

## COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AND THE ROMANIAN AGRICULTURE – A DRAFT COMPARISON APPROACH

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### Abstract

*In contemporary economies, agriculture has positive spill-over effects and contributes in valuing inland potentials and creating a competitive and well functional economic system. The recent evolution of the Romanian agriculture has imposed a new and determinant trend of valuing internal potential of growth in a larger perspective of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) transformation. The main goal of this research is to present and analyze the relations triggered by the convergence of Romanian agriculture to the new CAP perspective form a larger perspective of European comparisons.*

Key Words: *agriculture, CAP, reform, paradigm, land use, economy*

JEL classification: *N50; O13; P52; Q18*

### Introduction

In contemporary economies, agriculture, despite reducing its role and importance in creating gross value added, it continues to hold a basically economic place in assuring resilience for numerous rural communities. Agriculture is essential in reducing the regional development gaps and improving the social wellbeing for rural communities. In this context, agriculture has diversified its area of manifestation, gaining an ample multifunctionality, beyond its classical roles of food production and raw material providing.

Agriculture, due to the numerous transformations and mutations that have taken place along the processes of adapting to the demands of the global economy, has become an industry itself that mobilizes a large complex of

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resources. As it is argued in European policy documents (European Commission (2017), and already accepted "agriculture itself has become, in many cases, a form of industry, as technology, vertical integration, marketing and consumer preferences have evolved along lines that closely follow the profile of comparable industrial sectors, often of notable complexity and richness of variety and scope." (European Commission, 2017).

The perspective of the new financial framework and the need for a more proactive and highly functional Common Agricultural Policy has imposed a massive rethinking of the traditional working paradigm. As (Henke et al., 2018) argues "Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is a core policy of the European Union (EU), which represents 40 per cent of the EU budget allotments and a cornerstone of the integration process" (Henke et al., 2018).

The designing and application of a strong European agricultural policy requires more than ever the achievement of a strong covenant between the agricultural sectors of the member countries based on the requirements of the European agricultural model. Also, the challenges posed by achieving enormous environmental, climate and social and food security objectives of the population are some of the determining factors in designing a functioning agricultural policy.

The impact of the Common Agricultural Policy is multiple and differs in different degrees in objectives depending on the level of addressability. Thus, the CAP must satisfy equally the initial objectives set by the Rome Treaty, but also respond to the new challenges provoked by the sustainable development of rural communities, climate and environmental provocations, and income support for farmers.

The Common Agricultural Policy is heavily dependent on the realization of a budget that will satisfy the highest degree of the functioning of an economically suited economic zone for the Member States. In the same time as (Kirylyuk-Dryjska & Baer-Nawrocka, 2019) notice "CAP is one of the oldest and most controversial of the UE policies", but at the same time reunites the most common political interests of the EU at the highest level.

Analyzing the convergence between national agriculture and the new transformation of the CAP reforms` requires the ample process of

understanding of the intimate resorts of the sectorial transformations, and the future evolution from a large context of European convergence. In case of Romanian economy, agriculture is a determinant economic branch with a wide and determined impact in ensuring economic development and a sustainable growth for rural communities, from a multifaceted perspective being a basically revenue support for a numerous rural population.

Agriculture generates a broad process of positive effects and intercorrelations in the economy, being equally supplier and consumer of raw materials, contributing to the creation of value added in the economy. From this perspective, the understanding of the role and place of agriculture in the structure of the national economy implies a deepening of the mechanism of sectoral functioning and interrelation. Starting from the reality that agriculture has acquired the accents and characteristics of a real industry, it further emphasizes the understanding of connections with the CAP and its own way of functioning.

For achieving the research goals established above, the paper is structured in two distinct sections in which the evolution of the agricultural efficiency in Romania and some EU-MS, compared with the future design of the CAP paradigm, are presented and analyzed.

### **A multi approach on agricultural efficiency in some EU countries**

Agriculture represents an important economic activity and sector at the EU level, with determinant impact on economic growth. Agriculture, through CAP, has become one of the most integrated economic branches in economic structure. From this perspective, the evolution of the output of the agricultural 'industry' is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: *Output of the agricultural 'industry' in some EU countries, 2014-18 - Million purchasing power standards (PPS)-*

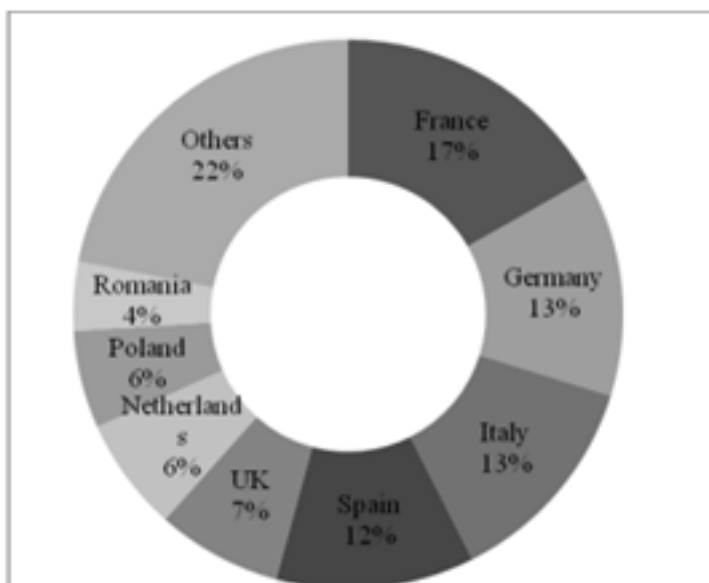
<b>Country</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b><math>\Delta_{2014=100}</math></b>
EU	461,779.78	446,950.49	476,410.20	3.17%
Bulgaria	9,379.68	8,411.90	8,366.32	-10.80%
Czechia	7,950.95	7,552.81	7,651.75	-3.76%
Germany	56,473.74	49,033.17	49,806.52	-11.81%
Estonia	1,259.42	1,022.70	1,127.77	-10.45%
Spain	48,959.90	53,730.15	58,790.85	20.08%
France	68,763.92	64,470.03	69,195.30	0.63%

Italy	54,096.23	54,966.32	57,527.75	6.34%
Latvia	1,948.63	1,936.06	1,891.13	-2.95%
Lithuania	4,672.93	4,613.55	4,538.52	-2.88%
Hungary	13,991.34	13,985.36	14,115.97	0.89%
Poland	40,248.39	40,300.90	42,654.71	5.98%
Romania	33,735.67	31,008.48	38,728.33	14.80%
Slovenia	1,529.71	1,505.97	1,601.34	4.68%
Slovakia	3,632.11	3,593.46	3,469.13	-4.49%

Source: *authors` based on (Eurostat, 2019a)*

From Table 1 it can be remarked that the evolution of output of the agricultural 'industry' in some EU countries during 2014-18 describes a general growing trend over the entire analyzed period, with the exception of states such as: Germany (11.81%), Bulgaria (10.80%), Slovakia (4.49%) and Latvia and Lithuania with a decrease of almost 3%. On the other hand, countries as Romania and Spain, with important shares of agriculture in the economic system register massive increases during the period. The discrepancy tendency of the presented indicator largely describes the role and importance of agriculture in the national economy. In Figure 1, the share of output value of EU's agricultural industry as percentage of EU total in 2017 is presented.

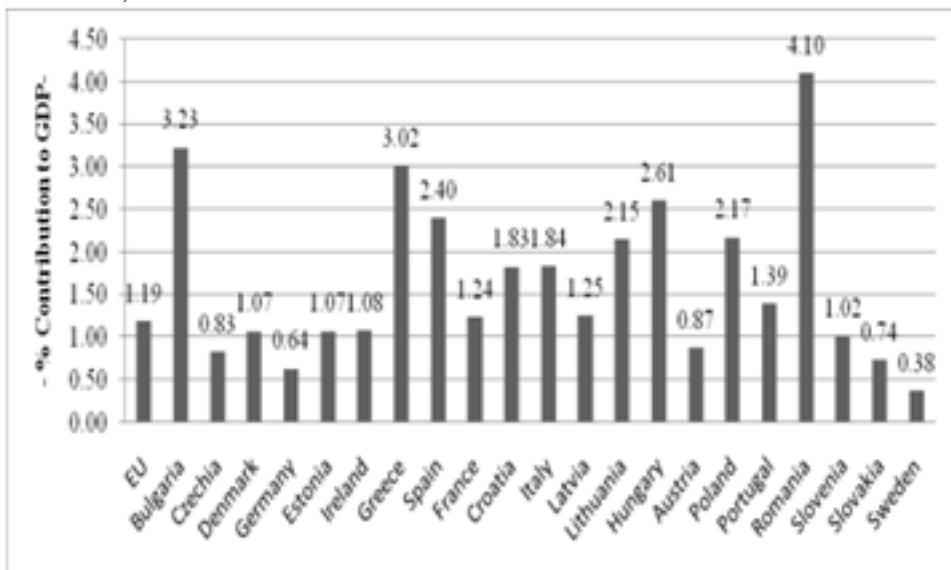
Figure 1: *Output value of EU's agricultural industry (% of EU total), 2017*



Source: *authors` own computations based on (Eurostat, 2019)*

The EU agriculture as is argued in numerous studies (Détang-Dessendre et al., 2018; Boinec & Fertő, 2019; Renwick, et al., 2013; Gardner, 2006 Andrei & Darvasi, 2012; Andrei et al., 2015) has different levels of impacts, starting from economic and environmental approaches and finishing with income support and multifunctional activities in rural areas. The share of output value of EU's agricultural industry reveals the fact that agriculture is a fundamental economic branch with a great impact on European agricultural economics. Output value of EU's agricultural industry holds and contributes with significant values in the most technologically advanced countries as France (17%), Germany and Italy with 13%, followed by Spain (12%). Romania, where agriculture continues to be an important economic branch, holds just 4%. For a greater approach, the agricultural contribution in creating GDP in some EU countries in 2017 is presented in fig.2.

Figure 2: *Agricultural contribution in creating GDP in some EU countries, 2017*



Source: *authors` own computations based on (Eurostat, 2019)*

The shares of agricultural contribution in creating GDP prove the importance of the agricultural sector in generating gross value added and wellbeing in EU-MS. The shares range from 0.38% in Sweden and 0.83% in Czech rep., with the peak of 4.19% in Romania and 3.23% in Bulgaria.

The agricultural production, as it is showed by the data from fig.2, holds important shares in EU –MS economies. If, in case of well functional and highly competitive countries as: Germany, France, Ireland, Denmark, agriculture has a contribution to GDP around 1% or below, for the latest countries accessed to EU, agriculture still has a major impact. From this perspective, the importance of CAP financial support has new meanings and approaches.

From this approach, another important issue is the evolution of the gross fixed capital formation in agriculture. In Table 2, the evolution of the gross fixed capital formation in some EU countries during 2014-2017 is presented.

Table 2: *Gross fixed capital formation in some EU countries, 2014-2017\**  
 - Million purchasing power standards (PPS) -

Country	2014	2016	2017	$\Delta_{20014=100}$
EU	58,659.20	56,756.31	59,030.44	0.63%
Bulgaria	452.00	307.05	322.87	-28.57%
Czechia	1,001.64	1,187.00	1,268.71	26.66%
Germany	8,943.41	8,337.16	8,685.41	-2.88%
Estonia	331.66	222.03	214.88	-35.21%
Spain	4,739.93	5,435.52	5,827.83	22.95%
France	10,042.28	9,056.78	9,158.76	-8.80%
Italy	7,894.38	8,479.67	8,709.17	10.32%
Latvia	275.22	447.00	467.40	69.83%
Lithuania	868.69	1,077.67	1,069.27	23.09%
Hungary	1,605.24	1,212.62	1,398.07	-12.91%
Portugal	1,152.04	1,182.65	1,123.95	-2.44%
Romania	2,174.16	1,936.06	2,101.02	-3.36%
Slovenia	290.50	285.76	312.27	7.49%
Slovakia	169.07	183.17	259.69	53.60%

Note: \*= excluding deductible VAT

Source: *authors` based on Eurostat, 2019*

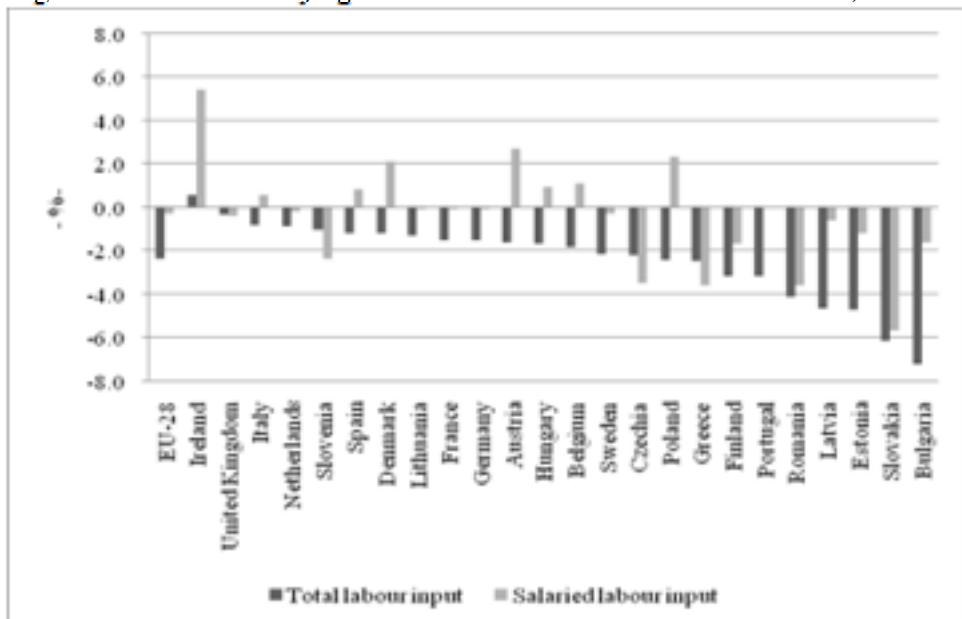
Gross fixed capital formation in agriculture presents a dogmatic approach of the agricultural importance in the whole economic structure. A performing agriculture needs massive capital investments, modern machinery and production technology.

During the analyzed period, gross fixed capital formation registered overall significant declines in most of the analyzed countries. The most significant decline was registered in Bulgaria, a country with a strong agricultural character. At the same time, it can be noticed that the biggest drops are driven by states where agriculture still has significant inflows, and where gross capital formation should record significant appreciation to reduce the gap.

As it has already been discussed in literature (Ciutacu et al., 2015; Mattison et al., 2005; Manoleli et al., 2004), there are significant discrepancies and divergences in agricultural sector. Productivity gaps in agriculture are also accentuated and sustained by poor farm labor and the lack of an active policy to support investment.

Against this background, gaps are on the rise, and agriculture in these countries will continue to be just a supplier of raw materials. In this context, agriculture continues to be labour intensive, less than technological intensive and register low levels of productivity. To accentuate this, the volume of agricultural labour used in some EU countries in 2017 is presented in fig.3.

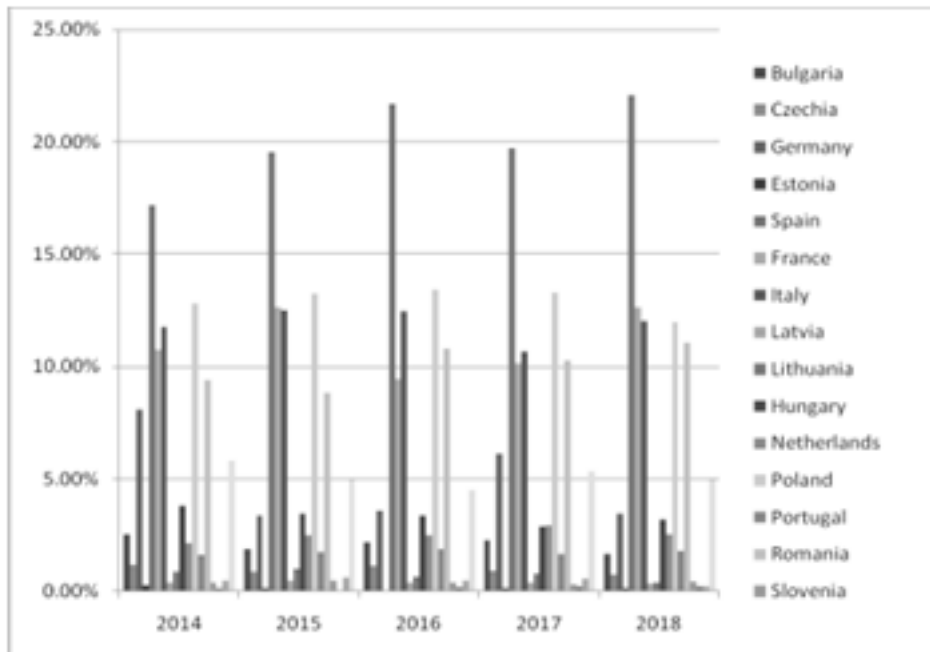
Figure 3: *The volume of agricultural labour in some EU countries, 2017*



Source: *authors` based on (Eurostat, 2019)*

The volume of agricultural labor reflects in a greater measure the remaining character of labor intensive activity, mobilizing massive labor force, especially no salaried, as could be remarked from the figure above. The agricultural labor employed is the one of the major topic debated when come to CAP effects. Despite the fact that agriculture has been massively modernized and orientated to the market efficiency principles satisfaction, labour inputs have kept almost the same shares in this economic sector.

Figure 4: *Evolution of entrepreneurial income in some EU countries, 2014-18*



Source: *authors` own computations based on (Eurostat, 2019a)*

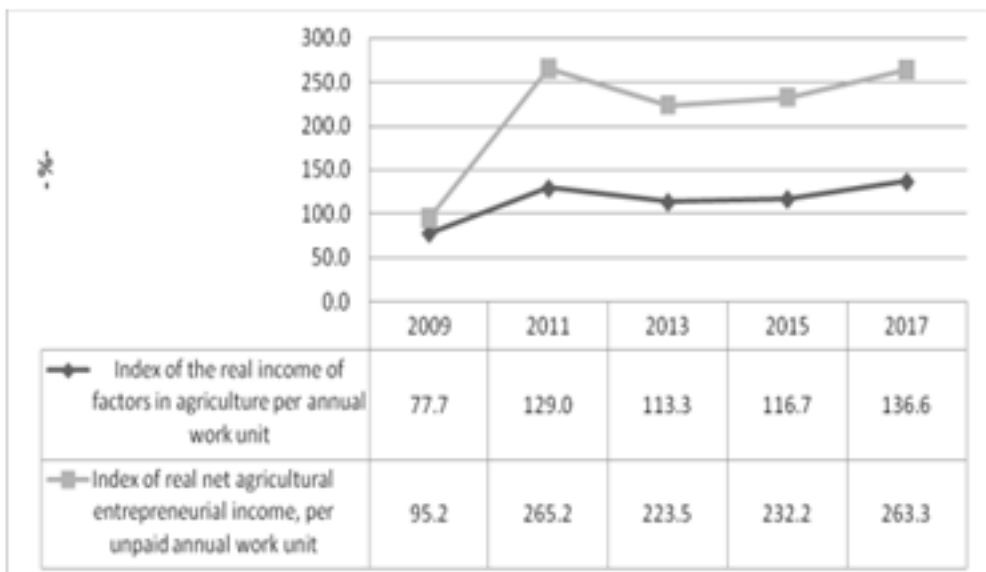
According to (Eurostat. 2019) statistics "the EU agricultural labour input was the equivalent of 9.4 million full-time workers in 2017 and reflects the amount of the notional workers that are remunerated with agricultural income." The decline rate of agricultural labor force could be considered as a sign of workforce orientation towards other economic sectors that generate a high gross added value, as well as an increase in the sectoral technology rate. The decline rate of the workforce in agriculture is different from one Member State to another, including the endogenous effects of national policies of valorizing domestic economic potential.

However if we consider the total agricultural labor input, the majority was non-salaried, which was appropriate (Eurostat, 2019) equivalent to 6.9 million full-time workers in 2017, while the salaried labor input was the equivalent of 2.4 million full-time for the same reference period.

On the other side, another complementary aspect is represented by the evolution of different indexes of incomes, specific to the agricultural sector, from which agricultural entrepreneurial income represents a milestone. In figures 4 and 5, the evolution of entrepreneurial income, index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit and the index of real net agricultural entrepreneurial income, per unpaid annual work unit, is presented.

*The evolution of entrepreneurial income* (fig.4) could describe an upward trend in most of the analyzed countries, which reflects an appreciation of the economic activities in agriculture and its potential to generate revenues. Although agriculture is appreciated as an economic branch that most often generates modest business gains, it can reorganize a large part of its work and business resources to capitalize on unexploited potential. To support this, the evolution of two revenues` indexes is presented in fig.5.

Figure 5: *Evolution of two income indexes, in some EU countries, 2009-17*



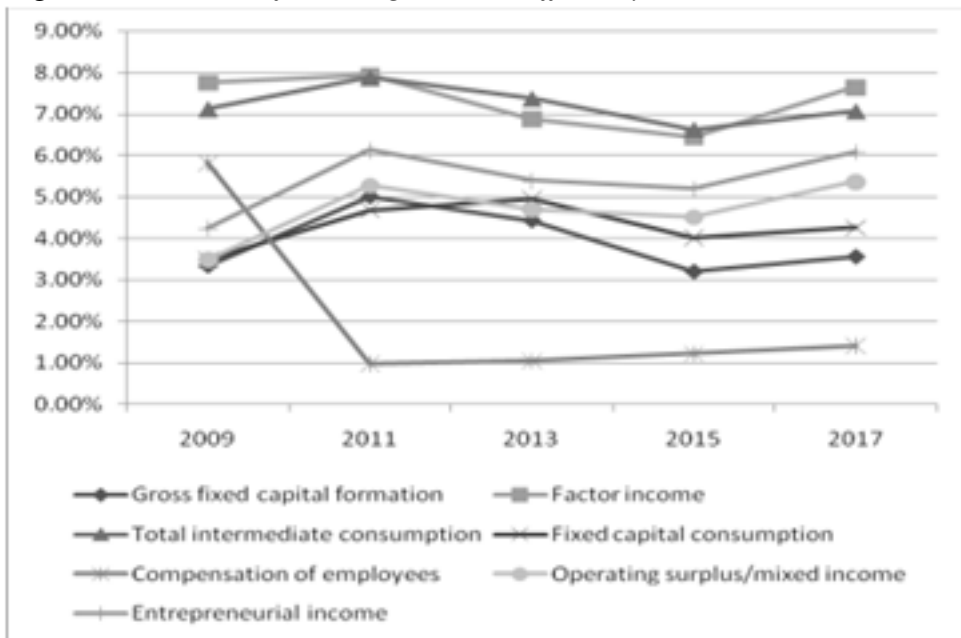
Source: *authors` computations based on (Eurostat, 2019a)*

In the case of the index of the real income of factors in agriculture per annual work unit and the index of real net agricultural entrepreneurial income, per unpaid annual work unit, a pronounced increase in recorded values can be noticed. The most relevant values are in the case of the unpaid labour force. Agriculture still uses the family workforce in valuing the agricultural potential.

Taking into consideration the role of agriculture in modern economies, a good and profound understanding of these evolutions may offer an efficient framework in valuing both the EU agricultural potential and the national ones, in a wider perspective.

Despite some literature opinions as (Barbu, 2011) who argued in his study that Romanian agriculture is mainly a subsistence agriculture with a low degree of profitability, the recent evolutions designate an appreciation of the efficiency degree.

Figure 6: *Evolution of some agricultural efficiency indicators, 2019-17*



Source: *authors` own computations based on (Eurostat, 2019a)*

If we are referring strictly to the Romanian agriculture, fig.6 presents the evolution of the most elementary elements in designing the agricultural performance and evolution. In this context, the following indicators were

chosen: total intermediate consumption, fixed capital consumption, compensation of employees, operating surplus/mixed income, entrepreneurial income and factor income.

The evolution of the indicators presented in fig.6 argues a stability of the Romanian agriculture performance during the considered period, which may lead to the conclusion that the agricultural sector has appreciated its exploitation performance. The Romanian agriculture should be analyzed and understood in a direct connection to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) agenda. From this perspective, the future of CAP will design the national agricultural evolution, more than ever.

### **Romanian Agriculture and the future of Common Agricultural Policy**

If in the first part of the paper we have analyzed the agricultural efficiency in some EU countries, including Romania, from a broader perspective, this section is dedicated to future impact of CAP reforms. Romanian agriculture has quickly integrated and adapted to the functioning of the CAP, and it is the sector that manages to absorb European financial allocations. Although the CAP has produced significant benefits to European agriculture, contributing to improving agricultural production and food safety and security, it nevertheless marks areas where it has not excelled. Biodiversity, the environment and the preservation of local traditions are just a few of these areas where the CAP needs to improve and excel.

The expanded size of the CAP, as well as its extensive flexibility and adaptability, make farming a more profound confrontation with the European agricultural model. The CAP cannot act outside the European agricultural model, and it is itself a determinant part of it. As (Lakner et al., 2019) argues "over the past decades, the EU's Common Agricultural Policy has been supporting farmers but at the same time, one could observe a sharp decline in farmland-biodiversity". Under these conditions, the CAP should fund the production using the environmental filter. On the other side (Cortignani & Dono, 2019) advocate that "the new greening rules generate positive but limited environmental impacts, which reinforce those already determined by the previous CAP reform".

A positive redefinition of the CAP therefore requires a modernization of the specific instruments but also a simplification of the operating

mechanism. Keeping the two pillars, inclining towards agri-environment measures, stimulating young farmers contributes fundamentally to the success of these policies.

Redefining and reforming the CAP must continue and keep the positive aspects of the current policy implementation but equally respond to the new challenges in the field, focusing on the demands of the European agricultural model. The reorientation towards the industrial model of agricultural production developed in other areas should not be regarded as an objective of the CAP. The European agricultural model is based on a largely family-friendly agriculture, without extinguishing the industry.

As (Milczarek-Andrzejewska et al., 2018) concluded in their study "that in the case of the least urbanized regions with small farms, CAP's contribution to increases in farmland prices was very high and hence CAP implicitly hampered farmland turnover, thereby leading to economic conflicts between farmers' (Milczarek-Andrzejewska et al., 2018). On the other hand, (Kuhmonen, 2018) concludes that "policy design and delivery has become the most extensively considered problem of the CAP", and for this reason a more proactive approach is need.

Examining the above reasons, Romanian agriculture is facing a new challenge regarding the convergence to the EU-CAP evolution. The significant contribution of agriculture to GDP formation, the labor resources mobilized in this sector and the high share of the rural population make agriculture an economic branch with large economic, social and environmental valences. The meanings of new CAP evolution imply a redesign of national agriculture. There are still numerous debates for reducing the CAP budget and reallocation to other activities. For example, the proposals to reduce the CAP budget are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: *The proposals to reduce the CAP budget*

.000 €	2014-2020 (EU28+EDF)	7*2020 EU27+EDF	2014-2020 (EU27+EDF)	2021- 2027	% change vs EU27 2020*7	% change vs EU27 2014- 2020
MFF(Current prices)	1,115,919	1,151,866	1,063,101	1,279,408	+11%	+20%
% GNI	1.03%	1.14%	1.16%	1.11%		
CAP(Current prices)	420,015	394,659	391,849	378,920	-4%	-3%

MFF(2018 prices)	1,136,105	1,107,138	1,082,320	1,134,583	+2%	+5%
CAP(2018 prices)	428,354	379,334	399,608	336,623	-11%	-16%

Source: *European Economic and Social Committee, (2018)*

As can be remarked from the data presented in the table above, the proposals to reduce the CAP budget from 38% of the EU budget over the 2014-2020 period down to 28.5% in the 2021-2027, which could represent in this case a negative effect for Romanian agriculture. Any reduction of the CAP budget means for Romania smaller sums received for sustaining agriculture and modernizing it.

As it is presented by (European Economic and Social Committee, 2018), the cuts to the CAP budget vary between 3% and 4% in current prices and 11% to 16% in 2018 prices (taking account of inflation at 2% p.a.), depending on the method of calculations used”. In case of the rural development financial allocation, in the same proposal, the cuts in 2018 prices are higher than 25 %.(European Economic and Social Committee, 2018)

For a complementary comparison, the union support for types of interventions for rural development and attracting young farmers and facilitating business development are presented in Annex 1 and 2.

### **Conclusion**

Romanian agriculture has experienced profound transformations of the functional paradigm under the CAP requirements. Appropriate financing of the CAP is a mandatory condition for achieving the sustainable development of European agriculture as a whole and for each Member State. Its major implications on the viability of rural communities that are largely dependent on agriculture, farmers' income, rural development as well as related areas require a future CAP reassessment on principles that meet the new challenges and policy objectives. At the same time, the CAP specific financial mechanism must support a resilient development of agriculture. Direct payments under the first CAP's pillar must fund viable farmers that meet environmental requirements and create sectoral added value.

The results of this draft comparison approach regarding the influence of the common agricultural policy on the development of the EU agricultural sector and in particular to the Romanian agriculture, reflect the spill over effect of agriculture on inland economies. The comparisons made during the analysis argue that Romanian agriculture is convergent to the EU-CAP demands and fulfills to a great extent its economic functionality.

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Annex 1: *Breakdown of union support for types of interventions for rural development (2021 to 2027) referred to in article 83(3)*

(current prices, in EUR)

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bulgaria	265 462 940	260 257 785	255 154 691	250 151 658
Czech Rep.	243 847 768	239 066 440	234 378 862	229 783 198
Germany	932 828 433	914 537 679	896 605 568	879 025 067
Estonia	82 807 411	81 183 737	79 591 899	78 031 273
Spain	943 455 836	924 956 702	906 820 296	889 039 505
France	1 139 511 952	1 117 168 580	1 095 263 314	1 073 787 562
Italy	1 197 041 834	1 173 570 426	1 150 559 241	1 127 999 256
Latvia	110 541 260	108 373 784	106 248 808	104 165 498
Lithuania	183 924 845	180 318 475	176 782 819	173 316 489
Hungary	392 196 885	384 506 750	376 967 402	369 575 884
Poland	1 241 877 681	1 217 527 138	1 193 654 057	1 170 249 075
Romania	909 815 361	891 975 844	874 486 121	857 339 335
Slovenia	96 351 317	94 462 075	92 609 878	90 793 998
Slovakia	214 550 513	210 343 640	206 219 255	202 175 740
<b>Total EU-27</b>	<b>10 582 808 505</b>	<b>10 375 302 457</b>	<b>10 171 865 154</b>	<b>9 972 416 815</b>

Year	2025	2026	2027	TOTAL 2021-2027
Bulgaria	245 246 723	240 437 964	235 723 494	1 752 435 255
Czech Rep.	225 277 645	220 860 437	216 529 840	1 609 744 190
Germany	861 789 281	844 891 452	828 324 953	6 158 002 433
Estonia	76 501 248	75 001 224	73 530 611	546 647 403
Spain	871 607 358	854 517 018	837 761 782	6 228 158 497
France	1 052 732 904	1 032 091 083	1 011 854 003	7 522 409 398
Italy	1 105 881 623	1 084 197 670	1 062 938 892	7 902 188 942
Latvia	102 123 037	100 120 625	98 157 475	729 730 487
Lithuania	169 918 127	166 586 399	163 319 999	1 214 167 153
Hungary	362 329 298	355 224 802	348 259 610	2 589 060 631
Poland	1 147 303 015	1 124 806 877	1 102 751 840	8 198 169 683
Romania	840 528 760	824 047 803	807 890 003	6 006 083 227
Slovenia	89 013 723	87 268 356	85 557 212	636 056 559
Slovakia	198 211 510	194 325 010	190 514 716	1 416 340 384
<b>Total EU-27</b>	<b>9 776 879 229</b>	<b>9 585 175 716</b>	<b>9 397 231 093</b>	<b>69 861 678 969</b>

Source: *European Commission, 2018*

Annex 2: *Minimum amounts reserved for the objective "attract young farmers and facilitate business development" as referred to in article 86(5)*

(current prices, in EUR)

<b>Calendar year</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Bulgaria	15 475 439	15 644 780	15 814 121	15 983 462
Czech Repub.	16 776 886	16 776 886	16 776 886	16 776 886
Germany	96 462 159	96 462 159	96 462 159	96 462 159
Estonia	3 354 430	3 453 356	3 552 281	3 651 206
Spain	94 203 434	94 346 677	94 489 919	94 633 162
France	142 955 739	142 955 739	142 955 739	142 955 739
Italy	71 203 710	71 203 710	71 203 710	71 203 710
Latvia	5 992 672	6 165 893	6 339 113	6 512 334
Lithuania	10 216 405	10 494 645	10 772 885	11 051 125
Hungary	24 395 393	24 395 393	24 395 393	24 395 393
Poland	59 459 556	60 071 486	60 683 415	61 295 345
Portugal	11 693 003	11 865 375	12 037 746	12 210 118
Romania	37 123 452	37 664 232	38 205 012	38 745 792
Slovenia	2 581 053	2 581 053	2 581 053	2 581 053
Slovakia	7 676 128	7 771 499	7 866 870	7 962 242

<b>Calendar year</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027 and the subsequent years</b>
Bulgaria	16 152 803	16 322 144	16 322 144
Czech Repub.	16 776 886	16 776 886	16 776 886
Germany	96 462 159	96 462 159	96 462 159
Estonia	3 750 131	3 849 057	3 849 057
Spain	94 776 404	94 919 647	94 919 647
France	142 955 739	142 955 739	142 955 739
Italy	71 203 710	71 203 710	71 203 710
Latvia	6 685 555	6 858 775	6 858 775
Lithuania	11 329 365	11 607 604	11 607 604
Hungary	24 395 393	24 395 393	24 395 393
Poland	61 907 274	62 519 203	62 519 203
Portugal	12 382 490	12 554 862	12 554 862
Romania	39 286 572	39 827 352	39 827 352
Slovenia	2 581 053	2 581 053	2 581 053
Slovakia	8 057 613	8 152 985	8 152 985

Source: *European Commission, 2018*