates and population ageing intensify labor shortages and place greater pressure on social protection systems. Pronatalist policies do not restore working-age populations, while migration only partly offsets their decline, entails integration costs, supplies workers only for low-skilled tasks, and creates systemic risks to state and citizen security. By contrast, AI may support economic and social resilience, shift the economy toward greater demand for highly skilled and highly paid labor, and enable economic expansion independently of demographic trends.

The study aims to identify AI's potential to compensate for human labor shortages and determine how automation changes the place of labor within social and production relations. Labor integrates individuals into exchange relations, shapes their income and social status, and generates revenue for public budgets and social insurance funds, whereas the profit of an automated enterprise does not itself prove that a machine creates new value. This raises the question of whether the ability of humans and AI to perform tasks with equivalent outcomes is sufficient to regard their economic roles as equivalent. The study compares the economic and social benefits and risks of migration and automation as responses to labor shortages and evaluates human labor and AI in functional and economic terms to substantiate the advantages of systematic automation.

The study demonstrates that AI can functionally replace both physical and cognitive human functions and sustain production with fewer workers. Large-scale automation may mitigate the economic consequences of depopulation, but it also alters the labor-capital relationship, employment structure, and income distribution mechanisms. Its implementation should therefore be accompanied by reforms to taxation, education, social insurance, the distribution of productivity gains, and social incentives. The scientific novelty lies in substantiating the conceptual possibility of minimizing the adverse economic effects of working-age population decline by restructuring employment toward a larger share of highly skilled and highly paid labor through the systematic automation of low-skilled tasks.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; automation; depopulation; labor market; working-age population.

QUALITY OF LIFE AND RESILIENCE IN OLDER PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES: A SOCIO-MEDICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Population ageing is accompanied by an increasing burden of chronic cardiovascular diseases, multimorbidity, frailty and long-term dependence on medical and social support. Health-related quality of life can be considered an important patient-reported indicator of socio-medical vulnerability and resilience. The aim of this paper is to analyse current evidence on health-related quality of life in older patients with chronic cardiovascular diseases and to justify a socio-medical approach to its assessment in the context of resilience and adaptation to chronic illness.

The study addresses the following research question: Which clinical, geriatric, psychological and socio-medical factors are associated with health-related quality of life in older patients with chronic cardiovascular diseases, and how can these factors be integrated into a socio-medical framework of resilience?

A narrative literature review was conducted based on 30 scientific articles selected from PubMed using keywords related to quality of life, health-related quality of life, older adults and cardiovascular diseases. The selected articles were published between 2020 and 2026 and included 21 cross-sectional studies, 6 longitudinal, cohort, registry-based or follow-up studies, and 3 review articles. The studies covered hypertension, heart failure, coronary heart disease, pulmonary hypertension, multimorbidity and cardiometabolic conditions. Sample sizes ranged from 30 participants in exploratory research to more than 500,000 participants in large population-based cohorts.

The synthesis showed that quality of life in older cardiovascular patients is shaped by the interaction of clinical severity, functional limitations, frailty, cognitive decline, depressive symptoms, multimorbidity, polypharmacy, hospitalizations and disease duration. Socio-medical and behavioural factors, including income, education, residence, social relationships, patient–physician communication, self-efficacy, physical activity, medication experience and adherence, also emerged as important mechanisms of adaptation.

The proposed socio-medical perspective interprets resilience not only as an individual psychological resource, but also as a process supported by accessible healthcare, social support, effective communication and active patient participation. This framework will guide a future empirical study on quality of life among older patients with chronic cardiovascular diseases in the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: quality of life; health-related quality of life; resilience; older patients; cardiovascular diseases; frailty; socio-medical factors.

ARE WE STILL DOWNLOADING CSVS FOR POPULATION STUDIES? RETHINKING DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ACQUISITION USING THE PYTHON 'EUROSTAT' LIBRARY

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The digitalization of scientific research has become a fundamental trend, highlighting the need for efficient digital tools, particularly in population studies. Generating and storing demographic data is a complex process that requires optimization. Despite this, scholars still rely largely on manual data extraction. Therefore, the primary aim of this research is to demonstrate an alternative to the traditional manual data acquisition process. Consequently, the key research question is whether it is possible to automate the process of demographic data collection and improve the efficiency of data analysis using Python.

This study describes an optimized ETL (Extract, Transform, Load) process in population studies using the Python 'eurostat' library, which provides direct programmatic access to official datasets from Eurostat (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/>). The proposed methodological framework streamlines the demographic data analysis pipeline, which is crucial for data-driven decision-making in demographic, social, migration, and economic policy formulation.

As a result, the proposed methodology demonstrates that within the ETL process, the Python library 'eurostat' is utilized at the "Extract" stage; the Python library 'pandas' is applied at the "Transform" stage; and visualization Python libraries such as 'matplotlib' or 'seaborn' are used at the "Load" stage. In turn, the resulting graphical and analytical outputs can be used to compile thematic reports, which are absolutely necessary for monitoring the indicators of the effectiveness of demographic, social, migration, and economic policies. Another strong point of the proposed ETL process is its rapid access to official Eurostat data and the overall reproducibility of the analytical process. Specifically, in this study, the ETL process was built on the basis of access to migration data from the Eurostat website using the Python library 'eurostat'.

The conference abstract was prepared as part of the research project of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine "Demography of War: Specifics and Challenges to Demographic Development" (registration number 2025.07/0283).

Keywords: population studies; demographic data; Python; Eurostat; reproducible research.

DIGITAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: PREVALENCE, FORMS AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

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This paper examines digital violence against women in the Republic of Moldova as an emerging form of gender-based violence shaped by the rapid expansion of digital communication, the transformation of social interaction and the persistence of structural gender inequalities. The paper approaches digital violence not merely as a set of isolated online incidents, but as part of a broader continuum of control, intimidation, harassment and reputational harm that connects online and offline forms of violence.

The main objective is to analyse the prevalence, forms and sociodemographic profile of digital violence against women among adult Internet users in the Republic of Moldova. The paper addresses the following research questions: What is the prevalence of direct and indirect experiences of digital violence? What are the most common forms of digital violence reported by respondents? Which categories of women are more exposed to this phenomenon, and what social and demographic factors shape vulnerability?

The analysis is based on a mixed-methods sociological research design. The quantitative component consisted of a nationally representative survey of 1,016 adult Internet users, based on a probabilistic, stratified sample. The qualitative component included in-depth interviews with women affected by digital violence and women from risk groups, semi-structured interviews with specialists from public institutions and civil society organizations, and scenario-based focus group discussions aimed at exploring social norms, perceptions and institutional responses.

The findings reveal that digital violence against women is a socially significant and gendered phenomenon. Overall, 12.0% of adult Internet users reported being victims of at least one form of digital violence, while 25.4% reported witnessing such situations. The most relevant forms include the use of false identities, unauthorized access to online accounts or devices, sexist and degrading language, defamation, threats, harassment, non-consensual distribution of private or intimate content, and emerging forms of technologically facilitated abuse, including manipulated images. The analysis shows higher vulnerability among women, especially young women, students, unmarried women and women from urban areas.

Keywords: digital violence; gender-based violence; online; incidents; victims; sociodemographic profile.

MOLDOVAN MIGRANTS AND BILATERAL SOCIAL SECURITY AGREEMENTS: WHEN AGE BECOMES A VULNERABILITY

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The article refers to a category of migrants with many vulnerabilities: those who have reached retirement age after many years of work in the host country, are trying to return to their country of origin or continue to live abroad, always worrying about an uncertain future. The Republic of Moldova is facing a high degree of population ageing, one of the causes being emigration, but also the negative natural population growth, and the continuously decreasing number of births. The phenomenon of population ageing also refers to Moldovan migrants, although it seems paradoxical at first glance. We are used to believe that among those who decide to go abroad are young people, but we must take into account the first waves of emigration from the Republic of Moldova, from the late 90s and early 2000s, which involved hundreds of thousands of people.

Social protection is a problem that migrants feel intensely. The Republic of Moldova has signed more than 20 bilateral social security agreements, with countries where numerous Moldovan citizens are emigrants. In this article, we analyze how these legal provisions are applied, what difficulties have appeared. Also, we highlight some results regarding the implementation of social security agreements. Special attention is paid to the implementation of the Social Security Agreement with Italy, entered into force on September 1, 2025 – a country where large communities of Moldovan migrants have formed over the years. Official statistical data are supplemented by the information from the National Office of Social Insurance and data provided by experts, and representative Moldovan migrants, leaders of associations from countries where bilateral social security agreements are implemented.

Keywords: migrants, Republic of Moldova, bilateral agreements, social protection, life certificate, aging population.

THE LABOUR SHORTAGE IN UKRAINE AS AN EXISTENTIAL CHALLENGE FOR POST-WAR RECOVERY

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The contemporary Ukrainian labour market operates under unprecedented macroeconomic shocks and chronic tension caused by structural disproportions and severe demographic and military losses. This systemic shortage of human resources constitutes a major constraint on national economic recovery. The study identifies the fundamental determinants of this crisis and models professional and vocational asymmetries within national human capital.

Analysing labour supply and demand dynamics over the period 2017–2025, the study processes State Employment Service datasets using a systems approach, complemented by comparative, trend, and statistical analysis. The methodology calculates the integrated Structural Mismatch Index using Data Analysis Expressions to evaluate absolute deviations between registered unemployment and job vacancies across occupational groups.

Empirical results demonstrate a critical escalation of the overall Structural Mismatch Index, rising from 17.5% in 2018 to 20.9% in 2022 and exceeding the critical 25% threshold to reach 25.6% by 2025. In 2024–2025, an acute labour shortage emerged as job vacancies (449,000) outpaced available labour supply (358,000), indicating that linear market adaptation mechanisms had exhausted their potential. The crisis is concentrated in pronounced structural gaps among skilled tradespeople (6.1%) and service workers (5.0%), alongside widening disparities among professionals (3.3%), driven by qualification shocks, psychosocial productivity erosion, mass migration, and mobilisation-related labour losses.

The findings suggest that traditional market self-regulation is insufficient to resolve this systemic crisis. Addressing this existential challenge requires a paradigm shift toward an anthropocentric and proactive state policy focused on rapid vocational retraining, validation of non-formal education, and the establishment of an institutional environment with high social quality standards aimed at preserving and repatriating human capital.

Keywords: labour shortage; labour market; structural mismatch; vocational retraining; economic recovery.

SOCIOECONOMIC SITUATION, ADAPTATION AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION OF OLDER UKRAINIANS IN WARTIME

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In the context of war and other social disruptions, older persons are often regarded through the lens of their vulnerability, given the elevated risks to their physical, economic, and psychological well-being. But they also possess essential resources of resilience, mutual support, and civic engagement. The research addresses seniors' experiences and responses to full-scale war in Ukraine. It examines their economic situation, adaptation and resilience, and forms of social participation and intergenerational interaction.

The study draws on statistical data, social surveys, and verified findings from sociological research. It used deductive, analytical, comparative, concrete-historical, and typological methods.

The Russian full-scale invasion has created numerous challenges to the safety and material security of Ukrainian seniors. Households composed exclusively of pensioners face severe financial difficulties: according to the National Representative Sample Survey of the Socio-Economic Status of Households (Q4, 2023), 77% of respondents reported a lack of savings to cover two months of expenses in emergencies; almost half could not afford meat or fish twice a week.

Despite this, many older Ukrainians assume essential roles within families and intergenerational networks, engage in economic activity, and contribute through volunteerism. The main types of intergenerational support they provide are caregiving for grandchildren, sometimes alongside care for the oldest family members; emotional and psychological support; some material support despite financial hardship; and transmission of cultural and social values.

Older persons also engage in volunteering within local communities, NGOs, and religious communities, and provide some individual assistance to vulnerable persons. Not only seniors living in Ukraine, but also military migrants are involved in volunteer activities to support the Armed Forces or other Ukrainian refugees. Seniors' engagement in volunteering and intergenerational support demonstrates that they could be active participants in rebuilding social ties and resilience during the post-war recovery.

Keywords: older persons; adaptation and resilience; social participation; war; Ukraine.

CHANGES IN THE FAMILY STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION IN UKRAINE: MODERN CHALLENGES AND WAYS TO MINIMIZE THEM

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The family structure of the population is an important socio-demographic characteristic that determines the potential for natural population reproduction and influences the quality of life of all age groups. In the pre-war decades, the marital and family structure of the population of Ukraine was typical of a modern developed society: the prevalence of “classical” family types, including simple and extended nuclear families in which the majority of the population lived, was combined with the gradual modernization of family structures. Single-parent and reconstituted families, transnational families, foster families, and partnerships without official registration became increasingly common. Despite certain challenges, this diversity contributed to the flexibility and adaptability of family structures, expanded opportunities for choice and self-realization, and provided pathways out of conflict situations.

Russia's armed aggression, which began in 2014–2015 and escalated into a full-scale war in 2022, fundamentally changed the living conditions of Ukrainian families, disrupted demographic processes, and negatively affected the marital and family structure of the population.

The purpose of this study is to examine changes in the family structure of the population of Ukraine under conditions of full-scale war, assess their impact on demographic processes and quality of life, identify risks affecting particular family types and population groups, and explore ways to minimize these risks.

The study demonstrates that current shifts in family structure, resulting from the war and the destructive processes it generates, may be characterized as a deformation of the population's family structure. The analysis is based on materials from sample surveys, expert assessments, information from open sources, data from the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, and the Department of State Registration of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine.

Keywords: family structure; population; war; family; state.

THE IMPACT OF LABOUR FORCE QUALITY ON GDP IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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One of the main challenges currently facing the Republic of Moldova is ensuring economic growth through structural reforms. As international experience shows, this objective can be achieved by attracting investment and ensuring its effective use, while simultaneously improving the quality of the labour force. Previous analysis has revealed that economic growth has varied across different periods of the country's socio-economic development. These variations have been influenced by changes in population size, investment volumes, and, consequently, differing levels of technological progress. At the current stage of globalization, economic transformation, and digitalization, the introduction of information technologies requires the effective use of human resource potential through improvements in labour force quality. At the same time, the adoption of information technologies and modernization can contribute to economic growth when supported by a qualified labour force equipped with modern skills and competencies.

This article presents the results of an assessment of the impact of labour force quality on Gross Domestic Product (GDP), including a comparative analysis of changes in GDP and the number of employed persons over the period 2014–2025. Using econometric analysis, a regression model was developed to examine the relationship between changes in GDP and improvements in the professional skills of the labour force.

Based on the research findings, the study proposes measures aimed at improving approaches to the management and monitoring of socio-economic policies, with particular emphasis on the role of labour force quality in supporting sustainable economic growth in the Republic of Moldova.

The study was elaborated under the research subprogramme 030102: Demographic Transition in the Republic of Moldova: Specific Features, Socio-Economic Implications, and the Consolidation of Demographic Resilience (2024–2027).

Keywords: *Gross Domestic Product; labour force quality; factors of economic growth; population size; econometric modelling.*

SOCIAL PROTECTION AND THE MINIMUM HEALTH INSURANCE PACKAGE: IMPLICATIONS OF ABOLISHING THE CO-INSURED STATUS IN ROMANIA

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Social protection systems are fundamental to reducing socio-economic vulnerabilities, with public health coverage serving as a core pillar of social cohesion. This paper examines the structural shift in Romania's public health policy following the 2025 fiscal austerity reforms, which eliminated the gratuitous „co-insured” status for non-earning family dependents. Utilizing a document analysis methodology focused on legislative changes and mainstream media discourse, the study evaluates the transition of these vulnerable groups into the mandatory social health insurance (CASS) system via the Single Tax Return (Declarația Unică). The findings indicate that while this measure aimed to increase fiscal consolidation for the national health budget, it has inadvertently weakened the social safety net. By forcing economically dependent individuals to either self-fund their insurance or rely strictly on the restrictive „minimum health package,” the reform has created severe systemic barriers. Ultimately, the paper argues that dismantling the traditional co-insurance mechanism exacerbates healthcare inequities, shifts the financial burden onto low-income households, and triggers an unsustainable reliance on emergency medical services. Furthermore, reforming the health insurance framework by eliminating co-insurance risks deepening social inequities, shifting long-term costs from the state directly onto vulnerable households, and compromising the universal right to health.

Keywords: social protection, co-insured status, minimum health insurance package, fiscal austerity, healthcare equity

UKRAINIAN PECULIARITIES OF INCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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In recent years, Ukraine's higher education sector has faced several challenges: aligning with European integration standards and adapting to unprecedented domestic socio-political realities. The practical execution of inclusion within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) reveals certain national peculiarities, frequently shaped by historical infrastructural hardships, the accelerated necessity of digitalisation, and a pressing need for trauma-informed academic spaces. The primary goal of this study is to evaluate the systemic, institutional, and cultural factors that define inclusive education in Ukrainian HEIs, and to identify the divergence between de jure legal frameworks and de facto realities, in order to define a strategy for the further development of inclusive education. The investigation examines how current Ukrainian legislative reforms regarding inclusive environments align with the capacities of regional HEIs, which socio-cultural biases and institutional limitations obstruct the widespread implementation of digital inclusion, and how recent national crises have changed the support requirements for students with special educational needs (SEN). The study adopts a mixed-methods design in order to capture both structural macro-trends and lived micro-experiences. The qualitative component consists of a systematic documentary review of recent national directives, conducted alongside a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with 20 university administrators, 35 faculty members, and 30 students with SEN across five major national universities. The quantitative component comprises a descriptive audit of physical accessibility and of digital tool compatibility scales in the selected institutions. The research offers an actionable framework to promote inclusion in Ukrainian higher education.

Keywords: inclusive higher education, Ukraine, students with special educational needs, accessibility, digital inclusion, trauma-informed education, universal design for learning

NEET YOUTH AS A FACTOR OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND DECLINING POPULATION WELL-BEING IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The issue of young people classified as NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training) is one of the most pressing socioeconomic challenges of our time. A high proportion of young people who are not engaged in education, vocational training, or employment contributes to increased social inequality, limits opportunities for social mobility, and has a negative impact on the well-being of the population. For the Republic of Moldova, this issue is of particular significance in the context of demographic changes, migration processes, and labour market transformation. The purpose of this study is to analyse the impact of NEET youth on levels of social inequality and on the well-being of the population, as well as to identify the main factors hindering the social and economic integration of this group of young people. The study examines the main trends in the prevalence of NEET youth in the Republic of Moldova, how NEET status affects the social well-being of young people and of society as a whole, what risks of social exclusion and poverty are associated with remaining in this category, and what measures can help increase social inclusion and reduce social inequality. The methodological framework includes systemic and comparative approaches, as well as methods of statistical analysis and a review of the scientific literature. The study is based on data from the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova and from international organizations, using indicators of employment, participation in education, poverty levels, and social vulnerability to assess the situation of NEET youth. The expected results will make it possible to determine the extent to which NEET youth contribute to the formation of social inequality and to the decline in public well-being, as well as to identify areas for improving public policy aimed at expanding opportunities for the social and economic integration of young people. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: NEET youth, social inequality, social inclusion, well-being, youth unemployment

INCLUSIVE TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A NARRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW

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University classrooms are becoming incredibly diverse, leading to greater interest in inclusive teaching so as to promote equitable participation and address learners' diverse needs. In recent years, researchers have explored inclusive teaching from a range of perspectives, including curriculum design, assessment, accessibility, and student engagement. Bringing these perspectives together gives the opportunity to develop a more integrated understanding of the pedagogical principles that affect inclusive teaching in higher education. To explore this issue, the paper adopts a qualitative narrative literature review guided by three questions: how inclusive teaching is conceptualised in contemporary higher education research; what pedagogical principles emerge consistently across studies on inclusive teaching; and what implications these principles have for promoting more equitable and inclusive learning environments in higher education. The review draws on a corpus of about twenty peer-reviewed journal articles, mostly retrieved from Scopus, ERIC, and Web of Science, using predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data are analysed using Braun and Clarke's approach to thematic analysis, while the interpretation of the findings is informed by the complementary theoretical perspectives of Inclusive Pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). The review is expected to identify a set of recurring pedagogical principles that characterise contemporary approaches to inclusive teaching and to illustrate how recent research understands inclusion as an important approach to supporting learner diversity. The aim of this work is therefore to contribute to ongoing discussions on educational inclusion and to provide an overview of the principles that can inform future research and teaching practice in higher education.

Keywords: inclusive teaching, inclusive pedagogy, UDL

FORCED MIGRANTS' PERSPECTIVES ON ACCESS TO THE SOCIAL WORK SYSTEM IN ROMANIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

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The integration of forced migrants has become a significant challenge for contemporary societies, requiring adaptation to new social, cultural, and institutional environments. Within this context, equitable access to social work systems represents a determinant of social inclusion, individual well-being, and the reduction of social inequalities. This study explores how forced migrants perceive and experience access to social work services and social benefits in Romania, identifying both the factors that facilitate integration and the barriers that hinder effective participation in the host society. The research adopts a qualitative methodology based on semi-structured individual interviews conducted with ten forced migrants residing in Western Romania. Data were analysed using thematic analysis, focusing on participants' experiences regarding access to social services, the challenges they encounter, and the role of institutional and non-governmental actors in supporting the integration process. The findings indicate that, although the Romanian legislative and institutional framework formally provides access to a range of social work services and benefits, their effective utilization is frequently constrained by language barriers, complex administrative procedures, and insufficient access to clear, up-to-date, and comprehensible information. In this context, non-governmental organizations and informal support networks play a mediating role by facilitating communication with public institutions and improving access to available resources. Furthermore, proficiency in the Romanian language emerges as a fundamental determinant of successful integration, influencing not only access to social services but also employment opportunities and the development of meaningful social relationships. The study concludes that strengthening institutional information and support mechanisms, simplifying administrative procedures, and developing more inclusive and migrant-responsive social services are essential for promoting effective social integration and reducing social inequalities. These findings contribute to the broader discussion on inclusive social protection policies and highlight the importance of improving accessibility and institutional responsiveness in order to enhance the well-being of forced migrants in Romania.

Keywords: forced migrants, social work system, social inclusion, access to social services, Romania

BEYOND BLANKET EXCLUSION: REFORMING AML/CFT BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP STANDARDS TO CURB INDISCRIMINATE DE-RISKING AND ADVANCE FINANCIAL INCLUSION

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This paper examines how the stringency of AML/CFT regulation – particularly beneficial ownership identification standards and enhanced due diligence requirements – generates economic incentives for indiscriminate de-risking among both correspondent banks and non-financial gatekeepers (lawyers, notaries, judicial enforcement officers, and authorized insolvency administrators). It aims to identify regulatory mechanisms capable of reducing categorical exclusion while preserving the integrity objectives of the AML/CFT framework, using the banking sector of an emerging, remittance-dependent economy (the Republic of Moldova) as an empirical reference point. The paper asks through which causal mechanisms compliance with beneficial ownership and due diligence standards translates into blanket exclusion rather than individualized risk assessment, whether these mechanisms differ structurally between correspondent banking relationships and non-bank gatekeeper professions, and what regulatory interventions – specifically, verifiable beneficial ownership regimes and legal safe harbor mechanisms – could realign institutional incentives toward individualized assessment and away from categorical exclusion. The study employs doctrinal legal analysis of FATF standards, the EU Anti-Money Laundering Regulation (AMLR) 2024/1624, and Moldova's recent beneficial ownership regulation, complemented by a comparative review of regulatory guidance (FATF, Wolfsberg Group, World Bank, EBA) on de-risking drivers. A case-based analysis of correspondent banking constraints affecting a Moldovan bank's diaspora-

remittance business line illustrates the practical mechanism under study. Preliminary analysis indicates that de-risking functions as a rational institutional response to compliance costs and liability exposure rather than as an implementation failure correctable through guidance alone. The paper argues that a verifiable beneficial ownership regime, paired with statutory safe harbor protections, can shift the cost-benefit calculus of regulated entities toward individualized assessment, thereby advancing financial inclusion without compromising AML/CFT integrity objectives – with direct implications for reducing socioeconomic inequalities tied to differentiated access to formal financial services.

Keywords: AML/CFT, de-risking, financial inclusion, beneficial ownership, risk-based approach, correspondent banking, social inequality

A COMPOSITE INDEX FOR ASSESSING URBAN SUSTAINABILITY IN EU27: A PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS APPROACH

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Urban sustainability is a key policy priority within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 11, which promotes inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities. This topic is especially relevant to the European Union, where urban areas face interconnected challenges related to social equity, housing, sustainable mobility, digital transformation, public health, access to green spaces, and waste management. This study aims to assess urban and local sustainability across the EU-27 by developing a composite index based on SDG 11 indicators. Its main objectives are to reduce the complexity of a broad set of sustainability indicators, to identify the key dimensions of urban sustainability, and to compare the performance of EU Member States. The analysis uses Eurostat data for the period 2003-2023. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is applied as a data reduction technique in order to identify the main patterns within the selected indicators and to determine the weights used to construct the composite index. The resulting index provides a multidimensional assessment of urban sustainability and enables comparisons among EU countries. The findings reveal significant differences in urban sustainability performance across the EU-27 and highlight the main factors underlying these variations. The proposed composite index provides a useful tool for monitoring progress toward SDG 11, identifying areas requiring policy intervention, and supporting evidence-based decision-making. By offering an integrated perspective on urban sustainability, the study contributes to a better understanding of urban performance and supports policies aimed at improving the quality of life and well-being of urban populations.

Keywords: city, sustainable development, PCA, Europe

STRATEGIC INCONSISTENCY AND UNEQUAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: EVIDENCE FROM UPPER ITALIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Educational inequality does not depend exclusively on access to schools, learning resources, or formal educational provision. It may also emerge from differences in students' ability to transform knowledge about effective learning strategies into their regular study practices. This study examines the discrepancy between the perceived effectiveness and the self-reported use of study strategies among upper secondary school students, interpreting such a discrepancy as a pedagogically relevant dimension of unequal learning opportunities. The study addresses two questions: to what extent students' evaluations of the effectiveness of study strategies correspond to their reported frequency of use, and which types of strategies show the widest discrepancies between perceived value and practical application. A secondary objective is to explore whether these patterns differ between students attending the second and the fifth years of upper secondary education. The analysis draws on data collected through the Study Strategies Questionnaire included in the AMOS assessment battery. The paired dataset comprises 305 students enrolled in humanities, language, and socio-

economic programmes. Descriptive statistics, paired comparisons, correlations, item-level discrepancies, and a global strategic inconsistency index are used to examine the relationship between perceived effectiveness and self-reported use. Comparisons between school years are interpreted as cross-sectional differences rather than as individual developmental trajectories. The results indicate that students generally recognise the usefulness of study strategies, but that this awareness is not consistently translated into reported practice. The overall effectiveness score is higher than the corresponding use score, while the strongest discrepancies concern strategies requiring time planning, material reorganisation, anticipatory processing, and intentional monitoring. Fifth-year students show generally higher levels of perceived effectiveness and use, but not a corresponding reduction in overall strategic inconsistency. The findings suggest that educational inclusion requires more than teaching students which strategies are effective: schools should create structured opportunities for modelling, practising, monitoring, and transferring strategic behaviours across subjects and learning contexts. Strategic inconsistency can therefore be interpreted not simply as an individual weakness, but as an educationally modifiable condition that may contribute to unequal opportunities for autonomous and successful learning.

Keywords: study strategies, strategic inconsistency, educational inequality, self-regulated learning, upper secondary education

STANDARD OF LIVING, INEQUALITY AND TAXATION. SOME CONSIDERATIONS IN THE CURRENT EUROPEAN ECONOMIC CONTEXT

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Standard of living, economic inequality and taxation are essential components of a country's economic and social development, being closely interconnected and with a direct influence on the well-being of the population, social stability and long-term development prospects. In recent decades, European states have faced economic and social challenges – namely globalization, digitalization, demographic changes, the financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, rising energy and food prices, as well as geopolitical tensions – which have significantly influenced the European economy and the standard of living of the population, and reducing economic inequalities has become increasingly important for public authorities. In this context, the purpose of the paper is to carry out an analysis of the standard of living (expressed by GDP per capita at Purchasing Power Parity) and of social inequality (expressed by the Gini coefficient) at the level of the European Union in the period 2020-2025, and to propose measures related to taxation that would influence its reduction. We use a descriptive and empirical methodology, drawing on bibliographic sources from the international specialized literature and on statistical data from fiscal entities (Eurostat, OECD).

Keywords: standard of living, inequality, Gini coefficient, progressive taxation, wealth taxation

ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING PROVISION AND ACCESS TO COMMUNAL AMENITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Improving the mechanism for bringing the living conditions of the population of the Republic of Moldova closer to the standards of the European Union requires an assessment of the current situation in this field, which determines the relevance of this study. The aim of the paper is to assess the provision of housing and communal amenities for the population of the Republic of Moldova. The main objectives are to analyse the housing stock by ownership type, to evaluate housing conditions using indicators such as living space per person and the average number of persons per living room, and to assess households' access to essential communal amenities. The study is based on data from the

Household Budget Survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova. The methodological approach includes methods of analysis and synthesis, monographic analysis, statistical analysis, comparative analysis, and the method of analogies. The results identify the structure of the housing stock by ownership type and explain the factors determining its differences from the European Union countries. The study analyses key indicators characterizing housing conditions, including the average living space per person and the average number of persons per living room. It also evaluates the population's access to safe drinking water, centralized sewerage, modern heating systems, hot water supply, natural gas, and telecommunication networks. The findings show that, although rural residents in the Republic of Moldova have better housing provision in terms of living space, their dwellings are significantly less equipped with communal amenities than those in urban areas. The results highlight the need to reduce territorial disparities in housing infrastructure and to improve access to basic communal services as an important prerequisite for enhancing living standards and supporting the country's convergence with European Union standards. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: housing conditions, housing provision, communal amenities, living standards, European integration, Republic of Moldova

INCOME ELASTICITY OF HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA: AN ENGEL-BASED ANALYSIS

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The years 2019-2024 are marked by a rise in real disposable income in the Republic of Moldova, accompanied by significant changes in the structure of household expenditure. Since not all consumption items increase with rising income in the same proportion, it is necessary to investigate the relationship between changes in consumption and changes in income, particularly for determining living standards during the country's accession process to the European Union. The research goal is to estimate income elasticities for the major household expenditure groups and to observe the relation between income changes and changes in the structure of consumption. The paper answers three questions: which expenditure groups are more elastic to income change; how the consumption behaviour of urban and rural populations differs; and what relation exists between growing income and changes in the structure of household spending. A research framework based on Engel analysis was applied to Household Budget Survey data for the years 2019-2024. Income elasticities were estimated on the basis of the relation between disposable income and average monthly household expenditure per capita. The findings show significant differences among the responses of expenditures to income change: food and housing have low income elasticities, which is coherent with a description as „necessities”, whereas restaurants and hotels, recreation and culture, education and transport are more elastic, which makes it possible to consider them „superior” or „luxury” goods. Differences in consumption between urban and rural populations are also detected. We conclude that income growth is accompanied by a structural change in consumption, in the form of a declining share of basic necessities in the consumption structure in favour of services-related expenses. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: income elasticity, household consumption expenditures, consumer behaviour, Republic of Moldova

INCOME AND WEALTH INEQUALITIES: TRENDS AND QUANTIFICATION**Mariana BĂLAN**

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Over the past two centuries, the world has witnessed unprecedented growth in average income and output. However, global income and wealth shares remain deeply unequal. The global population is unevenly distributed along the income and wealth hierarchy: 2.8 billion adults belong to low-income groups, 2.2 billion to the middle class, and only 556 million to the richest. Income inequality is very high; it has persisted, has mutated in recent years, and is growing. Today, the richest people globally earn more than half of all income, while those with low incomes earn only a tiny fraction. Wealth inequality is even greater than income inequality and is growing faster, both globally and at regional levels. The purpose of the paper is the analysis of the evolution of income inequalities and of inequalities in wealth distribution at global and regional levels. Various statistical methods were used to quantify regional disparities in income and wealth distribution: the relative distance method, the Gini coefficient and the Theil index. The results obtained confirm the negative tendencies regarding the increase in income inequalities and in inequalities of wealth distribution at global and regional level, and also at the level of the European Union member states.

Keywords: income inequalities, wealth distribution inequalities, regional disparities, statistical methods

**SOCIOECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ACROSS COUNTRIES OF DIFFERENT
INCOME GROUPS**
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The economics of happiness is a relatively recent interdisciplinary field of research that explains the phenomenon of happiness from the perspectives of economics, sociology, and psychology. The aim of this study is to identify the specific features of the relationship between the level of subjective well-being of the population and key socioeconomic factors. The study also provides a comparative analysis of the structure of factors shaping life satisfaction in countries at different income levels, with countries grouped according to the World Bank's official classification by gross national income per capita. The study includes a correlation analysis of the relationship between the level of life satisfaction and individual socioeconomic indicators; differences in the structure of the estimated contribution of factors shaping the subjective well-being of the population across countries with different income levels were identified; the dynamics of the estimated contribution of individual factors to life satisfaction in the Republic of Moldova were analysed; and the results obtained were compared with indicators from other countries. The study employs correlation analysis methods using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, along with grouping methods and comparative cross-country analysis. The calculated Spearman's rank correlation coefficient between the level of life satisfaction (according to the World Happiness Report 2026) and GDP per capita (at purchasing power parity, as of 2025) for 147 countries of the world was 0.807, indicating a strong positive relationship between the variables studied; the coefficient was 0.682 for the freedom index and 0.640 for the corruption index. The results obtained can be used in developing directions for state socioeconomic policy aimed at improving the subjective well-being of the population, as well as in further research in the field of welfare economics.

Keywords: economics of happiness, subjective well-being, life satisfaction, quality of life, correlation analysis

LEVEL OF HOUSEHOLD OWNERSHIP OF DURABLE GOODS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Household ownership of durable goods is an important indicator of living standards, material well-being, and quality of life. Access to modern household appliances, information and communication technologies, and means of transport enhances residential comfort, saves time, promotes health protection, and reflects the level of a society's socioeconomic development. Although the level of household ownership of durable goods in the Republic of Moldova has improved considerably in recent years, significant disparities persist between urban and rural areas, as well as among households with different income levels, which highlights the relevance of this research. The aim of the study is to assess the level of household ownership of durable goods in the Republic of Moldova and to identify disparities associated with the place of residence and household income. The objectives of the research are to analyse the current level of household ownership of the main categories of durable goods, to compare ownership patterns between urban and rural households, and to evaluate the impact of income level on households' access to these goods. The research methodology is based on the analysis of official statistical data on households in the Republic of Moldova for 2024. The study applies a comparative analytical approach to assess household ownership of the main categories of durable goods according to place of residence and income quintile groups, while descriptive and comparative methods were employed to interpret the findings. The results indicate that basic durable goods, such as mobile phones, televisions, and refrigerators, are available in almost all households, whereas ownership of computers, automatic washing machines, microwave ovens, air conditioners, and private cars is substantially lower in rural areas and among low-income households. The most pronounced inequalities are observed in the ownership of higher-value goods, including computers, dishwashers, and air conditioners, demonstrating that access to durable goods remains strongly influenced by household welfare and place of residence. The findings confirm the existence of significant disparities in household ownership of durable goods and highlight the influence of residential location and income level on access to these goods. The article was developed within the framework of Subprogram 030101 „Strengthening the resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability of the economy of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the accession process to the European Union”, institutional funding.

Keywords: durable goods, households, living standards, material well-being, territorial inequalities

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES AS A TOOL FOR PROMOTING WELL-BEING, SOCIAL INCLUSION, AND THE REDUCTION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

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The growing interest in social enterprises reflects their capacity to address social needs while creating economic value. In Romania, these organizations contribute to the integration of vulnerable groups into the labour market, support local community development, and provide services that strengthen social cohesion. Despite their social and economic potential, their visibility remains limited: low public awareness and fragmented promotion continue to constrain their recognition, development, and overall societal impact. This paper explores the role of social enterprises in promoting well-being, social inclusion, and the reduction of social inequalities. It forms part of an ongoing doctoral research project focused on promotion strategies for social enterprises within the Romanian economic environment. Drawing on the

academic literature, together with European and Romanian policy documents, the analysis examines how strategic promotion can increase the visibility and credibility of social enterprises while enhancing their capacity to generate social value. Particular emphasis is placed on the relationship between promotion strategies, stakeholder engagement, and the achievement of broader social outcomes. As an initial stage of the doctoral research, the study is primarily conceptual and does not seek to provide empirical evidence; instead, it establishes a theoretical foundation for the subsequent empirical phase by proposing a conceptual framework for analysing the factors that influence the visibility and public recognition of Romanian social enterprises. The framework links promotion strategies with social value creation, well-being, and social inclusion, offering a basis for future empirical investigation. The analysis suggests that improving the visibility and credibility of social enterprises may encourage greater public engagement and stronger stakeholder support. Over time, these developments can reinforce social cohesion, expand opportunities for vulnerable groups, and contribute to reducing social inequalities in Romania. The proposed framework may also provide useful insights for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners interested in strengthening the Romanian social enterprise ecosystem.

Keywords: social enterprises, social economy, well-being, social inclusion, social inequalities, promotion strategies, Romania

FROM INVISIBLE SURVIVAL TO INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION: A CRITICAL GENDER AUDIT OF SERVICE STANDARDS FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN ROMANIA

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Women's homelessness is frequently overlooked because institutional responses continue to be shaped by a conventional model of homelessness: an adult sleeping rough or staying in an emergency shelter. This paper examines how social service standards define beneficiary eligibility and determine the scope and intensity of intervention. The study assesses whether Romanian standards applicable to shelters and residential centres recognise the gendered dimensions of homelessness, incorporate an intersectional perspective, and address the impact of trauma on women experiencing homelessness. It also considers whether these standards support pathways towards safe and stable housing. The research question is to what extent existing standards move beyond the temporary management of visible forms of homelessness, and whether they enable the development of gender-responsive, trauma-informed services that promote access to safe and stable housing. The paper employs a historical-documentary analysis, complemented by a critical assessment of the regulatory framework. The analytical framework brings together the ETHOS typology, an intersectional perspective, trauma-informed approaches, Housing First principles, and the institutional learning generated through the INTERACT project (INTERACT – Intersectional Approach to Combating Homelessness for Women, Grant Agreement No. 101172611, ESF-2023-HOMELESS, funded by the European Union through the European Social Fund Plus and implemented by a consortium of organisations from six European countries: Greece, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, and Romania). Romanian service standards have contributed to the professionalisation of service provision by regulating accommodation conditions, needs assessment, the protection and promotion of beneficiaries' rights, staff responsibilities, and procedural safeguards. However, these standards remain predominantly gender-neutral and are structured around the profile of a single adult who is sleeping rough or seeking accommodation within a residential service. They insufficiently capture hidden forms of homelessness, gender-based violence, motherhood, women's dependence on others for access to a place to sleep, complex support needs, and the broader housing circumstances affecting women. Formal compliance with service standards does not, in itself, demonstrate that a service is accessible to all women.

Keywords: women experiencing homelessness, social service standards, institutional visibility, gender-responsive services, trauma-informed approach, Housing First, INTERACT project

COMPARISON OF METHODS FOR MEASURING POVERTY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD

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The measurement of poverty is one of the most methodologically complex and policy-relevant tasks in contemporary social economics, since the way poverty is defined and measured directly shapes the design, targeting, and evaluation of social protection policies. For the Republic of Moldova, this issue has acquired particular importance in the context of European integration and of the gradual transition toward the EU-SILC methodology and the AROPE indicator (At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion), a process that requires the national statistical system to align with international good practices. The purpose of this research is to compare the methodologies used to measure poverty in the Republic of Moldova with those applied in various countries around the world, in order to identify good practices relevant to the national context. The research seeks to answer which methodological models are used internationally to measure poverty, how the Moldovan approach compares with the reference models of different countries, how the recent methodological adjustments introduced by the National Bureau of Statistics affect measured monetary and non-monetary poverty rates, and what relationship exists between monetary and multidimensional poverty within the population. The methodological framework of the research includes systemic and comparative approaches, as well as methods of statistical analysis and a review of the scientific literature. The expected results will make it possible to identify good international practices applicable to the Republic of Moldova, to assess the degree of alignment of national statistics with European standards, and to formulate recommendations for improving the measurement of poverty as a basis for more effective and better-targeted social policies. The article was elaborated within the Project selected in the competition „Stimulating excellence in scientific research 2025-2026” 25.80012.0807.37SE „The perfection of instruments for reducing income inequality and reducing poverty of the population in the process of European integration of the Republic of Moldova”, institutional funding, ANCD.

Keywords: poverty measurement, multidimensional poverty, MPI, EU-SILC, social inequality, Republic of Moldova

MUSEUMS, VULNERABILITY AND WELL-BEING: THE BOTTEGA DEI RAGAZZI AT THE ISTITUTO DEGLI INNOCENTI AS A CULTURAL WELFARE HUB

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Social and educational inequalities affecting children and families experiencing vulnerability are also reflected in reduced opportunities to access culture, beauty, participation, and meaningful relational experiences. From this perspective, well-being cannot be promoted solely through social and health services, but requires the involvement of a network of institutions, including cultural organisations. This paper examines the museum as a cultural welfare hub and as a pedagogical environment of care capable of fostering social inclusion and addressing educational and cultural inequalities. The study focuses on the Bottega dei Ragazzi, the educational service of the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence, as a case of integration between cultural heritage, education, and social responsibility. Its objective is to understand how museum-based educational practices can expand opportunities for cultural participation, relationship-building, and recognition for children and families experiencing vulnerability. The research addresses two questions:

which pedagogical dimensions characterise the inclusive practices developed by the Bottega dei Ragazzi, and which educational, relational, and institutional conditions enable a museum to contribute to well-being, social cohesion, and the reduction of inequalities. The research adopts a qualitative single-case study design within a phenomenological-hermeneutic framework. The corpus includes project and educational documentation, workshop materials, observation records, and interviews with educators and professionals involved in the activities. Data are examined through thematic analysis aimed at identifying recurring meanings related to care, participation, belonging, symbolic mediation, access to cultural heritage, and inter-institutional collaboration. The paper seeks to show how museums can operate as nodes within territorial welfare networks by connecting cultural institutions, educational services, and social services. Cultural participation is understood as a component of well-being and social inclusion, as well as a public responsibility in creating contexts that expand children's educational opportunities. The study contributes to the debate on inclusive policies and evidence-informed practices aimed at reducing social and cultural inequalities through cross-sector collaboration.

Keywords: cultural welfare, vulnerability, well-being, museum education, social inclusion

EMPIRICAL STUDY ON EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION OF THE DETERMINANTS OF INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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The scientific effort of this paper is aimed at identifying the variables that influence individual and organizational performance. In current conditions, when employees make the difference in terms of performance within organizations, human resources management has a particular concern to identify and correctly manage the constituent elements that ensure performance. In this scientific approach, five variables that influence individual and organizational performance are presented and analysed, namely: leadership, transparency, trust, commitment and agility. Each of the mentioned variables corresponds to several items, and the survey participants rated each item according to a Likert scale from 1 to 5. The results prove that the survey participants are aware of the relevance of the mentioned variables for individual and organizational performance. At the same time, the perceptions of the survey participants regarding the five variables differ, depending on their impact on the professional behaviour of employees.

Keywords: leadership, transparency, trust, engagement, agile, performance, human resource management

DEPTH OF HOUSEHOLD RESILIENCE UNDER ENERGY VULNERABILITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The study analyses household adaptation to energy vulnerability in the Republic of Moldova by distinguishing between short-term behavioural adjustments and structural measures with more durable effects. It also highlights differences between households according to their main heating source. The online survey, conducted in March-April 2026, yielded 503 responses, of which 491 met the eligibility criteria and were included in the analysis. The results show that 39.5% of respondents frequently restrict heating for financial reasons, with the share ranging from 59.7% among households using natural gas to 32.1% among those using wood or coal. The most frequently reported measures are replacing conventional bulbs with LEDs (53.0%), lowering indoor temperature (47.0%), and reducing the use of large appliances (39.9%), while partial dwelling insulation is reported by 21.6% of respondents. These findings suggest a predominance of behavioural adjustments and relatively low-cost measures compared with the structural measures examined. Among households with centralized heating, 46.8% report being unable to regulate heating individually, yet they also report other energy-saving measures at rates comparable to or higher than those observed in other groups. The findings suggest that heating source and heating technology may influence both exposure to energy-cost pressure and the scope for adjusting consumption. The study contributes to the analysis of energy vulnerability by distinguishing between

short-term adjustments and structural measures with more durable effects. Given the non-probability and predominantly urban sample, the findings should be interpreted as patterns observed among surveyed households rather than as nationally representative estimates. Nevertheless, they may provide useful evidence for the design of future household support measures and for better targeting energy-efficiency interventions. Further research based on representative data could assess whether the identified patterns persist at the national level and inform more targeted approaches to residential energy efficiency policy.

Keywords: household resilience, energy vulnerability, behavioural coping, structural adaptation, heating source, Republic of Moldova

INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY AND THE NEW PARADIGM OF WELL-BEING: BETWEEN ECONOMIC EQUITY AND THE REDUCTION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

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The increasing complexity of contemporary economic and social transformations requires a reconsideration of the relationship between economic performance, resource distribution, and societal well-being. Inclusive prosperity is emerging as a multidimensional paradigm in which economic performance is assessed alongside equity, social inclusion, and access to opportunities. Inequality is not merely a problem of the distribution of economic outcomes; it may also become a factor affecting economic efficiency, social mobility, and the sustainability of development (Stiglitz, 2012). This paper examines the relationship between inclusive prosperity, economic equity, and the reduction of social inequalities, using the Gini coefficient as the principal indicator of income distribution. The research methodology is based on descriptive and comparative analysis of Eurostat and National Institute of Statistics data, complemented by a dynamic assessment of the Gini coefficient and of its relationship with disposable income, employment, poverty risk, and social exclusion. Romania's evolution is examined both over time and in comparison with the European context. The quantitative approach is complemented by a review of the economic literature addressing inequality, well-being, and redistributive policies. The research seeks to identify the relationship between inequality dynamics and socio-economic conditions, while emphasizing the limitations of the Gini coefficient as a stand-alone measure of well-being. A reduction in income inequality does not necessarily imply an improvement in overall well-being; therefore, distributive trends should be interpreted in conjunction with employment, income levels, access to essential services, and opportunities for social mobility. The paper argues for a transition from a predominantly quantitative assessment of economic performance towards a paradigm of inclusive and sustainable prosperity, in which distributive equity becomes an integral dimension of economic efficiency, social cohesion, and long-term socio-economic resilience.

Keywords: economic equity, social inequalities, social inclusion, redistributive policies, social cohesion

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MECHANISMS IN PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

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The relevance of this study stems from the need to establish an effective system of public administration capable of ensuring social inclusion, reducing social inequality, and, at the same time, strengthening the country's economic security. Amid transformational processes, economic instability, rising social risks, and limited resources, the issue of ensuring equal access for the population to economic, social, and public goods takes on particular significance. The purpose of this article is to justify the role of public administration mechanisms in ensuring social inclusion and to determine their impact on the level of economic security. The study employs systemic, institutional, and comprehensive

approaches, as well as methods of analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, and logical modelling. It is based on the view of social inclusion as a key prerequisite for creating a sustainable socioeconomic environment and mitigating threats to economic security, and it identifies the interdependence between the population's level of well-being, access to public services, social equality, employment, human capital development, and economic resilience. It has been argued that insufficient levels of social inclusion can exacerbate socioeconomic risks, reduce the productivity of human capital, stimulate labour migration, deepen inequality, and create additional threats to economic security. Key directions for improving public administration mechanisms are proposed, including increasing the accessibility of social and public services, promoting digital inclusion, supporting employment and entrepreneurship, improving targeted social assistance, ensuring transparent resource allocation, and strengthening cooperation among government agencies, local self-government bodies, and civil society. The practical significance of these findings lies in the potential to apply the proposed approaches when formulating and implementing socioeconomic policies aimed at improving the well-being of the population, reducing social risks, and strengthening the economic security of the state and of local communities.

Keywords: social inclusion, social inequality, public welfare, economic security, public administration, social policy, socioeconomic stability

INFLUENCING FACTORS OF THE ACTIVITY OF PENITENTIARY POLICE OFFICERS

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European prison systems are going through a period of increased pressure, generated by the overcrowding of units, the chronic shortage of personnel, the frequent changes in the regulatory framework and the increase in the complexity of the prison population. In this context, the well-being of prison police officers becomes a public policy issue, not just one of internal human resources management. The paper aims to systematize the factors that influence the activity and the quality of professional life of the staff in the Romanian penitentiary system. The analysis starts from the results of studies carried out by both the penitentiary administration and the trade union organizations, sources that offer complementary, sometimes divergent, perspectives on the same occupational reality. Based on these, a classification of stressors into three categories is proposed: operational, organizational and traumatic. The effects of these factors on physical and mental health, job satisfaction, intention to leave the system and operational performance are examined, with a focus on the mechanisms by which chronic stress evolves into burnout. The analysis highlights the fact that organisational factors, although less visible, often have a cumulative impact greater than operational ones. The approach is complemented by a comparative component: the inferences underlying the study of these factors at international level are presented, as well as the solutions adopted by other prison administrations, each responding in a particular and contextual manner to its own constraints. The conclusions formulate proposals for improvement structured on two levels: organizational measures – job sizing, post-incident psychological support, managerial training, psychosocial risk assessment according to occupational safety and health legislation – and individual measures – coping strategies, work-life balance, mental health education. The results can substantiate prison policy decisions oriented towards staff retention and towards increasing the quality of professional activity.

Keywords: penitentiary, prison policeman, working conditions, stress, burnout, occupational safety and health

WELFARE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION AS FACTORS IN STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC SECURITY WITHIN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM

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The relevance of the study is determined by the growing socio-economic imbalances, the unequal access of the population to public goods, and the need to ensure sustainable state development amid contemporary challenges. Population welfare and social inclusion are becoming increasingly important as prerequisites for social stability, human capital development, and the strengthening of economic security. The purpose of the article is to examine the interrelationship between population welfare, social inclusion, and economic security, as well as to determine the role of public administration in creating a favourable socio-economic environment. The methodological framework of the study is based on systemic, institutional, and comprehensive approaches, as well as methods of analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, and structural-functional analysis. The study considers population welfare as a comprehensive characteristic of living standards and quality of life encompassing income, employment, access to education, healthcare, social services, and public services. Social inclusion is defined as an essential condition for ensuring equal opportunities for the population to participate in economic, social, and civic life. It is substantiated that a high level of social inequality and the limited access of certain population groups to resources and public services may generate additional threats to economic security through the reduction of labour potential, increased social tensions, rising unemployment, labour migration, and economic dependency. It is established that effective public administration can perform stabilizing and preventive functions through the implementation of inclusive socio-economic policies. The article proposes directions for improving public administration mechanisms, including increasing the accessibility of social and public services, developing digital inclusion, supporting employment and entrepreneurial activity, improving targeted social assistance, enhancing the efficiency of budgetary resource allocation and utilization, and strengthening partnerships among the state, local self-government bodies, businesses, and civil society. The implementation of these measures will contribute to improving population welfare, reducing social inequality, strengthening social stability, and establishing a resilient economic security system.

Keywords: population welfare, social inclusion, economic security, social inequality, public administration, social stability, human capital, economic resilience

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF POPULATION WELFARE AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR ENSURING ECONOMIC SECURITY

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The relevance of this study stems from the need to improve the effectiveness of public administration in ensuring the well-being of the population as a key prerequisite for the country's economic security. In the context of economic instability, the transformation of socioeconomic relations, rising inequality, and increasing social risks, the level of public welfare directly affects social stability, the labour force, economic activity, and the state's resilience to internal and external threats. The purpose of this article is to substantiate

the role of public administration of public welfare as a tool for strengthening economic security and to identify priority areas for improving the relevant management mechanisms. The methodological basis of the study consists of systemic and institutional approaches, as well as methods of analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, structural-functional analysis, and logical modelling. The article examines public welfare as a comprehensive socioeconomic category that characterizes the level of income, employment, access to basic public goods, social services, and opportunities for citizens to realize their economic potential. The key channels through which public welfare influences economic security are identified, including employment and income levels, human capital development, consumer demand, social stability, and trust in public institutions. It is argued that insufficient levels of public welfare and deepening social inequality can pose systemic threats to the economy.

Keywords: public administration, public welfare, economic security, social policy, social stability, social risks, human capital, economic resilience

FROM MIGRATION TO INVESTMENT: FINANCIAL MECHANISMS FOR TRANSFORMING HUMAN AND SOCIAL CAPITAL INTO PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENT

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Migration generates different forms of capital that can potentially contribute to investment and economic development in countries of origin. While remittances provide migrants with financial resources, migration also contributes to the accumulation of skills, knowledge, professional experience and social networks. However, these resources are not always transformed into productive investment. This study examines the factors that influence migrants' decisions to use migration-related resources for productive investment in the Republic of Moldova. Particular attention is given to the role of remittances, human capital and social networks, as well as to migrants' access to financial resources and investment opportunities. The study uses a comparative approach to examine differences between migrants who have undertaken productive investments and those who have primarily used their migration-related income for consumption or savings. The analysis focuses on migrants' education, professional experience, entrepreneurial skills, migration experience, remittance use, access to finance and business networks. The results are expected to provide insights into the conditions under which migration can generate investment beyond the traditional use of remittances for household consumption. The study argues that productive investment is more likely when financial resources are combined with relevant skills, knowledge, professional networks and access to appropriate financial instruments. The findings may contribute to the development of policies aimed at encouraging migrants to channel their accumulated resources and experience into entrepreneurship and productive investment in the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: migration, remittances, human capital, social capital, productive investment, migrants, entrepreneurship, Republic of Moldova

BEYOND THE EXISTENCE OF PUBLIC POLICIES: AWARENESS OF ROMA INCLUSION MEASURES IN ROMANIA

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The aim of the paper is to analyse the level of awareness of public policies designed for Roma inclusion in Romania and the factors associated with variations in this awareness. Over the past few decades, post-communist Romania has developed a strategic and institutional framework towards Roma inclusion, with measures focused on areas such as education and employment. However, the existence and continuity of such sectorial interventions do not necessarily ensure their public visibility among the target population. The study is based on research conducted in Romania in the second part of 2025 by the Research Institute for Quality of Life (Romanian Academy) on a sample of 1,370 Roma households. Five policies, programmes, and measures related to inclusion, education, and employment were analysed, and their level of awareness was summarized into a cumulative score. The statistical analysis examined variations in awareness according to socio-demographic characteristics, institutional and community connections, participation in local activities, and socio-economic resources. The research outputs show substantial differences across the interventions analysed. Educational programmes and measures registered the highest levels of awareness (58-65%), while the Job Fair for Roma and the Strategy for Roma Inclusion are known only by 37% and 36% of respondents, respectively. Participation in community activities shows stronger associations with policy awareness than socio-economic resources: its inclusion in the model increases the explained variance from 10.3% to 28.2%, whereas socio-economic indicators make only a minor additional contribution. The results indicate that the institutional existence and continuity of policies do not, in themselves, ensure their visibility among the target population, and highlight the importance of community contexts for the dissemination of information about inclusion measures.

Keywords: public policies, Roma inclusion, policy awareness, community participation, Romania

TWENTY YEARS AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: AN ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS AND SIBLINGS

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Twenty years after the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), assessing its legal impact remains paramount. Despite a global shift toward a human rights approach, many established rights too often remain solely on paper. Furthermore, the implementation of the CRPD is deeply fragmented, varying significantly across different countries and regions. In practice, the outdated medical model remains prevalent, as demonstrated by the persistence of the institutionalization dogma and the bureaucratic webs of legal guardianship (amministrazione di sostegno). The purpose of this study is to evaluate the evolution of disability law under the CRPD, analysing the tension between these systemic critical issues and future prospects. Specifically, the objective is to investigate the legal protections surrounding figures who remain largely invisible: family caregivers and siblings. In Italy, this analysis is particularly timely given the regional disparities in service welfare and the current, complex legislative path toward a national law for caregivers. Applying a multidisciplinary methodology that combines comparative legal analysis with Disability Studies, this paper examines domestic and European frameworks in order to evaluate how systemic legal omissions impact the entire family unit. The results demonstrate that, while the CRPD has

advanced formal rights, legislative implementation remains uneven and fails to recognize family caregivers as autonomous subjects. In conclusion, the future of disability law depends on overcoming territorial fragmentation, dismantling institutional mindsets, and bridging the gap between formal paper rights and concrete legal inclusion.

Keywords: UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Disability Studies, family caregivers and siblings, territorial fragmentation, human rights-based model, legal inclusion

COORDINATED PREVENTION FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY PARENTAL SUBSTANCE USE: THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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Children affected by parental substance use represent a vulnerable and often overlooked group, facing risks that range from social exclusion to the intergenerational transmission of addiction-related behaviours. Drawing on the sociological concept of cumulative disadvantage, this paper argues that risk for this group builds up across several areas of life at once – family, health, education – rather than staying confined to one. Protection, then, depends on coordinating these domains rather than on relying on a single measure. Using a qualitative document analysis, the study examines European and Romanian legislation, national strategies, and prevention programmes addressing substance use, child protection, and physical activity. This is complemented by survey and administrative data on physical activity levels among Romanian children and the wider population. The analysis identifies physical activity as a well-documented but consistently underused preventive resource: it is absent from validated programmes, from national strategies, and from the broader research literature on this specific population, in Romania and internationally alike. The paper also highlights the coordinating role social workers already play, linking families in treatment to schools, healthcare providers, and community resources, including sport. Findings point to two priorities: new partnerships between treatment and social-work services and sports organisations, and public policies that explicitly name this group among their target populations. The study closes with recommendations for research, professional practice, and public policy, aimed at a more coordinated, interdisciplinary model of prevention for children affected by parental substance use.

Keywords: vulnerable children, parental substance use, cumulative disadvantage, physical activity, interdisciplinary collaboration

THE IMPACT OF THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT MECHANISM OF AN ENTERPRISE ON THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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The relevance of the study is determined by the urgent need to enhance the adaptability of enterprises to rapidly changing market conditions. The article substantiates the need to improve the strategic management mechanism by optimizing its key instruments and approaches. The study examines current priorities of strategic enterprise management in the context of the economy's transition towards a sustainable development model. It is substantiated that the intensification of global socio-economic, political, and environmental challenges necessitates the transformation of traditional approaches to enterprise management and the integration of sustainable development principles into the strategic management system. It is determined that the concept of sustainable development is based on the harmonization of economic, social, and environmental dimensions, which establishes new requirements for strategic planning and for the implementation of managerial decisions at the enterprise level. The theoretical foundations of strategic management

as a systematic approach to the formulation and implementation of long-term enterprise development objectives under conditions of an unstable external environment, increasing competition, and technological change are examined. It is demonstrated that integrating sustainable development principles into strategic management enhances enterprises' adaptability to contemporary challenges, facilitates more efficient resource utilization, creates prerequisites for strengthening competitive positions, and contributes to achieving long-term economic performance. The study considers the concept of the strategic management mechanism of an enterprise, reveals its essence, and characterizes its key components. The main stages of developing such a mechanism are identified, taking into account the specific characteristics of the wine industry. Based on a generalization of international experience, the key areas for implementing sustainable development principles in wine industry enterprises are identified, including the adoption of energy-efficient technologies, the rational use of water and energy resources, the application of environmentally safe production solutions, biodiversity conservation, and the development of socially responsible practices. The practical implementation of these approaches is examined using the case of PTK SHABO LLC. Directions for improving the strategic management mechanism of the enterprise are proposed, including the introduction of innovative technologies, the modernization of production processes, the development of new products, and the enhancement of environmental and social responsibility.

Keywords: strategic management, strategic management mechanism, sustainable development, enterprise, development strategy, competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social responsibility, wine industry

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: THE ROLE OF BIODIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

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Biodiversity and environmental quality are fundamental determinants of public health and sustainable development. Environmental degradation, air and water pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss increasingly affect population health, quality of life, and health system performance. These challenges are particularly relevant for the Republic of Moldova in the context of European integration and the implementation of the EU environmental acquis. The study aims to assess the relationship between biodiversity, environmental quality, public health, and quality of life by comparing selected European Union countries with Moldova, Ukraine, and Montenegro, and by identifying policy directions for improving environmental and health governance. The research applies a quantitative and comparative approach based on statistical analysis, synthesis, clustering, correlation, and comparative assessment. Data were obtained from the World Health Organization (WHO), the European Environment Agency (EEA), Eurostat, the World Bank, the UNDP Human Development Reports, the Environmental Performance Index (EPI), and the Numbeo Quality of Life Index. Indicators analysed included pollution, environmental quality, health expenditure, healthy life expectancy (HALE), GDP, and quality of life. The findings demonstrate a significant association between environmental quality, biodiversity conservation, and population health. Countries investing a larger share of GDP in environmental protection and public health generally achieve lower pollution levels, higher healthy life expectancy, and better quality-of-life outcomes. Conversely, lower environmental investment is associated with higher pollution exposure, poorer health indicators, and increased pressure on healthcare systems. Moldova and other EU candidate countries continue to face substantial challenges related to environmental management, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable public health financing. Biodiversity conservation should be considered an essential component of public health policy. Strengthening investments in environmental protection, promoting intersectoral governance, and aligning national policies with European environmental and public health standards may contribute to improving healthy life expectancy, enhancing quality of life, and achieving sustainable development. The study supports the integration of environmental and health policies as a strategic priority for countries undergoing European integration.

Keywords: biodiversity, public health, environmental protection, pollution, healthy life expectancy, quality of life, environmental investment, sustainable development, European Union

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN THE ROMANIAN PARLIAMENT

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Thirty years after the Fourth World Conference on Women, convened by the United Nations in Beijing in 1995, women continue to be underrepresented in political decision-making at the global level, accounting for only 27.2% of parliamentary seats worldwide. In Europe, where political parties and parliaments responded to the Council of Europe's recommendations to adopt legislative reforms for the implementation of gender quotas in parliamentary and local elections, women's political representation has increased in recent decades, rising from almost 14% in 1990 to 32.3% on 1 January 2026. At present, according to the Global Database of Gender Quotas, more than half of the world's states have already legislated gender quotas for parliamentary elections (71 states) or reserved seats for women in parliament (29 states), while political parties in 69 states have adopted voluntary gender quotas. The growing adoption of gender quotas was largely motivated by the recognition that, in the absence of targeted interventions, the gradual rise in women's parliamentary representation would not be sufficient to achieve gender parity within a reasonable timeframe. However, the introduction of such measures has rarely been straightforward and has often followed prolonged political debate. In a number of countries where women remain underrepresented in politics and decision-making forums, including Romania, legislative initiatives establishing gender quotas have continued to face resistance and have ultimately been rejected. Using content analysis, this paper analyses the evolution over time of the legislative initiatives aimed at increasing the number of women involved in the decision-making process, proposed in the Romanian Parliament after the fall of communism, tracing the correlation between descriptive representation and the substantive representation of women's interests regarding political participation, a correlation moderated by parliamentary political parties. The findings of this research lead to the conclusion that, despite the progress achieved in women's descriptive representation in the Romanian Parliament, inequalities in politics and decision-making continue to persist. These disparities remain embedded in slowly evolving social norms and may be further reinforced by the increasing prominence of nationalist and religious fundamentalist political actors, potentially contributing to a renewed emphasis on traditional gender roles.

Keywords: descriptive representation, substantive representation, gender quotas, women's political participation, political parties, legislative initiatives

PEOPLE-CENTERED PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AS A BASIS FOR INCLUSIVE WELL-BEING AND SOCIAL COHESION

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The transformation of contemporary socio-economic systems requires a shift in public administration from predominantly institutional and administrative approaches toward people-centered governance focused on improving quality of life, expanding equal opportunities, and strengthening social cohesion. Population well-being and social inclusion are increasingly recognized as important components of sustainable socio-economic development and as factors influencing the resilience of society and public institutions. In this context, people-centered public administration can serve as an important mechanism for coordinating social, economic, and institutional measures aimed at reducing social inequalities and ensuring inclusive development. The purpose of the study is to substantiate the role of people-centered public administration in enhancing inclusive well-being and strengthening social cohesion. The methodological framework is based on systemic, institutional, and stakeholder-oriented approaches, combined with methods of analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization, and structural-functional analysis. The study considers public administration not only as a mechanism for delivering public services but also as a system for creating conditions that enable individuals and social groups to realize their economic, social, and civic potential. It demonstrates that population well-being depends on a combination of economic, social, institutional, and territorial factors, including income stability,

employment, access to education and healthcare, availability of public and digital services, and opportunities for participation in social and economic life. Unequal access to these resources may contribute to social exclusion, weaken social cohesion, and increase socio-economic risks. Therefore, people-centered public administration should focus on equal opportunities, the accessibility and quality of public services, targeted social support, employment promotion, human capital development, digital inclusion, and meaningful citizen participation in public policymaking. The findings indicate that strengthening social cohesion requires an integrated approach combining social protection with measures aimed at increasing economic participation and individual self-reliance. Particular importance is attached to evidence-based decision-making, data-driven monitoring of social inequalities, intersectoral cooperation, and partnerships among public authorities, local communities, businesses, and civil society. The implementation of these approaches can contribute to improving population well-being, reducing social inequalities, strengthening social resilience, and creating a more inclusive and sustainable socio-economic environment.

Keywords: people-centered public administration, population well-being, social inclusion, social cohesion, social inequality, equal opportunities, human capital, public services, social resilience, inclusive development

THE ROLE OF THE DISABILITY MANAGER: A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

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The paper focuses on the role of the Disability Manager as a key instrument for addressing conditions of vulnerability and as a strategic resource for fostering inclusive economic and social development within specific social contexts. In particular, it examines how this professional figure can contribute to overcoming prejudice and discrimination against people with disabilities by promoting equal opportunities, participation, and organizational inclusion. The study is based on a qualitative theoretical analysis supported by documentary analysis and sociological interpretation. The first part presents an overview of recent data on disability in the Italian context, highlighting the main social, economic, and employment challenges experienced by people with disabilities. It also discusses the current policy framework and the growing importance of inclusive practices in both public institutions and private organizations. The analysis then explores prejudice toward disability through the lens of Erving Goffman's microsociological theory of stigma and of the relational approach developed by the British sociologist and disability rights activist Tom Shakespeare. Disability is understood as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by the interaction between individual conditions, social structures, and cultural representations. Within this framework, the Disability Manager is interpreted as a facilitator capable of creating connections and communication channels among individuals and groups experiencing different forms of diversity and vulnerability. The relational approach can therefore serve as a useful instrument for strengthening the Disability Manager's role from both a cultural and a strategic perspective, contributing to more inclusive organizations and societies.

Keywords: disability manager, society, disability, economic growth, relational approach

THE IMPACT OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

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Social transformation is currently viewed as a new form of individual adaptation to contemporary challenges and, at the same time, understood as a pathway to innovation. Society needs progress above all, and this improvement cannot be achieved without a collective effort. In this regard, the concept of social transformation – and society in particular – could be considered as witnesses promising equity, validity, and predictability. These concepts are, in fact, fundamental ethical principles transmitted by society to individuals, and should be considered major obligations for those interested in validating social outcomes. Among them, students should be constantly involved in academic activities primarily aimed at academic integrity. This paper focuses on the role of academic integrity in strengthening students' professional development, given that their academic status provides a solid framework for deepening the ethical principles essential to their future professional careers. Furthermore, the study considers the impact of students' academic integrity on the

socio-economic environment. To conduct research on the current topic, a conceptual analysis was carried out regarding the key principles of academic integrity that students must observe – both to complete their studies at higher education institutions and to prepare for their future professional careers. These principles primarily address ethics and moral values, as well as standards of integrity. The study concluded that academic integrity plays a distinct role in character formation within a specific framework where social values and professional standards must be strictly upheld by all stakeholders in the socio-economic environment. Furthermore, the conclusions stated that academic integrity represents an important balancing factor between students' ability to disseminate the knowledge they have acquired and their integration into the socio-economic environment.

Keywords: academic integrity, social values, ethics, legal framework, standards of integrity

MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL RESILIENCE: INTEGRATING SOFT SKILLS AND TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNICATION INTO HEALTH PROFESSIONS TRAINING

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The growing impact of armed conflicts, forced migration, public health emergencies, and demographic changes has transformed the communication demands placed on healthcare professionals. Beyond clinical expertise, medical practitioners require well-developed soft skills and trauma-informed communication competencies in order to provide equitable, patient-centered care for individuals experiencing vulnerability and psychological distress. This study aims to examine how the integration of soft skills and trauma-informed communication into health professions education can strengthen the social resilience of future healthcare professionals. The research addresses which soft skills are essential for effective professional practice in socially complex healthcare settings, how trauma-informed communication can be systematically integrated into competency-based medical education, and which educational approaches most effectively support the development of these competencies. The study employs a qualitative research design based on a comprehensive literature review, a comparative analysis of international competency frameworks and educational standards, and conceptual modelling. Recent evidence on communication skills education, trauma-informed care, competency-based medical education, and digital learning is synthesized in order to develop an integrated educational framework. The proposed model incorporates experiential learning, simulation-based training, reflective practice, interprofessional education, structured feedback, and AI-supported learning tools to enhance communication competence in authentic clinical contexts. The findings indicate that integrating trauma-informed communication with key soft skills such as empathy, active listening, emotional intelligence, teamwork, intercultural competence, adaptability, conflict resolution, and reflective practice can significantly enhance learners' preparedness to communicate effectively with vulnerable populations, including displaced persons, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and patients affected by trauma. The conceptual framework demonstrates how competency-based educational strategies can improve professional readiness while contributing to more resilient, inclusive, and patient-centered healthcare systems. The study concludes that embedding trauma-informed communication and soft skills throughout medical curricula represents an effective strategy for preparing healthcare professionals to address contemporary social challenges. The proposed framework offers practical guidance for curriculum developers, medical educators, and policymakers seeking to modernize health professions education in response to rapidly changing societal needs.

Keywords: social resilience, trauma-informed communication, soft skills, competency-based education

SOCIAL SEGREGATION AMONG THE ROMA URBAN POPULATION IN BULGARIA: REGIONAL PROFILES AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

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The current study examines the social segregation of Roma ghettoized urban communities in Bulgaria as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by historical, cultural, economic, demographic, and institutional factors. The aim of the paper is to identify the regional patterns and models of social segregation affecting the urban Roma population at the NUTS 2 level in Bulgaria. The research seeks to answer the following questions: what are the key regional differences in the social segregation of urban Roma communities in the country; which factors contribute most strongly to continuous marginalization and exclusion; and how regional profiles can support the elaboration of more territorially sensitive policies for the effective social inclusion of the Roma community. The study applies a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis based on a nationally representative survey of 900 respondents living in Roma ghettoized neighbourhoods in Bulgaria with qualitative analysis based on interviews and field observations conducted in multiple Bulgarian cities during the 2022-2024 period. A set of indicators is used to assess social segregation across NUTS 2 territorial units, together with a social segregation index designed to identify the urban areas at highest risk of persistent exclusion and marginalization in the country. The findings show that Roma social segregation in urban Bulgaria has a nationwide spatial scope but displays distinct regional profiles. In the northern regions, a model of “cumulative exclusion” predominates, where educational deficits, long-term unemployment, and weak institutional coverage reinforce one another. In the southern regions of the country, higher levels of mobility and social connectedness are observed, although these do not always translate into stable employment or effective institutional inclusion. Furthermore, the northern regions of Bulgaria show high values on the social segregation index, confirming the findings of the regional analysis and reflecting the prevalence of educational isolation, long-term unemployment, and weak institutional support. The results highlight the need for territorial differentiation of the policies implemented across the country in order to ensure the social inclusion and effective integration of the Roma population. Therefore, in certain urban regions of Bulgaria, priority should be given to literacy and school retention, while in others, emphasis should be placed on the transition from part-time to stable employment and on institutional integration.

Keywords: Roma population, social segregation, regional profiles, urban marginalization

SOCIAL INCLUSION MECHANISMS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS FOR A MORE FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE LABOUR MARKET SUPPORTING LONG-TERM EMPLOYABILITY

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The paper examines social inclusion mechanisms for vulnerable groups in the Republic of Moldova in the context of a labour market affected by demographic pressures, low labour force participation, skills mismatches, informality and uneven access to employment opportunities. The analysis focuses on how public policies, vocational education and training, active labour market measures, social assistance and partnerships between public authorities, employers and civil society can contribute to a more flexible and adaptable labour market that supports long-term employability. Particular attention is given to groups facing heightened barriers to employment, including persons with disabilities,

young people not in employment, education or training, women, Roma communities, refugees and other socially vulnerable categories. The study highlights that inclusion cannot be limited to access to jobs alone, but requires an integrated approach combining skills development, personalised employment support, accessible services, workplace adaptation, social protection and recognition of the specific needs of each group. In the case of the Republic of Moldova, strengthening institutional coordination, improving data-based targeting, expanding inclusive vocational pathways and promoting decent and formal employment are essential for reducing labour market exclusion. The paper argues that inclusive labour market policies increase both individual employability and systemic resilience, contributing to social cohesion, poverty reduction and sustainable economic development. The findings underline the need for coherent, evidence-based and rights-oriented mechanisms capable of transforming vulnerability into active participation and long-term integration into the labour market. The article was developed within the framework of 25.80012.0807.26TC Project for Young Researchers “Valorisation of human capital through mechanisms of social inclusion and sustainable development in the context of the innovative-technological ecosystem”, funded by ANCD.

Keywords: social inclusion, vulnerable groups, labour market, long-term employability, Republic of Moldova

TOURISM AND SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING: THE UKRAINIAN DIMENSION OF THE RECREATION–QUALITY OF LIFE NEXUS

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Tourism is usually assessed through revenue, arrivals and employment, yet its most lasting contribution may lie elsewhere – in the restoration of health, social connectedness and perceived quality of life. In Ukraine, where the sector has been reshaped by displacement, security constraints and the loss of inbound flows, this wellbeing function has moved from a secondary benefit to a primary reason for public support of the industry. Domestic, short-distance and recovery-oriented travel now serves populations under prolonged stress, while the traditional economic case for tourism has weakened. The study aims to clarify how participation in tourism and recreational activity relates to the wellbeing of Ukrainian households, and to identify which forms of tourism – health and spa, rural and green, cultural, or social and subsidised tourism – offer the greatest benefit relative to their cost. The investigation is guided by three questions: in what ways travel and recreation contribute to life satisfaction, health and social ties; which social groups remain excluded from recreation, and through what barriers – cost, infrastructure, information or security; and whether subsidised and social tourism can be justified on wellbeing rather than revenue grounds. The study relies on desk-based methods: a documentary review of national tourism and recovery policy and of regional development programmes; a descriptive analysis of official statistics on domestic travel, recreational expenditure and the use of health and sanatorium facilities; and a content analysis of publicly available offers of recreational, spa and rural tourism providers in the Odesa region, examined as an illustrative case. These are combined with a comparative review of European practice in social and health-oriented tourism and a SWOT assessment of the region's recreational potential. The paper proposes a simple, wellbeing-based framework for evaluating tourism policy in recovery conditions.

Keywords: tourism, subjective wellbeing, quality of life, health tourism, social tourism, recreation, Ukraine, post-crisis recovery

FROM PROTECTION TO PARTICIPATION: REFUGEE LABOUR-MARKET INCLUSION AND DEMOGRAPHIC RESILIENCE IN MOLDOVA

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Moldova faces a combination of demographic decline, population ageing, persistent emigration, and labor shortages that increasingly constrain its economic resilience. At the same time, the country hosts a significant population of refugees, many of whom are of working age and possess education, professional experience, and skills that remain only partially utilized. This article examines whether refugee inclusion can be understood not only as a humanitarian and social policy objective, but also as a component of Moldova's broader response to population change. Its main research goal is to assess the conditions under which the socioeconomic integration of Ukrainian refugees could contribute to local labor-market resilience, more effective use of human capital, and wider economic participation in Moldova. The central research question is: Under what conditions can the labor-market inclusion of Ukrainian refugees contribute to Moldova's economic and demographic resilience?

The study adopts a comparative policy analysis based on secondary quantitative and qualitative data. Moldova is treated as the principal case study, while Poland and Czechia are used as comparative reference cases because both countries have hosted large numbers of Ukrainian refugees and have generated measurable evidence regarding employment, labor-market participation, fiscal contributions, and skills utilization. The analysis draws on official statistics, reports by international organizations, policy documents, and relevant academic literature on refugee economies, labor-market integration, and host-country effects.

Rather than assuming that refugee inflows automatically generate economic benefits, the article focuses on the institutional conditions that shape outcomes, including access to employment, recognition of qualifications, language acquisition, childcare, job matching, and formalization of work. It argues that refugee inclusion cannot reverse Moldova's demographic decline, but that better labor-market integration may help mitigate some of its economic consequences by expanding labor supply, reducing skills underutilization, and strengthening participation in the formal economy while supporting longer-term social and economic resilience.

Keywords: *refugee labour-market integration, Ukrainian refugees, demographic resilience, human capital, formal employment, Moldova*