

ACADEMIA DE STUDII ECONOMICE DIN BUCUREȘTI



Școala Doctorală Economie II

TEZĂ DE DOCTORAT

Presented and publicly defended by the author:

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Title of the doctoral thesis:

**STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF THE ABSORPTION OF EUROPEAN FUNDS ON
THE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL SPACE AT THE LEVEL OF
THE SOUTHEAST DEVELOPMENT REGION**

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SUMMARY

The study focuses on the impact of European funds absorption on agriculture and rural areas, with particular emphasis on the South-East Development Region. Agriculture is presented as a strategic sector for food security and economic dynamics, but at the same time vulnerable due to land fragmentation, the high share of subsistence farms, deficient infrastructure, and risks generated by climate change, while European funds play a fundamental role in supporting farmers, modernizing farms, and consolidating rural infrastructure. The Romanian rural area faces major challenges related to demographic decline, population aging, limited access to services, and underdeveloped infrastructure, while European funds support the diversification of economic activities, the reduction of disparities, and the integration of this space into a multisectoral development process that combines agriculture with tourism, services, and local industries, while cohesion policy and structural funds contribute to reducing territorial gaps and modernizing basic infrastructure. At the level of the South-East Development Region, characterized by high agricultural potential but also by pronounced internal disparities between more developed counties such as Constanța and Galați and more vulnerable ones such as Tulcea or Vrancea, European funds have supported the modernization of farms, rehabilitation of irrigation systems, support for SMEs, tourism development, and infrastructure improvement, generating both economic effects through increased productivity and economic diversification, and social effects through job creation and farmer professionalization.