

STUDY ON THE USE OF DIFFERENT SOURCES OF FINANCING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

The study we propose will help to identify funding needs for the future programming period, as well as to highlight the contribution of investments from various sources of funding to human resource development in the region, in the programming period 2021 - 2027. The study will develop an updated, detailed and exhaustive analysis of the development of human resources in the rural environment in the SV Oltenia region taking into account previous funding, current legislation, institutions involved in the field and previous actions implemented in the region. Based on the interpretation of the data that characterize the current situation, the real development needs of this field will be identified. Based on these, both priorities and measures that could contribute to the development of rural human resources will be identified and described.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the policy on vocational training and human resources development has been forced to focus on equal opportunities, without departing from the principles of quality and competitiveness. In this context, the training of people in rural areas faces a different type of approach, moving from the problems they face, generally due to financial resources, to improving the conditions and accessibility of the population. The attempt by education policy to create equal opportunities for all, on the other hand, faces a labor market based on competitiveness and which, in rural areas, is much less diversified. In addition to the accessibility problems that the population here faces, the rural education system faces a double challenge: on the one hand,

it must adapt to the local labor market and, on the other hand, it can also offer qualifications. to support the population in trying to diversify the labor market and to reduce the degree of dependence on practicing economic activities with minimal profits (eg subsistence agriculture). European funds have been and are an important catalyst for the development of the rural environment of the SV Oltenia region. European funds have been and are an important catalyst for the development of the rural environment of the SV Oltenia region. The financings from European funds, represented an "air gap", and brought multiple benefits, dictated mainly by the financing directions, the objectives pursued aiming at:

- reducing the size of the population employed in agriculture and ensuring employment and income alternatives, in the broader context of addressing the issue from the perspective of rural development, correlated with the creation of viable economic holdings, by efforts to reduce the fragmentation of land use;

- the development of an infrastructure and services specific to rural areas, which would support the development of these regions, both from the perspective of increasing the commercial character of agriculture, but also from the one of offering alternatives of employment and income for the population.

Human resources are of particular importance in the context of the globalization of markets and the free movement of goods and people within the European Union. Disadvantages and gaps in the quality and use of human resources in rural areas can be counteracted by attracting structural funds that can contribute to the mobility and development of human resources.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study focuses on sustainable development in rural areas as well as funding opportunities in this area in order to develop human resources. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to present the situation of sustainable development in rural areas and, in close connection with it, the particularities of the South West Oltenia development region. For this, both bibliographic sources from the literature and statistical data were used. Next, the emphasis was on human resources as the main factor of production in agriculture, knowing that the vast majority of the rural workforce is employed in agriculture.

In view of all these aspects, the main sources of financing of human resources in rural areas were further analyzed, focusing on European financial sources with non-reimbursable financing.

The study we propose will help to identify funding needs for the future programming period, as well as to highlight the contribution of investments from various sources of funding to human resource development in the region, in the programming period 2021 - 2027. The study will develop an updated, detailed and exhaustive analysis of the development of human resources in the rural environment in the SV Oltenia region taking into account previous funding, current legislation, institutions involved in the field and previous actions implemented in the region. Based on the interpretation of the data that characterize the current situation, the real development needs of this field will be identified. Based on these, both priorities and measures that could contribute to the development of rural human resources will be identified and described.

In the numerous studies published so far, human resources have been analyzed mainly from an economic and structural point of view. It is important to know its needs depending on the specifics of the area, the demographic and geographical characteristics as well as the projects and strategies in force related to the region.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In Romania, approximately 9.6 million inhabitants live in rural areas. Romania is a country where the rural environment is almost equal, in terms of population, with the urban environment. Rural development today focuses the attention and resources of the international community on poverty reduction and environmental protection.

Southwest Oltenia is a development region of Romania, created in 1998. Like the other development regions, it has no administrative powers, its main functions being the co-ordination of regional development projects and the absorption of funds from the European Union. The South-West development region consists of 5 counties: Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinți, Olt and Vâlcea. These are 82.4% in the historical region of Oltenia.

The South-West Oltenia development region is located in the southwestern part of Romania covering 29,212 km², ie 12.25% of Romania's surface. It has a population of 2,330,792 inhabitants with a density of 79.8 inhabitants / km². According to the 2002 census,

another 1,857,013 inhabitants of Romania have their place of birth in the South-West Oltenia Development Region. From an administrative point of view, the South-West Oltenia Development Region includes 5 counties (Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinți, Olt, Vâlcea), with localities structured, in 2005, in 40 cities, of which 11 municipalities, 408 communes and 2,066 villages.

In the South West Oltenia region there are 408 communes, which represent 14.26% of the communes of Romania. These communes comprise the largest number of villages in Romania, 2,070, respectively 15.96% of Romanian villages. These figures show that most of the region's territory is framed in rural areas, especially since its surface is the smallest in the country, except for the Bucharest Ilfov region.

At the level of the region, in 2019, most communes are registered in Dolj and Olt counties, with 104 each, which represents, cumulatively, over 50% of the number of communes registered by South West Oltenia and over 7.2% of communes in Romania.

Rural development is a complex issue, which involves, on the one hand, achieving a balance between the need to modernize economic activity and life in rural areas, and on the other hand, trends to conserve and preserve the natural, ecological and socio-cultural [1].

Although the labor force in Romanian agriculture is still one of the most numerous in Europe, the dynamics of the share of the population employed in agriculture shows a tendency of its gradual decrease.

The causes of the decrease in the share of the population employed in agriculture are related to the aging of the active population in rural areas, the low incomes achieved, unattractive for young people and the still low investments in non-agricultural businesses in rural areas.

Human resources are the main factor of production in agriculture. The quality of the agricultural act depends to a large extent on the quality of the human resource, which determines the need to invest in the training and preparation of the human resource used in agriculture. The rural environment, through its specificity and structure, requires, all the more investments in human resources, investments specific to both the agricultural and non-agricultural profile.

According to Eurostat data from June 2019, 53.4% of the country's population in 2018 (10,436,306 people out of 19,530,000) live in rural areas.

Rural human resource development is an important component of rural development. Given the importance of human resources in

rural development, the level of vocational training of the rural workforce needs to be analyzed. The access to the labor market of rural people is hampered by the lack of skills and qualifications or the mismatch between them and the requirements of the local labor market, which lead to a low individual level of occupational mobility. Moreover, people in rural areas either have a small number of training opportunities or access to opportunities involves high costs (eg vocational training fees, losses generated by the temporary absence from subsistence agriculture). A large part of the active people in rural areas are employed in the subsistence economy and in the informal sector, being disconnected from the mechanisms of the market economy. This leads to significant economic stagnation for almost half of the country's population. The rather difficult period that Romania is going through in recent years has made the immediate concerns focus on the increased absorption of European funds made available to our country after joining the EU. However, recent studies show that the priority now is to focus on rural development, lift the rural population out of poverty and sustainable development. In other words, the absorption of European funds should not be an end in itself, but how we should solve problems with these funds [2].

Operational programs [4]:

The Competitiveness Operational Program 2014-2020 offers funding opportunities for large companies under Axis 1: "Research, Technological Development and Innovation (RDI) in support of economic competitiveness and business development".

The program is structured on two priority axes, of which Axis 1, of interest to large companies, has a budget of 952.5 million euros (60% of the total). Within this Axis, some of the expected results are: the creation of key research and development infrastructures, the increase of the participation of Romanian research organizations and enterprises in the Horizon 2020 program, the increase of private sector expenditures for RDI.

The Human Capital Operational Program provides funding, through specific funding lines, by financing projects of large companies aimed at training employees, including those in rural areas, attracting new employees through various facilities, training and professional integration of young people. 7 funding axes are available under the program.

The Large Infrastructure Operational Program (POIM) 2014-2020 responds to the development challenges identified at national level in terms of infrastructure and resources.

Given the high degree of correlation and complementarity of types of infrastructure investments, the promotion of investments addressing infrastructure and resource needs has been proposed for funding under a single operational program, with the overall objective of: Transport infrastructure development, environment, energy and risk prevention at European standards, in order to create the premises for sustainable economic growth, in safe and efficient use of natural resources. The program provides funding through 8 priority axes.

The European Aid Fund for the Most Deprived supports the actions of the European Union countries aimed at providing material assistance to the poorest sections of the population. Romania provides basic food aid and material assistance through the Operational Program Helping Disadvantaged People 2014-2020 (POAD). The program contributes to strengthening social cohesion and reducing extreme poverty through the distribution of staple foods (in the form of food packages and prepared food), school supplies for children, newborn kits, clothing and footwear and hygiene products to the most disadvantaged people. European aid through the POAD is complemented by national schemes for people living in extreme poverty.

The Technical Assistance Operational Program (OPTA) 2014-2020 aims to ensure an efficient and effective implementation process of the European Structural and Investment Funds in Romania in accordance with the principles and rules of partnership, programming, evaluation, communication, management, including financial management, monitoring and control, based on the responsibilities shared between the Member States and the European Commission. The overall objective of the OPTA 2014-2020 is to ensure the capacity and tools necessary for effective coordination, management and control of interventions financed from the European Structural and Investment Funds, as well as an efficient, well-targeted and correct implementation of the OPTA, Infrastructure Operational Program (POIM) and the Competitiveness Operational Program (COP). Contains 3 priority axes.

The Regional Operational Program (ROP) 2014-2020 is one of the programs through which Romania will be able to access the European structural and investment funds from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), in the period 2014-2020.

ROP 2014–2020 aims as a general objective to increase economic competitiveness and improve the living conditions of local and regional communities, by supporting the development of business

environment, infrastructure and services, for the sustainable development of regions, so that they can manage effectively resources and capitalize on the potential for innovation and assimilation of technological progress. These objectives are translated into 11 priority axes.

The Regional Operational Program 2014-2020 is one of the programs through which Romania will be able to access European funds. The Operational Program Administrative Capacity promotes the creation of a modern public administration, able to facilitate socio-economic development through competitive public services, investments and quality regulations. In order to fulfill this role, the public administration needs competent and well-managed human resources, an efficient and transparent management of the use of resources, an adequate institutional-administrative structure, as well as clear, simple and predictable operating procedures. Such an administration must be able to provide policy makers with the tools necessary to substantiate and implement public policies in the interests of citizens. Optimizing administration is an important condition for implementing any structural change towards smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

National Rural Development Program 2014 - 2020 (PNDR) - program that grants non-reimbursable funds from the European Union and the Government of Romania for the economic and social development of the rural area in Romania. PNDR responds to 3 of the development challenges set out in the Partnership Agreement:

- Competitiveness and local development
- People and society
- Resources

The NRDP (funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) supports the strategic development of rural areas by strategically addressing the following objectives:

- SO1 Restructuring and increasing the viability of agricultural holdings
- OS2 Sustainable management of natural resources and combating climate change
- SO3 Diversification of economic activities, job creation, improvement of infrastructure and services to improve the quality of life in rural areas (P6)

The main rural development priorities for the 2014-2020 programming period:

- Modernization and increase of viability of agricultural holdings by consolidating them, opening to the market and processing of agricultural products;

- Encouraging the rejuvenation of generations of farmers by supporting the installation of young farmers;

- Development of basic rural infrastructure as a precondition for attracting investments in rural areas and creating new jobs and implicitly for the development of rural areas.

- Encouraging the diversification of the rural economy by promoting the creation and development of SMEs in non-agricultural sectors in rural areas;

- Promoting the fruit sector, as a sector with specific needs, through a dedicated subprogram;

- Encourage local development placed in the responsibility of the community through the LEADER approach. LEADER's cross-cutting competence improves competitiveness, quality of life and diversification of the rural economy, as well as combating poverty and social exclusion.

In order to achieve strategic objective 1, the following categories of interventions will be financed through NRDP measures:

- Establishment, expansion and modernization of farm facilities (buildings, access roads, irrigation, technologies to reduce pollution and production of energy from renewable sources, storage, marketing and processing facilities, including in the context of short chains, etc.);

- Investments in processing and marketing, including energy efficiency, marketing, storage, conditioning, adaptation to standards, etc .;

- Support for the restructuring of farms, especially small ones, and the rejuvenation of generations of farmers;

- Risk management in the agri-food sector;

- Counseling and training activities, including through producer groups.

In order to achieve strategic objective 2, the following categories of intervention will be financed through NRDP measures:

- Actions of afforestation of agricultural and non-agricultural lands, as well as the realization of forest curtains on these lands;

- Compensatory payments to farmers who voluntarily make agri-environmental commitments;

- Compensatory payments to farmers who voluntarily undertake to adopt or maintain practices and methods specific to organic farming;

- Compensatory payments to farmers who voluntarily undertake to continue working in areas designated as areas facing natural or other specific constraints.

In order to achieve strategic objective 3, the following categories of intervention will be financed through NRDP measures:

- Support for investments for micro and small non-agricultural enterprises in rural areas;
- Improving local infrastructure (water supply systems, sewerage, local roads), educational, medical and social infrastructure;
- Restoration and conservation of cultural heritage;
- Support for locally generated strategies that provide integrated approaches to local development;

The Agency for Financing Rural Investments (AFIR) is the institution that ensures the technical and financial implementation of the National Rural Development Program 2014 – 2020 [3].

According to the Regulation of the Council of Europe no. 1290/2005 on the financing of the common agricultural policy, two European funds for agriculture were created:

- European Agricultural Guarantee Fund - for measures to regulate or support agricultural markets and for direct payments to farmers in the context of the common agricultural policy;
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development - to finance rural development programs

The Special Pre-Accession Program for Agriculture and Rural Development has created the technical and financial premises necessary for the process of accession to European structures. Thus, the funds developed through the SAPARD Agency and later the Paying Agency for Rural Development and Fisheries, directly contributed to the economic and social development of the rural environment, supported the private producer, provided support to agricultural associations and agricultural companies, but also councils local. They also provided financial support to non-governmental organizations, but only to those that have set up specialized units for agricultural machinery. The SAPARD program was created to support the efforts of the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe to join the European Union and to prepare their participation in the Community Agricultural Policy. The assistance was provided between 2000 and 2006. Moreover, in this way we were given the opportunity to adapt to the financial procedures and control mechanisms of the European Union.

The main areas for which non-reimbursable funds were granted are:

Agri-food industry; Agricultural holdings; Diversification of economic activities; Formation of groups of agricultural, forestry and fish producers; Agricultural methods for organic farming; Forestry.

CONCLUSIONS

Human resources are of particular importance in the context of the globalization of markets and the free movement of goods and people within the European Union. Disadvantages and gaps in the quality and use of human resources in rural areas can be counteracted by attracting structural funds that can contribute to the mobility and development of human resources. The main sources of funding for rural human resource development are European funds which, through operational programs, allocate funds that can be used to develop rural areas, reduce poverty and social exclusion and train human resources...

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