

Regional development between crises and opportunities: European funds, economy and social resilience

The paper reflects the way in which my scientific activity is structured in four complementary directions, each born from a distinct intellectual and biographical experience, but converging in an integrative vision. These directions are related to the essential dimensions of public and economic transformation in the European context: the way in which public policies and European funds shape territories, the potential of sustainable agriculture and the green economy to strengthen social cohesion, the challenges of the energy transition in an era of overlapping crises and, last but not least, the subtle relationship between economic performance and social responsibility.

The four directions are in a relationship of interdependence, illustrating a transdisciplinary approach in which research becomes not only an exercise in understanding, but also an act of social transformation.

The first direction of research that I have delved into is that of public policies, public administration and European funds. I chose this field because it offered me the ideal analytical framework to understand both the technical mechanisms of non-reimbursable financing and the way in which Romania relates, with aspirations and difficulties, to the European institutional architecture. In this endeavor, I viewed public administration as a network of actors and decisions, with its vulnerabilities and resources, but also with a real potential for transformation. My research contributes to the consolidation of a vision in which cohesion policy is understood as an instrument of deep European integration, with the potential to transform not only infrastructure, but also administrative culture, institutional capacity and social cohesion.

The second research direction is linked to my constant concern for sustainability and efficiency, which naturally extended to the field of sustainable agriculture and the green economy, spaces in which I found not only methodological challenges, but also real opportunities for structural transformation. In a European context marked by the climate crisis, pressure on natural resources and the need for territorial cohesion, organic farming is emerging more and more clearly as a strategic vector of sustainable development, with profound economic, social and ecological implications. Through the analyses prepared, I aimed to contribute to redefining the role of agriculture in contemporary society, not as a residual sector, but as a vector of sustainability, resilience and territorial identity. I wrote with the conviction that Romania has not only the obligation, but also the opportunity to become a relevant actor in European organic

farming, if it undertakes the necessary reforms and intelligently capitalizes on its natural and human resources.

In parallel with my concerns regarding territorial development and agricultural sustainability, I dedicated a third research direction to the energy transition, understood as a technological process, but also as a systemic challenge with profound implications for public policies, social balance and economic security. Recent experiences – from the COVID-19 pandemic to the military conflict in Ukraine – have demonstrated the fragility of the European energy system and brought to the forefront the permanent tensions between decarbonization objectives and energy security imperatives. Through my research, I have aimed to contribute to the redefinition of the energy paradigm, in a framework in which sustainability, security and social cohesion are treated not only as competing objectives, but as complementary dimensions of responsible and visionary governance.

The fourth direction of my research path has focused on applied economic analysis, with an emphasis on the functioning of markets and corporate social responsibility (CSR). In these areas, I have sought to understand the logic of economic mechanisms and how they interact with social values, institutional norms and individual behaviors. To investigate these complex relationships, I used advanced econometric and statistical methods — including logistic regressions, spatial models and network analyses — that allowed me to empirically explore consumption behaviors, financial literacy levels, regional disparities and the integration processes of migrants into the European Union labor market. , I argued that real economic sustainability involves profitability, but also responsibility towards the community, the environment and future generations. My research is part of a paradigm in which the economy is understood as a space for institutional and moral construction, and economic governance is evaluated by its capacity to generate trust, cohesion and sustainability.

Along with the presentation of scientific contributions, the paper presents the results obtained as a professional in the field of public policy development and European funds management. I demonstrated how these have contributed substantially to building a didactic activity centered on the fact that university teaching must be a space of active, reflective, and responsible learning. I presented my pedagogical intention to create a demanding, yet motivating and encouraging learning environment, where students can develop both their technical skills, critical thinking, and ethical responsibility.